

*This English version is based on a German translation of the original Croatian*

Article published in the newspaper *ZADARSKI LIST* on Friday, 20 May 2011  
No. 3963

---

Page 2:

*/Photo/*

*Caption:*

Jerko Rošin, Peter Götz und Ante Uglešić at the opening of the Global Forum of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat

GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARIANS ADOPT DECLARATION OF ZADAR TODAY

## **Urban Areas are the Main Sources of Climate Change**

**Soon, two thirds of the world population will live in cities. 75 percent of energy consumption and 80 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions are already accounted for by cities, say parliamentarians.**

*/Photo/*

*Caption:*

Delegates are aware of the problem of migration caused by poor economic conditions in certain countries.

**ZADAR** – Around 100 parliamentarians who work on challenges in the field of urban development, environmental protection and housing have gathered in Zadar for the 7th Global Forum of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat (GPH). Delegates were welcomed to the University of Zadar's ceremonial hall by Peter Götz, the President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat. In his opening speech, he said that one of the most important tasks for the Global Parliamentarians is to discuss how to include the losers of the urbanization process in developing countries. He also spoke of the need to include more renewable energy sources and greater energy efficiency and of his organization's support for this goal. The ensuing discussion then also focused on how climate change is affecting sustainable urban development.

### **The problem: large-scale migration flows**

Delegates were then addressed by the Vice-President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat (GPH) Europe, Jerko Rošin, a Member of Parliament from the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), who also chaired the meeting. He underlined Habitat's role as part of the United Nations system, especially in light of the growing international problem of large-scale migration flows, which are caused by poor economic conditions in the developing countries. This, said Rošin, ultimately increases land use, which in turn causes major housing problems

Dražen Grgurović, Deputy Mayor of the City of Zadar, also addressed the parliamentarians, drawing attention to Zadar's 3000-year-old history. Zadar, said Grgurović, has always been a city of comings and goings, with people invariably leaving at least a little of their knowledge and culture behind. Today, Zadar has a strong maritime role.

- Zadar has also invested World Bank loans in wastewater treatment in order to improve the quality of its coastal environment, effectively making the whole city into a beach. What's more, Zadar is located just 30 minutes' drive from five national parks. As a result, the people of Zadar are very sensitive to the need for the type of legislation adopted by Habitat parliamentarians, said the Deputy Mayor.

- Professor Ante Uglešić, Rector of Zadar University, also welcomed the opportunity to address the parliamentarians and provided a brief overview of the history of Zadar.

**Declaration of Zadar to be adopted**

At the end of the conference today, delegates will adopt the Declaration of Zadar. The draft Declaration, entitled “Good Laws for a Better Habitat”, states that soon, more than two thirds of the world population will live in cities. 75 percent of energy consumption and about 80 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions are already today accounted for by cities. In the Declaration, the Global Parliamentarians acknowledge that urban areas are the main sources of climate change. In the Declaration, they therefore undertake to promote the passing and implementation of national laws that lead to sustainable development and to promote the setting up of regional parliamentarian groups as a means of sharing experience and knowledge in order to implement ideas and agreed guidelines into the national legal systems.

In pursuit of these goals, the Global Parliamentarians also state their intention to step up the public debate with government representatives and organizations as well as with business representatives on the options available for improving the implementation of decisions on sustainability. They also pledge to urge governments and the international financial institutions to ensure the availability of financial resources for UN-HABITAT and its programmes.

The Declaration confirms that the prevention of maritime pollution is a way of protecting the biodiversity of the ocean and that this can be done by controlling the quality of the ballast water transported by ships. It also insists that efforts should be made to diminish the consequences of the rise of the sea level that is due to the melting of the polar ice. For these reasons, the Global Parliamentarians will ensure that their parliamentary colleagues are constantly and sufficiently informed about all the expert aspects that their organization, the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, is dealing with, in particular by exchanging their experiences with regard to legal and regulatory issues among and between all the UN members on issues of sustainable urban development.

The Declaration of Zadar also expresses solidarity with victims of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

### **ZADAR: THE FORUM HOST**

Zadar was chosen to stage the 7th Global Forum of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat on the basis of a decision adopted by the Board of Directors of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in March 2010. The decision was then confirmed in Beijing in October 2010. The decisions were preceded by a proposal made by Jerko Rošin, Vice-President of GPH Europe and a Member of the Croatian Sabor (Parliament), to Peter Götz, the President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, for Croatia to apply to host the 7th Global Forum. Dražen Grgurović, Deputy Mayor of the City of Zadar, travelled to Brazil on behalf of the City of Zadar to submit its formal application and make a presentation on what it has to offer.

The Global Forum of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat is hosted by the Croatian Parliament and is organized by the City of Zadar and the Croatian Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction, which is providing technical support for the work of the Global Forum in Croatia.

Siniša Klarica

*This English version is based on a German translation of the original Croatian*

Article published in the newspaper *ZADARSKI LIST* on 21/22 May 2011  
No. 3964

---

*Saturday, 21 May 2011*

**EVENTS**

*Zadarski List, page 7*

---

**The 7th Global Forum of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat (GPH) ended yesterday with the adoption of the Declaration of Zadar**

**Rošin: Croatia is the only country in the world where illegal construction is a crime**

**Contrary to previous announcements, the provisions of the Declaration of Zadar will not be binding on the Global Parliamentarians' home parliaments; instead – as their President Peter Götz put it – the outcomes of the Global Forum in Zadar will act as “a driver behind good initiatives” at parliamentary level**

*(Photo)*

*Caption: Jerko Rošić: Zadar conference is the largest to date*

**ZADAR** - The 7th Global Forum of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat (GPH) ended yesterday with the adoption of the Declaration of Zadar. The President of the European Council of the GPH, Jerko Rošin, a Member of Parliament from the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), said that HABITAT is one of the most important United Nations programmes, as is borne out by the fact that a UN Under-Secretary-General is now serving as its Executive Director. The Global Parliamentarians have a key role to play in HABITAT, for they are responsible for budgetary oversight within their parliaments, and it is the parliaments which must provide the financial resources required to improve living conditions. However, contrary to previous announcements, the provisions of the Declaration of Zadar will not be binding on the Global

Parliamentarians' home parliaments; instead – as their President Peter Götz put it – the outcomes of the Global Forum in Zadar will act as “a driver behind good initiatives” at parliamentary level. As Jerko Rošin explained, Croatia has already implemented some of the decisions adopted at previous meetings of the Global Parliamentarians. Rošin particularly emphasised, in this context, that Croatia is the only country in the world where illegal construction is treated as a criminal offence. However, although on paper, the penalties include up to five years' imprisonment and the statute of limitations is 10 years, this legislation is almost never enforced. The President of the Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, Peter Götz, a Member of the German Bundestag, would not comment on Croatia's plans for the ex post facto legalization of such construction, merely adding that the implementation of the decisions adopted at this meeting will, once again, be a matter for the national parliaments.

According to Jerko Rošin, the Zadar conference is the largest to date: the organizers had expected around 60 delegates to attend, but in the event, more than 120 parliamentarians from 30 countries came to Zadar. Two workshops were held, one of which focused on coastal cities and climate change and aroused particular interest. In response to questions from journalists about the extent to which fears of a disaster occurring as a result of sea level rise are justified, Rošin explained that much of the ancient city of Alexandria was inundated and submerged due to sea level rise of just half a metre. If, for some reason, the sea level were to rise by a full metre, this would have truly devastating consequences.

Yet we can also point to the case of Starigrad, the old city on the island of Hvar, or Milna on the island of Brač, where the sea level rises by a full 1.20 m as a result of tidal influences, flooding the coasts. However, various speakers, including Jerko Rošin, explained that sea level rise in the Adriatic is not caused primarily by the melting of polar ice but by the flooding of rivers, especially the Italian Po.

Siniša Klarica

### **Excerpts from the Declaration of Zadar**

Among the various commitments made in the Declaration of Zadar, the following are particular worthy of mention:

“...We undertake to promote the passing and implementation of national laws on the basis of the Habitat Agenda, and to create the legislative and administrative instruments that lead to a sustainable development. We will urge governments to ensure the availability of adequate and predictable financial resources for UN-HABITAT to enhance its work. We express our solidarity with victims of the earthquake and the ensuing series of disasters which ravaged Japan in March 2011, including the Tsunami and the destruction of the nuclear power plant in Fukushima with all its terrible consequences for the people of Japan. We confirm that the prevention of maritime pollution is a way of protection of the bio-diversity of the ocean and that this can be done by controlling the quality of the water that flows into the sea or of the ballast water transported by ships. We insist that efforts should be made to diminish the consequences of the rise of the sea level which occurs due to sporadic tidal or tsunami waves and/or due to the constant gradual rise of the sea due to the melting of the polar ice.”