

**INPUT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES-LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY, EXECUTIVE MAYOR
OF THE CITY OF JOHANNESBURG, COUNCILLOR AMOS
MASONDO TO THE 12TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**VENUE: CONFERENCE ROOM 1, UNITED NATIONS PLAZA,
NEW YORK**

DATE: 19TH APRIL 2004 ~~19TH APRIL 2004~~

- Chairman of the 12th Commission on Sustainable Development,
Norwegian Minister of Environment, Honourable Minister Borge
Brende of Norway,
- Various Ministers and Ambassadors present from across the
world,
- Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Ms Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka,
- Executive Director of UNEP, Dr Klaus Töpfer,
- Various experts on Sustainable Development,
- Representatives of Major Groups,
- All protocols observed.

Chairperson,

It is a great privilege and an honour for me to say a few words at this important meeting.

Since the hosting of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, local governments globally have aligned themselves with the outcomes of the world Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and are implementing the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation as evidenced in the Local Government Action on Water, Sanitation, and Human Settlements
- See: Case Summaries Background Paper No 5.

Mr. Chairman, local government is the sphere of government closest to the people and most accountable for service delivery. We welcome the programme set out by the Commission for Sustainable Development in ensuring that the Joburg Plan of Implementation does not remain a rhetoric but that actual implementation is taking place.

Worldwide Local Governments are facing the challenge of urbanisation brought about by the movement of people from rural

areas to urban centres. This is especially so in developing countries. In Africa alone, UN Habitat estimate that a hundred million more people, by the year 2010, will be residing in cities and towns.

Our experience also indicates that notwithstanding some of the difficulties that Local Government face, great strides have been made at the local level in terms of service delivery on housing, water and sanitation. It is important to note, however, that the challenge of accessing financial resources and mechanisms to provide bulk infrastructure still remains.

Capacity building is a key to successful implementation and it is imperative that local decision makers are empowered to achieve meaningful implementation levels.

Mr. Chairman, lack of access to basic services such as water and sanitation hampers the creation of sustainable settlements. Due to the water crisis faced by many countries it is imperative that mechanisms for the supply of water takes into account water demand management strategies that address shortages. We

therefore call for the development of Integrated Water Resource Management strategies.

On sanitation, there is a need to ensure that access is provided in a safe and affordable manner. Local Government calls for integrated settlement planning which will integrate settlement planning with provision of basic services such as housing, water and sanitation. ^{We believe that this will} ~~This~~ will result in the creation of sustainable urban settlements.

Mr. Chairman, whilst we note that in some instances, local governments are not able to address the challenge of creating sustainable urban settlements due to the lack of clear mandates, we welcome and note the debates on decentralisation being driven by UN HABITAT. We would like to see more clarification of mandates for Local Government followed by the requisite resources flowing from our national governments. This will result in empowering Local Government to deal with service delivery issues within their localities.

In addition to the lack of financial instruments, successful human settlements must include in addition to the provision of water and

sanitation, attention to the provision of infrastructure and other
basic services, health care, transportation, education and energy.

Local Government welcomes efforts being made by some
intergovernmental and national governments in ensuring that local
Government is best positioned to respond to the challenges of
service delivery on water, sanitation and human settlements. We
are in full agreement with the Executive Director of UN-Habitat that
the provision of basic services and slum upgrading must become
the core business for Local and National Government alike and
that it should receive adequate support from international financing
institutions and development agencies.

Finally, as Local Government, we re-affirm our unwavering
commitment to ensuring that the Joburg Plan of Implementation
becomes a reality. Let us work together to build a better tomorrow.

Thank you for very much for your attention.