

From: "Hidrocálido" on 5.10.2011

Global Parliamentarians on Habitat pay tribute to the sustainability measures of the city government under Lorena Martínez¹



To the left of the picture: Peter Götz, President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, met with Mayor Lorena Martínez Rodríguez and underlined the significant impact of the city's initiatives "Línea Verde" and "Línea Morada".

To the right of the picture: Praise from Peter Götz for the city's sustainability measures

The President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, Peter Götz, paid tribute to the sustainability measures being developed by the city government to promote environmental protection and social justice, after Mayor Lorena Martínez had presented the projects "Línea Verde" and "Línea Morada".

The German expert, who is taking part in the celebrations and events surrounding World Habitat Day in the city, called it an impressive project, which moreover will meet with broad international approval and recognition.

He pointed out that the two projects were a very well thought-out and successful combination, and went on to say it was a superb idea to use already existing pipeline areas to create a green belt, which is why it can be considered a fantastic project.

He congratulated Aguascalientes on this and expressed his hope that the plans would actually be adhered to since, as he pointed out, they offer real benefits to the community as a new space will be created and at the same time it represents an environmental challenge.

¹ Translated by Kathryn Waldie in cooperation with the Language Service of the German Bundestag

The international representative underlined how important he feels it is to press ahead with a water infrastructure which provides the green public spaces with water, as one of the major challenges currently facing the world is precisely the sensible use and reuse of water.

He therefore made it clear that the responsible use of natural resources is a topic that will become increasingly significant in the future and that the peoples of this world will have to think about how to tackle the issue of water, as often drinking water is used in areas where it would not necessarily have to be.

On the topic of the planned “Línea Verde”, he said that one of its features is that it directly addresses the problem of protecting the environment. In that vein, he welcomed the fact that the grounds of the PEMEX pipeline will be turned into an area with trees, through which the consequences of climate change can be counteracted.

Furthermore, he was of the opinion that a new model for public spaces is taking shape, bringing with it major benefits – socially, economically and environmentally. On this, too, he explicitly congratulated Mayor Lorena Martínez, who he said had implemented public measures which fit into sustainability programmes.

The head of the city pointed out that this investment of over 400 million pesos to construct the “Línea Verde” over a stretch of 15 kilometres in the east of the city aimed, amongst other things, to provide the population of seven poor districts with a better sport and leisure infrastructure. One important element in this project was the recycling of water, she said, as it will be a green infrastructure with an area of vegetation of almost 50 hectares.

According to Mayor Lorena Martínez, the project is one hundred percent ecological.

Lorena Martínez recognized the support from the central government and the federal state government in implementing this project and especially that of Governor Carlos Lozano de la Torre in promoting further measures of unquestionably high value to society.

“I am very grateful for the opportunity to tell you about this project, which because of its impact on the whole city and especially for areas with a higher degree of exclusion, and also as a result of its significance for the environment and urban planning, is indeed the most important project of the incumbent city administration. We hope that you will speak out as a great advocate of this project in the international bodies, as it is to them we look to bring the funding but also the recognition of this project forward.”

In this context, Nikolai Popov, who was awarded the United Nations “Scroll of Honour” accolade for the “Sustainability in cold climate zones” project, learned on a tour through the temporary storage facility, the GPS supported control centre and the San Nicolás waste disposal site how the city administration deals with waste from the residential areas. He was accompanied by officials from the Department of Public Services, who explained the functioning and work processes.

From: "La Jornada" on 5.10.2011

■ **Not enough to solve the problem, but a start²**

Peter Götz: "Línea Verde" is a showpiece for the combat against climate change

■ Introduction of renewables needed

by Ricardo Valdez

In an interview with La Jornada Aguascalientes and after a meeting with the mayor of the city of Aguascalientes, the member of the German Bundestag and president of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, Peter Götz, described the planned "Línea Verde" as "very impressive" and "a role model for the rest of the world", pointing out that it will meet with broad international approval and that above and beyond this, new opportunities could open up for the city.

He deemed the fact that thanks to this project an area previously unused due to the existing oil pipeline would now be reclaimed and transformed in an environmentally friendly way, as waste water will be used for its maintenance, to be particularly interesting. What is more, he said, this would offer real benefits for the community as a new meeting space will be created. "This urban area will bring people together, creating a new quality of life for this city", said Götz.

Furthermore, he was of the opinion that a contribution will be made to counteracting the effects of climate change if there is a commitment to protect the climate by creating a green space which is no longer allowed to be changed. "We must all face up to the major challenge of climate change and can only master it if we join forces at international level", stated Götz and made it clear that the measures to protect the climate could only be organised starting at the grass roots level, making reference to action at the village and town and city level. "We need many projects of this kind."

² Translated by Kathryn Waldie in cooperation with the Language Service of the German Bundestag

The German MP nonetheless conceded that this alone would not suffice to solve the problems, which is why he felt it necessary to start introducing renewable energies. He emphasised that the solar power available in abundance in the country as well as the hydro power would have to be harnessed using storage and by constructing the necessary equipment to generate it and that it would be necessary to verify to what extent wind power is an option. In his opinion the opportunities available in each respective region must be seized.

He also cited the issue of energy efficiency through the responsible use of energy in buildings, transport, industry and private homes as another aspect which must be taken into consideration. He believed this to be a particular challenge, as saving energy and increased use of renewable energy sources would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. “The age of renewable energies offers many opportunities”, he added.

He explained that towns and cities would have to seriously think about how to become more compact and consolidated, since within urban areas there are many unused spaces and yet urban sprawl is increasingly common, something he believed to be neither cost-efficient nor sustainable from an environmental as well as economic point of view.

“We need integrated towns and cities, where people can live, work and enjoy their free time and not industry on one side and residential areas on another, which then leads to a high demand for transport and the emission of greenhouse gases”, Götz affirmed.

In light of this, the development challenge faced by towns and cities was therefore to become more compact, Götz said, whereby an alternative would be to grow upwards, if density was really what was aspired to. He warned, however, that this would have to happen in a controlled manner, as here, too, serious problems could arise. This could then impinge upon people’s quality of life and, if applied too often, could also cause environmental problems.