

**Multi-stakeholder Side Event:**  
**Resilient Cities – Fostering Local Action to Achieve Sustainable  
Development**

**Wednesday, 20 June 2012 , 9:00-10:30am**  
**Conference Room T-1, Rio Centro**

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**Introduction:**

Cities are home to half of the world's population and in the coming years, this number is expected to grow by 70%. As engines of economic growth, innovation and job creation, cities play a pivotal role for sustainable development to be realized. Cities have also become one of the main contributors to many environmental problems. Emerging sustainable development challenges such as disaster risks are brought by rapid urbanization, unsustainable development practices and climate change. More than half of the world's largest cities, with populations ranging from 2 to 15 million, are currently located in areas of high risk of seismic activity. In addition, almost a billion people still live in slums or marginal and informal settlements without access to basic services and they are often in high-risk areas. If not addressed properly and in time, disasters will continue to pose significant threats to people's lives and assets and development actions. So, before the tide of urbanization leaves us behind, all stakeholders concerned need to bring about a sea change in how we address urban disaster risks.

**Thematic Focus:**

Recognizing these disaster risk challenges, and that local government capacities and commitments are key to transformative local action, UNISDR and its partners launched a campaign in 2010 --*Making Cities Resilient*-- to enhance awareness about the benefits of investing in and building on sustainable urbanization to reduce disaster risks. The campaign is engaging mayors and local governments and building their commitment around a checklist of Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient- for local government to work on with local stakeholders. The effort aims at 'localizing' the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters* adopted by UN member states, with practical applications and innovative partnerships between national and local governments, legislative and budgetary resolve and collaboration with private sector and communities of practice. As of May 2012, there are over 1100 local governments from more than 80 different countries participating in the campaign.



The campaign also brings about tangible results in improving the collaboration between local governments, civil society organizations and various other stakeholders in their efforts to make cities safe and resilient.

As we approach the 2012 Rio+20 Summit, Member States and other stakeholders are calling for an ambitious, concise and action-focused outcome. Pragmatic and clear implementation strategies are needed to address the implementation gaps and emerging challenges such as disaster risk reduction for sustainable development. The Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient can be developed as indicators to monitor commitments and goals that are focused on promoting sustainable cities and reducing disaster risk and improving disaster resilience from local to national and global scale. The checklist, as a self assessment tool, is flexible to local conditions, so it could be easily adopted by both national and local governments.

To showcase the significance and applicability of this approach to sustainable development, UNISDR together with ICLEI, UCLG, UN-Habitat and IFRC will host a dialogue to present existing disaster risk reduction initiatives led by local governments based on the Ten Essentials for Making Cities Resilient. The dialogue will seek to highlight the

economic, social and environmental benefits of disaster reduction measures and share practical implementation strategies.

**Contribution to the outcome and follow up to Rio+20:** The dialogue will also serve as platform to discuss further the applicability of the checklist of “10 essentials” as a contribution to advance the implementation and monitoring of actions, particularly in the area of sustainable cities and disaster risk reduction, as part of the outcome of Rio+20. Furthermore, the event is expected to strengthen the commitment and increase awareness of different stakeholders to support the initiative of making cities safe and resilient for sustainable development. One concrete outcome of the event will be launching of an Interactive Web-resource of Good Practices to facilitate further replication among cities around the world.

**Format of the event and Speakers:** This event will have a strong focus on civil society participation and will feature high level speakers including Mayors, Heads of States, Parliamentarians, local government actors, and private sector. Each speaker will have 5-10 min for introductory remarks, after which the moderator will engage participants in an interactive discussion with the panellists. The event will be moderated by Ms. Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

## Programme

- 9:00 am Opening Remarks  
9:15 am Panel discussion moderated by **Ms. Margareta Wahlstrom**, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction

### Panellists

- 9:20 am Governor **Joey Salceda**, Governor of Albay, Philippines  
Mayor **Graciela Fernanda Ortuzar Novoa**, Mayor of Lampa, Chile  
Hon. **Saber Chowdhury**, Member of Parliament, Bangladesh  
Dr. **Guiteau Jean-Pierre**, Director General of the Haitian Red Cross, Haiti  
Mr. **Peter Gruetter**, Director and Distinguished Fellow, CISCO Internet Business Solutions Group
- 10:00 am Open discussion  
10:25 am Closing Remarks