

# THE MANILA 2007 DECLARATION

*Concerning the Principles  
Which define the roles and mission  
Of governments, organizations  
And sectors in the vision for  
Liveable cities*

## PREAMBLE

WHEREAS, we, representatives from national governments, local authorities, development partners, civil society and the business sectors have gathered together in the Philippines from November 5 to 9, 2007 to hold the Cities Alliance Public Policy Forum;

WHEREAS, the Forum and its related activities have highlighted the successes and gaps in the ongoing implementation of the City Development Strategies and other similar efforts by various sectors to upgrade slums, create liveable cities and address the adverse effects of rapid urban growth on peoples;

WHEREAS, the following indicators of successes have been highlighted in the Forum:

That cities continue to grow in their role as engines of growth and vital players in regional and provincial development;

That local authorities are expanding their roles as enablers of development beyond their traditional function as administrators;

That participative governance promotes partnerships with the various stakeholders in the vision for liveable cities;

That local authorities have the ability to rally and attract private investors to support their development goals;

That local authorities have the will and capability to initiate and sustain a diminishing dependence on national governments for financial support;

That local authorities succeed in designing their own development/re-development strategies and manage their implementation;

That local authorities exhibit the will and ability to preserve the historical and cultural resources of their cities even as they pursue development and urban renewal goals;

That development partners and civil societies have significantly helped promote peoples' active engagement in development processes, livelihood and housing programs; and have successfully tapped the support of private sector for these endeavours; and

That the sustained growth in the collaboration and networking among governments, partners and civil societies in the building of liveable cities are helping empower peoples to take active roles in the improvement of their lives;

WHEREAS, there remain significant challenges to and gaps in the shared effort to attain the vision for liveable cities:

That the vision for the upgrading of slums and creation of liveable communities is confronted by the spectre of the “limited resources in the face of unlimited challenges”;

That rapid urbanization also brings about the emergence of slum communities and challenges to the environment;

That the magnitude and speed of urbanization constrain governments to formulate, adopt and pursue a strong national vision and framework for urbanization;

That both the successes and challenges impel national governments to further raise the level of priority given to the financial requirements of slum upgrading and creation of liveable cities;

That institutions, local authorities and communities may not have yet built the adequate capacity to absorb available financial support and capital investment in an efficient, responsive and responsible manner, and the expertise and capacity to undertake capital market transactions;

That traditional financing modes are no longer adequate in the face of huge financial needs of the development efforts;

That local authorities have not fully tapped the financial resources and funding mechanisms afforded to them by new legislations and expanded modes for project financing; and

That the beneficiary sectors are yet to fully graduate into catalysts of development rather than remain passive recipients of assistance.

**THEREFORE, WE, the participants in the 2007 Cities Alliance Public Policy Forum, hereby reaffirm our commitment to and advocacy for the following principles:**

That **local authorities** are the **prime-movers** of the shared aspiration for accelerated transformation of cities into liveable, competitive, bankable and well-governed politico-economic units;

That their partnerships with, and the active participation of all stakeholders, are key to the effective and efficient planning, management and implementation of strategies, programs and projects for the upgrading of marginalized communities;

That the comprehensive, long-term and city-wide approach to slum upgrading by local authorities ensures that current and future housing requirements are adequately met;

That local authorities provide the leadership in the integration, generation and mobilization of financial and technical resources for community development;

That the growing national, regional and global network of local authorities plays a major role in achieving better local planning and city management;

And that deliberate and active mentoring among and between local governments optimizes the value of lessons learned and experiences gained in the application of the Slum Upgrading and City Development strategies.

That **national governments** create and sustain the needed **policy environment** and **systems of incentives** that fuel the collaboration and meaningful engagement of concerned sectors in the overall poverty reduction effort;

That the **City Development Strategies** is an integral part of the overall national development framework of national governments;

That the accelerated upgrading of slums and other marginalized communities is a continuing priority of national governments;

That a policy environment promoting long-term, adequate and sustainable financing for community shelter programs is a vital support required of national governments;

That anticipating and planning for future growth is an imperative for national governments even as they uphold the policy of **inclusive growth**;

And that their support to local authorities in the latter's prime-mover role through **sustained capacity-building** and expanded access to financial resources and mechanisms is crucial to the overall success of development efforts at the grassroots level.

That **civil societies** are **vital participants** and **indispensable partners** in the creation of liveable cities;

That they hold the key to sustained, meaningful and productive dialogue among peoples, government and development partners in relation to the programs and projects that affect grassroots communities;

That they are effective catalysts in the generation of community savings which can be leveraged for expanded financial resources;

That they provide strong and added linkages to financial resources and financing mechanisms;

And, that they are instrumental in inspiring the meaningful participation of grassroots communities in the development processes.

That **international development partners** are major sources of the knowledge, financial and technical resources that are key to the sustainability and longevity of the programs for the creation of liveable cities and the eradication of slums;

That they provide the strong platform for the sharing of experience, best practices and lessons learned by all sectors taking part in the collaborative efforts;

And that they are a vital support to **institutional capacity-building and development**.

That the **business sector** plays an important role in the creation of liveable cities and upgrading of slums through their core enterprises and their corporate social responsibility programs; and that this role encourages a facilitative environment for informal/small-scale enterprises, and for private sector-government partnerships in infrastructure and service delivery investments.

**In the light of our commitment to and advocacy for these principles, we reiterate our urgent call for corresponding action on the part of governments, organizations and sectors concerned.**

*Done in Quezon City, Republic of the Philippines, this 7<sup>th</sup> Day of November, 2007 during the **Cities Alliance Public Policy Forum** on “Leveraging Resources for Liveable Cities”.*