

Hon Peter Goetz, President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat,

Ms. Axumite Gebre, from the UN-Habitat,

Senator Eloy Cantu Segovia, Vice-president, on the activities of the GPH in America,

Senator Rodolfo G. Biazon, Vice-president, on the activities of the GPH in Asia,

Hon Margaret Zziwa, Vice-president, on the activities of the GPH in Africa,

Honorable members of the Board of Directors of the Global Parliamentarian on Habitat,

Honorable Members of Parliament,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

I wish to express my sincere appreciation for inviting me to participate at the Meeting of the GPH Board of Directors in this beautiful representative city of the entire globe, Washington D.C., U.S.A.

I here by represent the President of the European Parliamentarians on Habitat, Mr. Traian Constantin Igas. ***"I express my gratitude for all of you who made this conference possible. Following last year's meeting in Bucharest and continuing to this spring's conference held in Brussels, I've noticed an increasing interest about habitat matters coming from European governments. Since GPH started its works we managed to change perspectives on how national legislation should combine efforts with international laws providing us a better world we all deserve to live in."***

The topic of the meeting „Good laws for a better Habitat” is of extremely importance in this actual context worldwide spread. Of course I am referring to the global crisis which easily oversteps boundaries and involves the issue of solidarity. We, the European Board of Directors of the GPH, at the meeting in Brussels, on March 4 2009, had foreseen some major challenges which need dealing with an extreme caution. Here, Mr. Peter Goetz remarked that the **continuity** issue is a real challenge for GPH, taking into consideration the former MPs, who can still be GPH members, but it is obviously more difficult for them to attend GPH meetings all around the world.

Mr. Jerko Rosin referred to the legislative work in Croatian Parliament. It is an intense work, many new laws being aligned with the EU, and many country-specific laws being enforced. This phenomenon is approximately the same in all the new EU member states. In Turkey, Mrs. Mrs Birnur Şahinoglu, representative for Mr. Yazer Ozdalga, presented the study carried in Turkey regarding the improvement of citizens conditions of living in rural areas especially. Hon Peter Götz talked about the new ecologist projects actually on debate in Germany. New environmental regulations in Germany – some of which are still not enforced – are dealing with relationship between financial crisis and energy efficiency, and between crisis and climate change investments and programs.

We agreed on two issues: climate changes are perhaps the most difficult challenge facing humanity and the city pollution can be stopped only by reducing the population, by making better conditions for the people living in rural areas – a better infrastructure, so they no longer migrate to the cities.

Taking into consideration the comparative study, one of the main findings of the study is that compared to the Western Europe, Eastern European countries have more privately owned housing and in this case it would be easier to regulate and enforce certain laws.

The Eastern European countries present substantial differences coming from their past, the socialist past, and their present, as new EU member states. With all these drawbacks, these states do cover a wide range of goals and principles of the Habitat Agenda:

- ✓ *The majority of the East European states pass the principle of environmental protection in their constitutions.*
- ✓ *The East European states implemented the instruments in the field of action „youth” and „social security & health” the basic regulations have a certain relevance in practice.*
- ✓ *Finally, the Habitat Agenda sub-goal, economically sustainable development implies the existence of local taxes on real estate, entitled to the municipalities, which takes an important role on community financing.*

Our aim, based on the Bucharest 2008 Declaration „Good laws for a better life in cities”, is to work together regarding the implementation of statutory measures to bring about sustainable worldwide settlement development and adequate shelter for all, as well as well-managed cities

fit for the future. The climate-related challenges for cities and energy-policy issues are at the top of the agenda in this context.

Following the principles recognized in the mentioned Declaration, in April 2008, in Bucharest, we have had two workshops regarding the transposition of the goals of the Habitat Agenda into national law and the climate changes and its impact on cities.

- ✓ The workshop called "*Changing climate and its impact on cities*" took into consideration city environment. Following the opening lecture about "*Critic places in Bucharest's metropolitan area and its climate changes*", held by Dr. Ines Grigorescu research assistant from the Geographical Institute of the Romanian Academy, the participants concentrated their discussions among seven major issues:
 1. The concept of metropolitan area in Romania and laws concerning the issue;
 2. Critic places in Bucharest's metropolitan area;
 3. Natural, climate, hydrological, technological, industrial and biological hazards;
 4. Hydro technical damage hazards;
 5. Waste management and its long term negative impact on the environment;
 6. Critical areas in Bucharest's surroundings
 7. The atrophic impact of Bucharest's metropolitan development and its unfavorable consequences on the environment and human living.
- ✓ Another workshop held during the Bucharest April 2008 meeting was about "*Implementing the objectives and principals of the Habitat Agenda, adopted at Istanbul 1996 meeting, in the national legislation of Germany, Finland, Holland, Romania and Turkey*".

In conclusion, we have to consider the city as a whole, because the urban landscape forms the identity of a city and we reaffirm our willingness to promote active and decisive involvement of parliamentarians, in harmony with the points contained in the Habitat Agenda.

I thank you for your kind attention!