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Promoting the Values of Local Government

2004 was an historic year for the world's cities. The creation of United Cities and Local Governments has given rise to the first united voice for local governments within the international community. Dedicated to promoting the values, objectives, and interests of cities and local governments across the globe, United Cities and Local Governments provides a platform for a stronger role for cities in international debates and global partnerships such as the Cities Alliance.

On behalf of United Cities and Local Governments, we are proud to present the *2004 Annual Report* of the Cities Alliance. Five years ago our founding organisations helped establish the Cities Alliance. While playing an active role in its governance, the voice and role of local authorities has steadily grown stronger in the Alliance, which is already changing the way international development agencies engage with cities and local governments.

We are committed to the Cities Alliance not only because we share a common vision, but because we believe that this partnership is helping us to promote the developmental role of local governments not just in implementing policies, but also in defining them. The international system is increasingly recognising the need to work with all actors in this process.

With its forward-looking approach and clear focus, the Cities Alliance is playing a crucial role by helping cities of all sizes obtain more coherent support from international development agencies. By focusing on the future of cities and promoting the positive impacts of urbanisation, the Cities Alliance is helping mayors anticipate and prepare for growth, develop sustainable financing strategies, and attract the long-term capital investments so critical for the provision of infrastructure and other services.

As mayors we have first-hand knowledge of the plight of slum dwellers. We also have the primary responsibility for improving their living conditions. Indeed, promoting a range of inclusive policies to improve the lives of slum dwellers is crucial for the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. This is why our members are committed to moving beyond sectoral approaches to development by introducing comprehensive, citywide programmes that create opportunities for all citizens.

We look forward to strengthening our relationship with the Cities Alliance and its members and to working in partnership to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.



Bertrand Delanoë
Mayor of Paris



Smangaliso Mkhathshwa
Mayor of Tshwane