

OFFICIAL STATEMENT BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES MAJOR GROUP

CSD – 13 HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

21 April 2005

15h00-18h00

delivered by

Councillor Amos Masondo

Executive Mayor of the City of Johannesburg

**President of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives-Local
Governments for Sustainability**

Chairperson of the South African Local Governments Association

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Chair of the CSD 13 Ambassador John Ashe
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished delegates

I want to thank you for your leadership in guiding the discussion of this session in a **'frank and open manner'** and the opportunity given to local authorities to address this high level segment.

We note that most governments recognised the role of local governments in the delivery of water, sanitation and human settlements.

Mr Chairman,

Since the Rio Earth Summit, over 6200 local governments have implemented Local Agenda 21 strategies.

At the Johannesburg Summit, local governments launched a campaign called **'Local action moves the world'** in an effort to find local solutions for global problems.

Local governments have since Rio to Johannesburg, realised that the achievement of the global commitments such as MDG and JPOI targets lie at a local level.

Mr Chairman

In May 2004 in Paris, organised local governments across the world united themselves under one umbrella body- **United Cities and Local Governments**. To date a number of regional UCLG are being launched, the last one being UCLG-Africa in Pretoria in May next month.

At the meeting of organised local governments leaders held in Brazil in August 2004, the Secretary General of the UN Mr Kofi Annan, **acknowledged that up to 70% of the MDGs / JPOI targets should primarily be achieved through local governments working in consultation with national governments and other stakeholder at a local level.**

Mr Chairman

It is however recognised that without effective decentralisation and the requisite flow of technical and financial resources, local governments will find it difficult to achieve the MDG/ JPOI targets.

We welcome the **dialogue on effective decentralisation being driven by the United Nations Advisory Committee on Local Authorities under the auspices of UN Habitat** and believe that this work will provide guidelines to those governments that have not as yet defined mandates of their local governments.

Mr Chairman

We urge member states to promote our unique role of bridging the gap between governments and other stakeholder at a local level and to be sympathetic to the voice of local governments.

In conclusion, as local governments we are committed to working with our governments and all stakeholders to get the MDGs/ JPOI targets to be localised and implemented.

I thank you for your kind attention.