

CONFERENCE REPORT



2017

Commonwealth Local Government Conference

Fit for the future:
resources and capacity for
effective local government

VALLETTA MALTA
21-24 NOVEMBER 2017



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AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT



LOCAL COUNCILS
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Foreword

“ CLGC2017 has been an important springboard for key players in development to come together to start this important work. ”

The 2017 Commonwealth Local Government Conference, Fit for the future: resources and capacity for local government, took place in Malta, as the focus shifted towards implementation of the important global targets agreed in 2015 - most notably the Agenda 2030: 17 universal global targets to address inequality and to promote sustainable economic, social and environmental development to reduce poverty.

Local government has a central role to play in the achievement of these goals. Indeed, when my own country of Botswana hosted the 2015 Conference, we adopted the **Local Government Vision 2030** and the **Valletta Outcomes** build on that work with very practical recommendations around resourcing local government more effectively to enable our sector to meet the challenge of sustainable development in the cities and communities where Commonwealth citizens live and work. It is clear that all levels of government must work together more cooperatively if the SDGs are to be achieved but, equally, in recognising the role of respective partners in development, it is important to ensure that adequate financing is in place for delivery.

CLGF's Patron, Rt Hon Helen Clark reminded us again that local government is an indispensable partner in achieving the SDGs. Many of our eminent speakers highlighted the importance of empowerment and autonomy of local government, and the need to rethink decentralisation to enable sustainable development; the importance of inclusive governance and accountability at the local level; building trust and ensuring opportunity to services and decision making; the central role of planning in ensuring sustainable development for all; and the necessity for strengthening capacity at the local level; and, of course ultimately the role that finance and access to resources plays in ensuring that local government can deliver. In addition to the plenary presentations, the event also provided a valuable opportunity for practitioners to share and debate their experiences of implementing new and innovative approaches to resourcing local development and to learn from practical experiences from across the Commonwealth. This practitioner to practitioner interaction and exchange is an important element of the Commonwealth Local Government Conference experience.

At this Conference we also held a roundtable on **localising the SDGs**, bringing together local and central government representatives from across the Commonwealth.

As leaders we attend many policy events and these are important for our personal development and in strengthening the institutions we serve. However, it will be the implementation of the policy recommendations from Valletta which will define the Conference's success. The Valletta Outcomes set out clear actions for us to implement in our home countries, but it also sets out a series of areas where, as the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, we can also work collectively to push to effect the change that is necessary for local government to be empowered and resourced to contribute fully to the achievement of the SDGs. The first step in this journey will be in presenting the outcomes of the Conference to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London, April 2018 and will work with Dr Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta in this regard.

I would like to thank our hosts, the Government of Malta, the Local Councils Association of Malta and the Arts Council of Malta for their support, and for ensuring the successful delivery of CLGC2017. It has been a wonderful week of activities and I look forward to working with the CLGF membership and staff to make the Valletta Outcomes a reality

Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo,
Chairperson, CLGF



Introduction

The Commonwealth Local Government Conference has a reputation for providing a platform for key stakeholders from around the Commonwealth to come together to discuss the major issues affecting local government, now and in the future. This was my first conference since taking on the role of CLGF Secretary-General and I was impressed by the input and level of commitment of everyone involved; and by the way the discussions and ideas were transformed into tangible objectives in the form of the Valletta outcomes.

In a rapidly changing world, and where the service delivery and developmental responsibilities of local government are increasing, it is important that local government across the Commonwealth adapts itself to be *fit for the future*, so the theme for the conference was very relevant and useful for our members who participated.

More than 400 delegates from 58 countries converged on the beautiful island of Malta to be welcomed by the Hon Dr Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta, who opened the event. We were also honoured to have the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC in attendance, adding special significance to the event. As part of CLGF's commitment to SDG5 - empowering women and girls – the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network was created and it was particularly pleasing to launch the network at this conference, under the auspices of the President of Malta, HE Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, with the Commonwealth Secretary-General and CLGF Patron Rt Hon Helen Clark, providing their experience in leadership.

I should like to thank a number of people in Malta who made the conference possible: the Maltese Government, the Local Councils Association and the Arts Council Malta for their wonderful hospitality and support before, and throughout the event; and to the University of Malta for hosting the Research Colloquium.

I want to thank our conference partner, Microsoft, with whom we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the period 2016 to 2019 to undertake a number of activities; and to all our conference exhibitors; the European Commission, Platforma, UKAid and UNHabitat for their support.

Finally, I would like to thank CLGF patrons, the Board, speakers, dignitaries and delegates for their contributions; and, not least, the CLGF staff for their hard work, commitment and attention to detail. I look forward to working with our members to achieve the outcomes articulated at the Conference.

Dr Greg Munro,
Secretary-General, CLGF

“ Where the service delivery and developmental responsibilities of local government are increasing, it is important that local government across the Commonwealth adapts itself to be fit for the future. ”

Welcome remarks

Malta's Minister of Justice, Culture and Local Government, **Hon Owen Bonnici**, welcomed delegates and expressed great pleasure in hosting CLGC2017. Malta is proud of its success in hosting major international events, he said, and CLGC2017 provides an ideal opportunity for policy makers from around the world to exchange ideas and for councils to compare experiences with their counterparts. Problems are best tackled by sharing best practice and learning from each other; discussing the challenges we all face will benefit all countries, regardless of size or nature. It is important to agree on synergies and focus on the requirements of practitioners, especially in relation to how local government can work in a smarter way. The conference theme fits well with Malta's own reform agenda. Malta is celebrating 25 years of local government. In 1993, 68 local councils, ranging in size from 300 to over 23,000, were established, together with a regulatory mechanism for local council operations. Maltese councils can all provide examples of good practice and it is a good time to look at reforms which enhance systems and can strengthen Maltese decentralisation, he said. Expressing his pleasure in using the event to launch the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network (ComWLG), he emphasised Malta's commitment to achieving better participation of women in all aspects of social and economic activity. Measures introduced in 2013, he said, make it easier for women to succeed, particularly at local council level; and targeted policies provide the best possible environment to enhance the role of women in all sectors.

Acknowledging the long service of Councillor Joe Attard who died recently, Hon Bonnici explained how, as Mayor of Żejtun, he had transformed the area to make it one of the most beautiful places to visit. He dedicated the conference to the memory of Councillor Joe Attard.

Wishing delegates well for the conference, on behalf of the Government of Malta, the Minister invited everyone to take the time to enjoy the historical richness and culture of Malta.

Cllr Joe Cordina of the Local Councils Association of Malta (LCA) welcomed everyone on behalf of the LCA. He said the event was an important opportunity to help strengthen and consolidate the bond between Malta and the rest of the Commonwealth, both locally and regionally. He explained that Malta provides a peaceful base and has a thriving economy. As a small but ambitious island, Malta seeks continuously to punch above its own weight and, by sharing experiences, can draw lessons to help ensure this continues. Local government policies are important, he said, to help meet present and future needs and he reminded delegates that we can all learn from each other to build more effective and responsive local government.

CLGF Chairperson and President of the Botswana Association of Local Authorities **Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo** welcomed delegates to a world gathering of local government practitioners and the biennial conference for members which helps shape CLGF's work for the next two years. He called it an important milestone to ensure that CLGF is addressing its advocacy programme and responding to the needs of members. He reminded the audience that in 2015, the conference took place in his country, Botswana, where a roadmap for local government for the next 15 years was created - *Vision 2020*. That conference focused on the need to involve local government in the development agenda and the

main outcome was recognition of the meaningful role of local government in implementing and monitoring the SDGs. He described how, as part of the Global Task Force, this point was clearly made at the UN Habitat III meeting with the slogan: *Nothing about us, without us*. He emphasised that local government's voice is clearer, stronger and louder if we work together and speak as one. These efforts have been rewarded by local government now having a seat at the global development table and the recognition that almost two thirds of the SDGs require local government input if they are to be achieved. He emphasised that during the Habitat III meeting in 2016, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon chaired a special session for a few hundred mayors and local government leaders. CLGC2017 is taking the debate to the next level, he said, by asking how local government can build our resources and capacity to engage and deliver the development that our communities and citizens need: how we can promote more fiscal decentralisation, increase locally raised revenue, work with partners on sustainable development, build strong local economies, work smarter to be more efficient and effective, and work across local government to be more innovative with our finances.

He reminded delegates of CLGF's unique role in bringing together different levels of government, reflected in its membership structure and Board which comprises representatives from local government; national associations of local government; and national/ provincial/ state government. He noted that this is also evidenced by the attendees, ensuring that the conference outcomes will be owned by more than local government alone. It is essential for members to respond to, and implement conference outcomes, to ensure they feed into other initiatives and become a reality.

He acknowledged the presence of Hon Dr Muscat, Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC and Rt Hon Helen Clark and their help in reaching a bigger, global audience of decision-makers. He welcomed the opportunity to share the CLGC2017 outcomes with the heads of government at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Working in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and using lessons from other local government partner organisations will make CLGF and the Commonwealth Secretariat stronger, he said, and able to achieve more. CLGF's Board meeting earlier in the day had been highly energised by the attendance of the Commonwealth Secretary-General. He concluded by thanking the Government of Malta and the Prime Minister's Office for their consistent support.

Hon Dr Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta, thanked CLGF for choosing Malta and asked what lessons could be taken from 24 years of local government. Personal contact with citizens remains central to Malta's political system, he said and, due to the size of Maltese towns and cities, councillors know almost all their citizens on a first name basis. Putting local citizens closer to decision-making is key, but can also present a problem. If everyone is a neighbour or friend, he explained, it is much harder to take decisions for the common good if you know they might negatively affect people you know well. This is why the theme *Fit for the Future* is perfect, he said. Through technology it is clear that size does not matter, or that it matters less; digital tools can reach everyone in an equal and cost effective manner. There has been more transparency since the introduction of live streaming meetings four years ago and easier access to services through mobile apps: small initiatives that give people direct access to local government, while ensuring transparency.

While the future is used vaguely in political speeches, it is possible to talk concretely about how local government can improve people's lives by using smart technologies. He gave the example of how introducing a system to show the location of vacant parking spots had helped commuters in one area, by saving time in looking for parking spaces and reducing traffic congestion.

Local democracy is an important way to open up democracy to as many people as possible, he said, adding that Malta was the first country to lower the voting age in local elections to 16; voting makes democracy come alive. Malta wants young people to feel motivated to contest seats at 16 and know that they can contribute to the future, he said. He cited a 9% budgetary increase and said Malta will continue investing in local government. In closing, he said the role of a council and the government is to improve lives - local government exists to keep families and businesses at the centre of decision-making and strengthen our communities.

A video message of support was provided by HRH Prince of Wales wishing delegates well for CLGC2017.

Commonwealth Secretary-General (CSG) **Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC** commended CLGF's role in extending and maintaining Commonwealth connections. Recalling that she became Secretary-General at the 2015 CHOGM in Malta, she praised the Government and people of Malta. She noted that CHOGM's theme in April 2018 in London would be *Towards a Common Future*. She said she wanted to hear delegates' views on how local government can contribute to creating a fairer, safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future for all. Local government is fundamental to achieving these goals, she said, and makes an immense contribution towards inclusive and resilient development and democracy at levels where citizens are most immediately aware of progress. Good and honest local government is a vital part of the fabric that knits society together, she said, inclusively and with respect for the needs and aspirations of all people. When local political oversight and administration are weak, or fail, communities break down with disastrous consequences for social and economic development, she explained. Local government provides the services and infrastructure that people depend on in the communities where they live, play, learn and work. She reminded participants that the Commonwealth Charter stresses the importance of representative local government and sustainable development and sets out the values and principles by which the Commonwealth seeks to advance development, resilience, the rights of citizens, and social and economic inclusion. The key Commonwealth principles of democracy and rule of law are as important at local government level as at national level, she advised. Transparency, accountability and effectiveness are fundamental tenets of a strong political system, as are a level playing field in the political process, freedom of expression and access to the media. She welcomed CLGF's work in supporting local governments to live up to these principles and deliver effective governance. Development, whether social or economic, depends on reliable and efficient infrastructure and utilities - roads, schools and healthcare facilities - with accountable and responsive delivery of services at local, district and regional level.

She suggested that resilient development is best achieved through a Regenerative Model of Development, which supports member states and communities in the Commonwealth to meet the

commitments outlined in the Paris Agreement and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. She talked about the impact of climate change, referencing damage caused in the Caribbean. Access to international development funds and climate financing for small island states, she said, is often constrained due to regulatory and policy hurdles, and procedural and capacity obstacles; and this conspires to delay and impair the heroic efforts of government and local people to rebuild. Emphasising the focus and importance of SDG5, and equality in all aspects of public and private life, she commended CLGF for establishing a dedicated network for women to exchange knowledge and provide mutual support. Achieving fairer representation and gender equality means encouraging and supporting women into positions of community and political leadership. Sharing experiences and perspectives within the diversity and commonality of the Commonwealth offers distinctive ways of making a difference for the 2.4 billion people who are the Commonwealth. Local government impacts citizens' learning, leisure time and livelihoods – every aspect of their lives. Truly sustainable and resilient development will be delivered by working in partnership.

CLGF Vice Chairperson and Bahamas Association of Local Government Authorities **Cllr Philip McPhee** thanked the Prime Minister, Hon Dr Joseph Muscat, Hon Owen Bonnici and Cllr Joe Cordina for their warm welcome. He called the Prince of Wales' message inspiring in emphasising the importance of planning and managing urbanisation. He thanked Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC for her powerful call to action and CLGF Chairperson, Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo for his wisdom and insight. Praising the cultural performers, he wished delegates fruitful deliberations, a successful conference and enjoyable visit to Malta.

This was followed by the official opening and tour of the Conference Exhibition. A full list of exhibitors can be found on page at the end of this report.

Wednesday 22 November

09.00

Objectives and theme of the Conference

What are the key questions we need to address to ensure local government is fit for the future and a full partner in achieving the new global consensus?

Local government as a full partner in developing sustainable communities

- Dr Greg Munro, Secretary-General, CLGF

Reflections by:

- **Bhaskar Chakrabarti**, Associate Professor, Public Policy & Management Group, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta and representing the Research Advisory Group
 - **Eric Beaume**, Deputy Head of Unit C5 – Cities, Local Authorities, Digitalisation, Infrastructures, DEVCO, European Commission
 - **Richard Oppenheim**, UK Commonwealth Envoy
- Keynote address: How government at all levels can work in partnership to invest in sustainable development**
- **Rt Hon Helen Clark**, Patron of CLGF, and former Prime Minister of New Zealand/Administrator of UNDP

10.30

Refreshment break

11.00

Plenary 1: Fiscal decentralisation, local revenue generation, trade and investment: creating an enabling environment for cities, local governments and partners to deliver sustainable development

The session will look at different forms of financing and investment that can help cities and local government deliver on the commitments agreed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including the needs of small states, and the role of cities, trade and inward investment.

Panel

Short video presentation to introduce the session by Paul Smoke, Professor of Public Finance and Planning, NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and co-author of the conference background paper

- **Cllr Parks Tau**, President of SALGA, South Africa and Chairperson of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- **Cllr Nick Small**, Liverpool City Council, Local Government Association of England and Wales
- **Hon Jules Doret Ndong**, Minister Delegate, in charge of Decentralisation and Local Councils, Cameroon
- **Hon Prof Edward Scicluna**, Minister of Finance, Malta

Q + A

12.30

Lunch

13.45

Working groups A

Six parallel sessions offering in-depth discussions on particular aspects of the theme.

- Enabling local government to meet agenda 2030: inter-governmental cooperation and fiscal decentralisation
- Transparency and accountability: tools to empower local governments
- Building capacity to deliver: professionalisation and leadership in local government
- Cities and trade: the role of local government in promoting trade and investment
- Resourcing local development in small states
- Innovative partnerships for financing and delivery

15.30

Refreshment break

16.00

Plenary 2: Strong local economies as a basis for effective local development

This session will focus on the importance of a sound local economy as a key driver of sustainable development. It will look at local engagement and economic development as a means of delivering development

Moderated panel session

Keynote: **Mr Chucheka Mhlongo**, Head of Infrastructure Financing, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)

Partnerships to strengthen investment in local infrastructure Panel

Local economic development as a means of achieving the SDGs

- **William Cobbett**, Director, Cities Alliance
- **Mayor Darrell Bradley**, Mayor of Belize City
- **Hon Vincent Mwale**, Minister for Local Government, Housing, Early Education & Environmental Protection, Zambia
- **Hon Faiszer Mustapha**, Minister of Provincial Councils, Local Government, Sri Lanka

17.15

Regional meetings (CLGF members)

- Africa (Southern, West, East)
- Asia Pacific
- Americas
- Europe
- Associate members

19.00

Reception, Verdala Palace

Women in local government – meeting SDG goal 5 across the Commonwealth and launch of the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network

Hosted by **HE Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**, President of Malta, with **Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo**, CLGF Chairperson, **Rt Hon Patricia Scotland**, and **Rt Hon Helen Clark**

Places for the Women in Local Government event are limited, please make sure you sign up at registration.

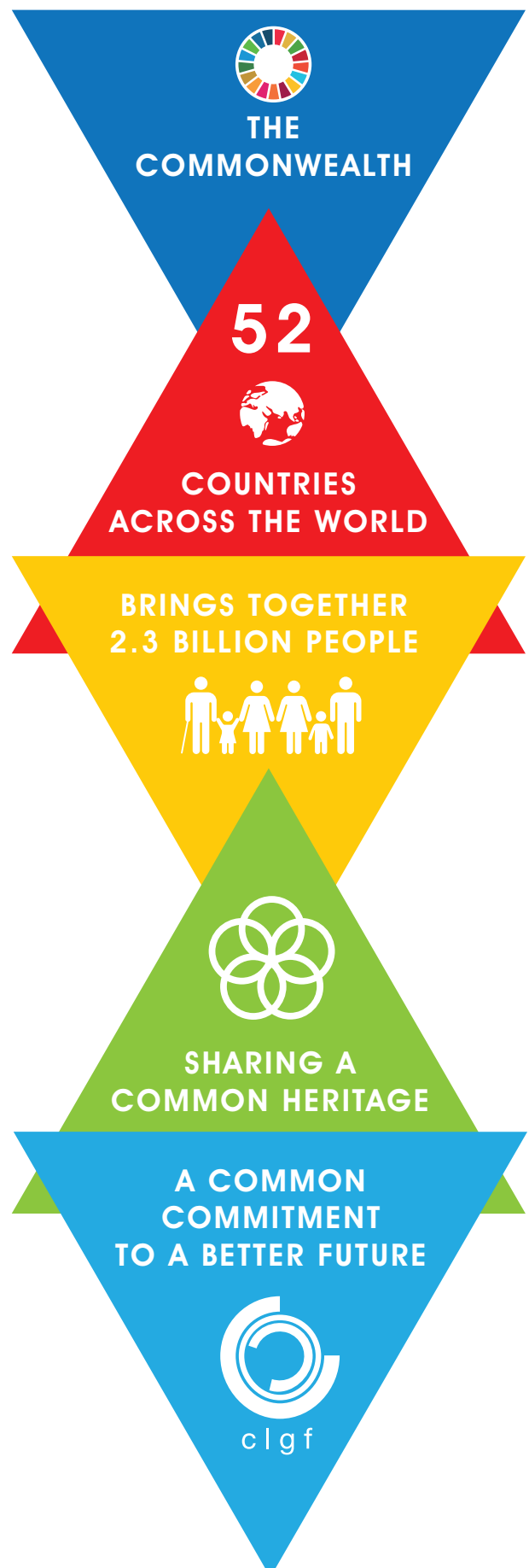
Setting the objectives and theme of the Conference

CLGF Secretary-General **Dr Greg Munro** welcomed participants and advised that Hon Minister Bonnici and CLGF Chairperson Mpho Moruakgomo had been appointed as chairs for the conference; and Hon Ndongo, Cllr Cordino and Cllr McPhee would act as vice-chairs.

He reflected on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), noting that many countries had, for a variety of reasons, failed to reach the original development targets. He noted that the 2017 conference was a natural progression from Gaborone 2015, where there was a call for local government to have a meaningful role in the 2030 Agenda. With the support of the Global Task Force, of which CLGF was a founder, the role of local government had been asserted, and he suggested that there must now be a single, integrated system where all spheres of government work to implement, monitor and report on the SDGs. The next big issue is how to resource this work, which will require money and skills. Microsoft has assessed the data available across the 17 SDGs to set baselines and monitor programmes, he said, but baseline data in many countries remains poor, making measuring the outcomes difficult. As populations and urbanisation grow, local government services are expanding, with local government having to deliver more with less. He explained that the conference would look at how global development is resourced and capacitated at the local level. Going beyond fiscal transfers from national to local government it will look at local government taxes; increasing locally raised revenue; capital funding; municipal bonds; green financing; and strategies for local government to engage with the private sector as an equal partner. He emphasised the importance of looking at the best way to work with communities to create social enterprises; work smarter; and nurture the non-financial partnerships required for development, with innovation, best practices and learning modalities. Conference delegates represent diverse countries he noted: some with centralised models with strong state and federal systems, and others with very well legislated, devolved and empowered local government systems. The four guiding principles should recognise that: the global agenda exists to benefit citizens and communities; local government is closest to those communities, therefore has an important in the delivery and monitoring of the SDGs. Nothing will happen unless local government is resourced and capacitated; and resourcing alone is not enough; working in partnership is vital. Collectively, he said, we can be fit for the future and being fit for the future is here, in this room; we just have to find it over the next few days.

The Research Colloquium

Representing the Research Advisory Group **Bhaskar Chakrabarti** said that although greater decentralisation of taxation leads to increasing electoral accountability of local politicians, inadequate fiscal decentralisation continues to be one of the key ways to curb local authority autonomy. He reported that the Colloquium had demonstrated that dependence on *own-source* revenue leads to greater scrutiny and higher accountability in public spending. He argued for incentivised generation of local revenues. He cited the background paper, which talked about the creation of a revenue generation eco-system rather than an ad hoc activity. The paper recommended developing administrative capacity to monitor local tax systems and praised local stakeholders for negotiating austerity by working creatively, through collaborative and collective leadership with an enabling but minimal estate.





Despite pressure on local governments to follow the private sector and develop outsourced service and partnership arrangements, the barriers in terms of cultural differences in priorities and lack of experience in PPPs remain formidable. He asked whether it was time to think afresh about PPPs by searching for new partnerships for financing initiatives; creating regulatory bodies dedicated to work in this area; or by moving towards more relationship-based agreements. A step wise process, starting with collaboration in minor activities leading to collaboration in larger programmes, would be more likely to succeed as experience of working together helps build trust and mutual understanding. With regard to enhancing inter-governmental relations, the colloquium argued for clearer definition of roles and responsibilities of actors based on the nature of the resources possessed by them. Some argued that a triple helix model with local government, academic institutions and the business sector working on an equal footing to address local issues might be of help. The use of tools like KPIs to understand citizens' needs and designing services accordingly was discussed in relation to service delivery; and mapping the needs of people and the assets of local government could be useful. There has been a departure from the earlier centralisation vs decentralisation debate to spatially blind versus spatially sensitive local governance, he said. The difficulty in responding to the increasing diversity of populations is one of the major justifications for decentralisation. Scholars have argued about some of the related issues in service delivery: from providing institutionalised mechanisms through which political minorities can voice their problems, to using multiple determinants to decide who qualifies as poor. Other innovations discussed included addressing issues of low participation, especially amongst women.

Eric Beaume, Deputy Head of the European Commission's (EC) Unit for Cities, Local Authorities, Digitalisation and Infrastructure said the conference theme was timely and coincided with a reorganisation of his Unit, the New Urban Agenda and the new Consensus on Development, adopted by the European Union (EU) a few months earlier. The Commission's aim is to 'raise its game' as an institution engaged with finance. He explained that the EC is taking a new approach to development to tackle the challenges of urban governance; inclusive and safe cities; green and resilient cities, linked to the Urban Agenda; and how it is going to use the funding available for local authorities (€190M over the next three years)

to focus on supporting urban areas. The new instrument for Africa, the External Investment Plan (EIP), to be launched at the Africa EU summit has a new scheme of guarantees for sustainable cities to ensure the Commission is making the right tools available: tackling challenges by working with other institutions and the private sector, and through supporting city-to-city twinning. The Commission will provide €2m as part of their continuing partnership with CLGF, to continue the work on localising the SDGs. He said that better tailored partnerships were needed with a broader range of stakeholders and partners to deal with integrated economic, social and environmental dimensions. He emphasised the EC's shift away from inputs to outcomes. Local authorities are where important developmental results will be seen and felt.

Richard Oppenheim, the UK Commonwealth Envoy praised the Commonwealth as a network and the role of CLGF in promoting and strengthening local government, helping to transform lives through better access to services and jobs in poor and disadvantaged communities. He noted that the conference theme highlights issues of importance to the Commonwealth and beyond. The Commonwealth has enormous potential. He indicated that the main challenges for the Commonwealth in the 21st century will be creating prosperity by boosting intra-commonwealth trade and investment; and maximising the *Commonwealth advantage* - the shared language and legal basis, which has made trade between Commonwealth partners up to 19% cheaper than with other countries; mitigating climate change impact to create a more sustainable Commonwealth; addressing new security challenges like cyber terrorism and online extremism; and protecting and promoting the values of democracy, fundamental freedoms and good governance to create a freer, fairer and more coherent Commonwealth. Local government is at the forefront of many of these priorities, he said, enabling local economic development, building better communities. He described how the Commonwealth Secretary-General is leading a vital reform programme. The Commonwealth needs an agile and responsive Secretariat, he said, focusing on efficiency and adding value; but reform is not just for the Secretariat. Human networks and people-to-people links define the Commonwealth and must be recognised and nurtured. With so many people under 30, he emphasised that it is important to deliver for young people. Their concerns will be at the heart of the Commonwealth summit which the UK will be hosting in April 2018.



The final speaker was CLGF Patron **Rt Hon Helen Clark**, former Prime Minister of New Zealand and UNDP Administrator, who addressed the conference as follows:

As Prime Minister of New Zealand, I was delighted to welcome the Conference to my home city, Auckland, in 2007. I have been pleased to see the important contribution of New Zealanders in the Forum before and since that time, including by Basil Morrison and Lawrence

Yule who both headed the New Zealand Local Government Association in recent years. I am delighted to see Mayor David Cull from Dunedin, New Zealand, attending this Conference as the new leader of Local Government New Zealand.

When I moved to New York in 2009 to lead the United Nations Development Programme, the former Secretary-General of this Forum, Carl Wright, was an early visitor: UNDP, like the Forum, is an active contributor to strengthening local government capacity, and so is its associated programme, the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF). That meant that our organisations were natural partners. Carl persuaded me that I should continue to come to the Forum's biennial conferences, and I've been pleased to be with you in Cardiff, Kampala, and Gaborone.

Fast forward to November 2017 – I am honoured to continue as your Patron, to continue to support the Forum, Secretary-General Greg Munro and his staff, and to participate in this conference.

At past conferences, I've spoken about the role of local government in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Forum recognised both the importance of the Goals, and their relevance to local government.

But now we are in a new era – with a bigger, bolder global agenda – and a universal one. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals are challenging for all countries – rich, middle income, and low income. It's all the more important therefore that an inclusive organisation like this Forum brings its members together to share experiences and ideas about how local government can help drive progress on sustainable development – indeed, as I will go on to say in my address, actually to help lead that progress.

I observed in my time at UNDP that there is a lot of awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals in developing countries. Perhaps that is because these goals are the successor agenda to the Millennium Development Goals - on which developing countries made such huge efforts to achieve progress.

But I do wonder how much awareness there is currently at local and central government level in developed countries that the SDGs are a universal and progressive agenda, and that aligning vision and action with them will be a powerful tool for taking communities towards sustainable development?

A number of developed country governments also have shown few signs of intending to embrace the SDGs as an agenda for them – adhering to a notion that development is for somebody else, somewhere else. Yet the 2030 Agenda's focus on poverty eradication, reducing inequalities significantly – including for gender

inequality, and producing, consuming, and living sustainably has messages and challenges for countries at all levels of development.

This session focuses on local government as a partner in achieving sustainable development. I would go even further and say that local government is an indispensable partner – without the full and active engagement of local government with the global goals, little will be achieved.

That's because it is at local government level that many of the critical decisions about sustainability so often lay, for example:

Let's look at the physical design of our urban communities – are they built with a light carbon footprint, or are they built to be big greenhouse gas polluters? Can they be retrofitted for sustainability?

Are our communities equipped for walking, cycling, and clean public transport – or do they favour motor vehicles?

Are the community's buildings - from the commercial and administrative to the home - energy efficient – or do they leak energy during both a hot summer and/or a cold winter?

How about the community's waste? Does it go unsorted to a dump where it will ooze methane and other toxins for generations? Or is the local government promoting a zero waste to landfill approach based on the Three Rs of reduce, reuse, and recycle?

Do polluters pay for the pollution they cause – whether in the cost of recycling and disposal of used goods – e-waste and appliances being particular problems - or for the cost of greenhouse gas and other pollution in general?

Then, let's not forget that sustainability also covers the economic and social spheres -

Are our local governments active in creating the environment for decent work and opportunity for their citizens?

Are they fostering social cohesion – with the objective of seeing no one left behind in their communities?

No one can deny the importance of federal and central governments in advancing sustainable development. But if a country is to have a good story to tell on reaching the SDGs, local government will have to be engaged as a full and willing partner and a leader in its own right.

Where national-level governments have little regard for sustainable development, it's especially important that sub-national government steps up. We see this now in the United States, where progressive states and cities are making it clear that they support the Paris Climate Agreement, and will do whatever they can to make their administrations part of the solution to climate change - and not part of the problem.

So, what will local government need in order to play its full role in the new global agenda? Let me offer a few thoughts:

1) I do think that empowerment of local government to act in accordance with the new global agenda and the wishes of its community is critical. In many countries, local government continues to be kept on a very short leash – able to do only a narrow range of things set out in statute.

This is not good for communities, and it's not good for countries as a whole. Excessive centralisation leads to a "one size fits all" approach, and can lead to bottlenecks in policy-making and implementation – when empowered and capable local government could just get on and get things done.

Fifteen years ago in New Zealand, my government took a new Local Government Act through Parliament. It provided local government with what we called a "general power of competence". The only competency we entirely reserved for central government was in the realm of the country's foreign affairs and defence arrangements. Those aside, local governments, through proper planning processes, were free to respond to the aspirations and needs of their communities.

That autonomy and power to act would greatly assist local governments to get on with Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. And the fast movers among them could be showcases for what others can do – and perhaps even inspire more action at the national level.

2) With this greater autonomy, it becomes even more important that local governments practise the inclusive and responsive governance called for in the SDGs. They can be models for collaboration between citizens and local authorities – ensuring that all are heard as the local government goes about its planning, policy-making, and implementation.

That means paying special attention to those whose voices have not been heard as much – the voices of women, of youth, and of marginalised communities generally. The local government which wants to pursue sustainable development must be open, receptive, and worthy of the people's trust.

3) Let me make that point another way: trust is built when there is zero tolerance of corruption. So often, citizens get services which should be their right only for a "small consideration" – or, in plain words, a bribe. If local governments aren't seen to uphold the rule of law, citizens will rightly be cynical of whatever local and central governments claim to be their priorities. That is not a good climate in which to pursue sustainable development, as the engagement of every citizen and household is required to make the changes that need to be made.

There is an SDG target, in Goal 16, which calls for "substantially reducing corruption and bribery in all their forms". This target should be given priority – achieving it is rather fundamental to getting good results on investment in infrastructure, the local economy, and public services – which in turn are rather critical for getting inclusive and sustainable development.

4) Achieving the SDGs requires a capacity for "whole of government" planning and co-ordination. My view is that local governments can lead on this – after all, planning for the community's basic needs and delivering on that plan are at the core of what local government does. Most developed countries have long since abandoned any serious national planning at the national level – but their local governments are expected to plan, and they do plan.

But if sustainable development is the objective, then old ways of fostering growth at any price to the health and wellbeing of the people and the environment must go. Let's say it again – the new agenda is looking for inclusive and sustainable growth. It should be growth which advances human well-being, does not widen inequalities, and does not trash the environment. Growing now and cleaning up later is not an option – that approach has got the world into the mess it's in today as it exceeds its planetary boundaries. That won't do – we have only the finite resources of one planet to live on – but collectively we live in a way which assumes that we have the resources of three, four, or more planets.

Capacity will need to be enhanced to do this kind of planning – and for developing countries, I hope that development partners will see this as a priority. Capacity will have to be beefed up in developed countries too. There's a role here for the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in supporting experience sharing on sustainable development, so that best practice can be studied, and adapted or adopted as appropriate.

To be fit for purpose, local administrations will need capable staff, good policy frameworks, and to be effective and efficient – continually modernizing, streamlining, and ensuring that form fits function are vital.

5) Resources. I've left this until last in my list because my view always is that money isn't everything, but of course it does help.

Quite a lot of time is being devoted to issues of resourcing and financing at this conference. It's estimated that the financing of the MDGS was 77 per cent domestic financing. I think it's unlikely that the domestic burden of financing the SDGs would be less – the goals are much more ambitious.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of 2015 was realistic in urging that all sources of finance need to be drawn on for development – public and private, and domestic and international. I would add to that developmental and environmental, as among the greatest sources of finance available to developing countries now are the Green Climate Fund and other climate change financing mechanisms.

Local government in most countries tends to have been hemmed in with traditional financing options – rates on properties, fee for services, local sales taxes in some jurisdictions, and central government grants. Opening up these options is a discussion to be had with central governments country by country.

I do think it's important to evaluate carefully what may look like easy options, but which may have significant hidden costs. Public-private partnerships for transport infrastructure, for example, I believe to be inherently risky – with a chance - in poorly designed contracts - of the local (or national) government paying out excessively.

On the other hand, productive investment locally is what every local government wants – and getting it should increase jobs and revenue. Local governments can make their luck in this respect – if the local environment is transparent and honest, and if the local policy and regulation is well designed. There is also the opportunity to steer investment towards sustainability – for example in local energy infrastructure.

In conclusion, local government is an indispensable partner in sustainable development – indispensable to central governments wanting good national results, and indispensable to citizens and local stakeholders.

Local governments need to nurture all those partnerships – because it can't succeed on its own either. It needs the good will and positive support of central government; it needs an active and engaged citizenry; and it needs quality private sector investment in its locality.

Its history of planning means that it has a capacity for co-ordinating policy – but now must exercise those skills in the service of sustainable development. That means ensuring the health and well-being of people, the local economy, and the environment simultaneously – which is business unusual for many. Yet worldwide there are good examples of what we can call triple win policies where all these objectives are advanced together.

I wish you all a very productive conference – and hope that you will return home with new ideas and new enthusiasm for the task of achieving sustainable development. It can't be achieved anywhere without local government being a driver and a leader of sustainability.



Plenary I: Fiscal decentralisation, local revenue generation, trade and investment, creating an enabling environment for cities, local governments and partners to deliver sustainable development.

Focusing on *subnational governments and the SDGs, key roles and challenges*, in a video message **Dr Paul Smoke** from NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, said that if the international community is to achieve an ambitious set of SDGs in a decade, countries will need to work in new ways and with new partners, and must use the available governance, fiscal and managerial mechanisms at their disposal more effectively. Local and regional governments (LRGs) will be crucial in ensuring the SDGs are translated into action that addresses the most pressing needs of their communities. They need to catalyse local expertise and

resources, securing support from domestic and external sources, to support this demanding agenda. He cautioned that, despite broad recognition of the subnational dimension of the SDGs and role of LRGs, the capacities and resources required have not been given official consideration to date. There is a strong rationale for LRGs to be key players in sustainable development, including an expectation about the services they will provide and the large gaps in public services and basic infrastructure critical for sustainable development. Needs are expected to surge as population growth and urbanisation advances; many SDGs include multiple components that must be addressed collectively in specific jurisdictions, such as SDG 11. Proximity to local residents means that LRGs have more potential and motivation than national actors to think holistically about integrated territorial development, as highlighted by CLGF and others, he said. Many of the SDGs centre on alleviating prominent and interconnected global conditions that pose significant challenges – climate change, financial instability, energy deficiencies, health crises and food insecurity, among others. All LRGs can help advance the SDGs, but urban areas are especially prominent. Cities drive economic growth and nearly half the global population is already urban. He signalled the need for Intergovernmental frameworks and policies that empower, finance, motivate and support LRGs and citizens.

Councillor Parks Tau, President of SALGA, South Africa, Chairperson of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and Board Member of CLGF said that limited finance and resourcing are possibly the most critical impediments to local government achieving their own objectives and the global development agenda. It is necessary to look at broader issues around local government financing to identify the critical challenges. In many countries there is a lack of decentralisation but even with it, there is little fiscal decentralisation. This, he said, prevents local authorities from raising revenue to fund solutions. National legislation and policy regulations around revenue generation are often not well defined or mature enough to allow local government to raise local finances. Raising revenue is further impeded by the capacity and maturity of service charging regimes in local authorities. In South Africa, local authorities raise revenue in several ways: rates and property tax; and charges for electricity, water, sanitation and solid waste management. Fuel charges are collected by national government, and some metropolitan areas are able to share in this. Local government still faces significant challenges to meet service delivery and development towards the SDGs. He cited Johannesburg which, despite generating much of its own revenue, and being the highest investor in national infrastructure at sub-national level, is still not able to meet financial challenges due to increasing urbanisation and service demands. This must be addressed for all municipalities, he said, with mechanisms to allow local authorities to raise revenue locally, through national policy regimes. Multilateral finance mechanisms, like those agreed in Addis Ababa, must be extended to local government in a manner that does not undermine the sovereignty of states, but recognises that local government should be able to operate within a global finance mechanism with a multilateral development bank fund. Local government should be able to access impact and philanthropic investment, he said, and continue to explore innovative solutions and instruments like pooled finance mechanisms. The greatest impediment for effective local development is the agility of governments to develop appropriate legislation to enable local authorities to take advantage of financing opportunities. With 2030 only 13 years away he said that we have a collective duty to work on this as a global community.

Nick Small, representing the LGA of England and Wales, Cllr Small said the biggest issue affecting the UK is Brexit and negotiating leaving the EU. Despite the recent momentum towards devolution (election of Metro Mayors, City Deals, Combined Authorities Economic Areas). Government is being pressed to deliver what has already been promised and complete anything pending. Work streams must be continued and the case made for local government to focus on delivering efficient and effective services in areas like skills and employment, trade and inward investment, and higher education. The LGA has proposed that local government be allowed to retain a proportion of the nationally collected taxes paid by residents, such as income tax or stamp duty, along with appropriate redistribution arrangements and control over discounts and reductions. He stressed the need for devolved power over local taxes, allowing local politicians to decide how money is spent; and freedom to collect current taxes to support different priorities or to introduce new taxes such as a tourism tax. He said the case for fiscal devolution needs to be made to change the behaviour of local councils, allowing councils to grow their own local economy and make a greater contribution to national growth; in turn, making a greater contribution to the SDGs and to Agenda 2030. The LGA is looking at powers, freedom and flexibility over policy areas relating to creating the conditions that facilitate growth such as skills and employment, particularly in cities. This includes more devolution to deliver better locally, and to ensure more resources, freedoms and flexibilities to deliver the housing and infrastructure needed in local areas; together with criminal justice, health and social care. He concluded by saying that a cost effective social policy agenda delivering better outcomes for children's services is needed.

Cameroon's 2004 decentralisation laws presented a new strategic vision in favour of local development, according to **Hon Jules Doret Ndongo**. The country's principles for good governance include: the belief that decentralisation is fundamental to promote development, democracy and good governance locally; the importance of transferring powers to local government for local economic development, social development, health, education, culture and sports development; and the need to ensure the finances needed by local and regional authorities to exercise their responsibilities are devolved through a system of tax transfers or revenue collection. Funding decentralisation in Cameroon relies on budget allocations and fiscal transfers. The Common Decentralisation Fund (CDF) was established to part-fund decentralisation and sees a percentage of state revenue set aside for local government. The amount is voted on every year by the Parliament. Decentralisation is also funded from an Equalisation Fund which comes from an additional council tax levied on goods and services at a rate of 10%, via national taxes such as VAT, income and corporate taxes. These are collected by the State Treasury and remitted quarterly to the Special Council Support Fund for Mutual Assistance (SCSF) for distribution to councils. A 2009 law defines and determines taxes and duties devolved to decentralised local entities, giving a push to decentralisation through access to local taxes and duties formerly reserved for the state, but now shared between the two. Insufficient finances for central government and local authorities remain a challenge. Key issues for local authorities include unemployment,

social integration, human capacity building and climate change. Cameroon's local fiscal system was designed as a strategic tool to encourage innovation among local authorities and create a vibrant local economy to generate economic and income activities. Councils must look to international funding opportunities for issues like climate change and the New Urban Agenda; but councils' expertise in project management is weak and increased training and capacity building for council staff and elected officials to do this is urgently needed.

Decentralisation on the small island of Malta, with 450,000 people, is difficult said **Hon Prof Edward Scicluna**. Fragmented into 70 local councils of a village nature, with average populations of six to seven thousand people, there is a limit as to how far revenue collection can be decentralised. Bylaws permit local councils to acquire a limited amount of revenue but most comes from central government. Malta has skills and know-how but, when it comes to the SDGs, councils need help from central government. For example, if an individual area wants to build on a beach, it may not understand how this will impact currents or fish. Forestation and road building are other areas where regional planning is important. A single regional or national contract might be more sensible where there are 68 separate contracts for domestic waste collection. Malta can contribute to the SDGs through its experience in empowering women, waste management and water resource management. With a lot of waste but little space for disposal, the options are to use existing natural spaces, export it; or incinerate. EU membership means adhering to a number of

“ National legislation and policy regulations around revenue generation are often not well defined or mature enough to allow local government to raise local finances. ”

standards; recycling schemes have improved the situation, including taxing plastics. Malta only produces 45% of the water it needs and is one of the biggest users of desalination in the Mediterranean. Water is scarce but local councils can help conserve resources through awareness raising and education. Nationally, Malta is the fastest growing economy in the EU and a net importer of labour from abroad. He cautioned that growth brings many problems, eg. traffic congestion, which is being addressed by improvements to public transport, promotion of cycle-use and

collective school transport systems, and increasing pedestrianised areas; pressure on infrastructure with a need for better roads and more housing - tourism and labour have caused housing shortages, increased rents and house prices; and lastly, waste. Malta is keen to face these challenges, which are part of the SDGs, within Malta and to help other countries. It is involved in many projects around the world, particularly in Sub-Sahara Africa. Migration is not an issue in itself, he said, it is about coping with development. Malta is looking to work more with development banks, not just the World Bank, but the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (ERBD) and the European Investment Bank (EIB); and is setting up its own development bank to go where commercial banks cannot go. New regulations as a result of the financial crisis are enormous; anti money-laundering restrictions and guidelines are causing banks to lend less and less, making room for capital markets and the stock exchange. Malta is investing a lot in the stock exchange where small enterprises can borrow small sums. A platform for such firms has been created to allow people to participate in both the risks and high returns.

Working groups A

Working Group 1 - Enabling local government to meet Agenda 2030: Inter-governmental Cooperation and Fiscal Decentralisation

Facilitator: **Lea Flaspoebler**, DeLoG.

Presenters: **Mayor Dave Cull**, Local Government New Zealand; **Angelo Baglio**, DG DevCo, European Commission; **Kanyiso Walaza** and **Lerato Thwane**, Department Cooperative Governance

Panel recommendations: better information on local government/ citizen role in achieving SDGs; sub-national SDG implementation plans; more fiscal decentralisation/ financial support for local government; diverse and innovative funding mechanisms to improve development and service delivery; strengthened structures to enhance local development and engagement with central government; global and regional tools to measure country performance on SDG implementation to inform tailored support; strengthened global LGAs to mainstream local government's voice in government policies and programmes.

Working group 2 - Transparency and accountability as tools to empower local governments

Facilitator: **Diana López Caramazana**, UNHabitat.

Presenters: **HE Pindi Hazara Chana**, Permanent representative of Tanzania to the UN; **George Mutabaazi**, President, Uganda Local Government Association, and **Mayor Andrew Mua**, Honiara City Council, Solomon Islands.

Panel recommendations: increase trust in capacity of public institutions to deliver urban governance; local government to establish policies to prevent corruption and mismanagement; give local governments technical mechanisms to improve capacity, including participatory tools to guarantee ownership and improve trust between government, the city stakeholders and the citizens; create an open, competitive and fair environment for provision of efficient and effective services; promote local government's role as effective agents in the fight against corruption.

Working group 3 – Professionalising local government

Facilitator: **Wouter Boesman**, Platforma.

Presenters: **Hon Kobebe Taitai**, Minister of Local Government, Kiribati; **Lauren Oakey**, CEO, Local Government Professionals and **Bhaskar Chakrabarti**, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, India.

Panel recommendations: local government need strong leadership; training to contribute to transformational change and relate to devolution and decentralisation; need to build capabilities of elected members; training to be based on bottom-up needs assessment; focus on inclusion of women, youth and indigenous peoples; all training to have follow-up and be contextualised; core of all training to be communication and professional conduct; peer-to-peer and vocational learning to complement more formal trajectories.

Working Group 4 - Cities and Trade: the role of local government in promoting trade and investment

Facilitator: **Russell Reefer**, LGA England and Wales, UK.

Presenters: **Xolile George**, CEO, SALGA, South Africa; **Gordon Bradbery**, Mayor of Wollongong, Australia; **Dr Saeed Ahmed**, Assistant Professor, NED University, Karachi, Pakistan.

Panel recommendations: create enabling environment with constitutional, policy and legislative frameworks to allow cities to be catalysts for economic development; develop systems to enable all tiers/spheres of government to coordinate economic development; good government macro-economic policies needed, permissive to trade and investment at city level; promote innovative and resilient culture; build on cities' strengths and uniqueness; promote stakeholder/ neighbourhood-led development; introduce red tape reduction initiatives; better use of data in planning, monitoring and evaluation; promote cooperation.

Working Group 5 – Resourcing local development in small states

Facilitator: **Mayor Darrell Bradley**, Belize City.

Presenters: **San Kiow Foon Siong**, CEO, Municipal Council of Beau Bassin Rose Hill, Mauritius; **Tauia Taoaba**, Chairperson KILGA, Kiribati.

Panel recommendations: more transparency in cash transactions to local government to allow for better planning and budgeting; more contributions to income from local sources, not just cash transfers; special attention needed on ability of small states to rebound from natural disasters and keep on track with the SDGs; special focus and intervention strategies to ensure stronger voice for small states in global processes to utilise their unique experience; more discussion and engagement on SDGs at local level.

Working Group 6 - Innovative partnerships for financing delivery

Facilitator: **Charles Chunga**, Secretary General, MALGA, Malawi.

Presenters: **Philippe Camille Akoa**, Support Fund for Mutual Assistance for Councils, Cameroon; **Anthony Roberts**, Chairperson, TTALGA, Trinidad and Tobago; and **Patricia Chase-Green**, Deputy Mayor, Georgetown, Guyana.

Panel recommendations: promote creative and innovative ways to raise resources to meet SDGs; councils to strengthen partnerships by finding ways of cutting costs, reducing inefficiencies and improving productivity; eliminate corruption to win confidence of citizens and private sector for PPPs; use LED tools as an inclusive approach at local level; empower councillors to strengthen revenue generation through legislation; levy road fraction tax on motor vehicles; use partnerships with the community and private sector, i.e. initiatives like getting citizens to 'adopt their streets'; sister-city partnerships.

Plenary 2: Strong local economies as a basis for effective local development.

Mr Chucheka Mhlongo, Head of Infrastructure Financing at the Development Bank of Southern Africa gave the opening presentation for the session on strengthening local economies. He emphasised the fact that local governments' own-source revenue and transfers from the centre will not be enough on their own to meet the infrastructure gap faced by the sector. He explained that if local governments have clear plans in place and projects which are ready to be financed, there are already ways in which it is possible to offer off-balance-sheet finance, credit lines and direct financing initiatives which could augment resources available at the local level. Pooled financing is also an option, but it is important to ensure that local governments are able to prove their creditworthiness before they can access such funds. Partnership with the private sector will play an increasingly important role in supporting infrastructure development. They are well placed to pass on infrastructure financing available to local government. In this regard local governments need to be ready to build meaningful partnerships to enable them to be creative in the way in which they finance local development.

William Cobbett, Director of Cities Alliance, reminded delegates that it will primarily (77%) be domestic finance (not ODA etc) that will enable the achievement of the SDGs. The role of secondary or intermediate cities will be key to this. It is important to move beyond the traditional urban/rural dichotomy and look at the functional realities of how different territorial areas inter-relate and the governance and development needed to enable inclusive development. National policies that support all cities and take into account the realities and budgets available locally will be important in enabling more equitable development at the city level. Lack of human capacity in cities will inevitably impact significantly on their ability to achieve the SDGs. He suggested that a mechanism to make local government the preferred career choice is urgently needed, with specific training and capacity building initiatives targeted at staff in the sector. In strengthening local economies it is important not to forget the significance and scale of the informal sector. In Ghana, for example, 70% of the economy is informal. Rather than seeing it as a problem, cities need to look at practical ways to engage, support and facilitate the informal economy.

Darrell Bradley, Mayor of Belize City emphasised that communities have power. He explained that his council had issued a municipal bond and put in place the necessary resources to pay the bond back. Efficient collection of taxes and charges was key, as well as reducing the number of non-payers for services the council was providing; and linking tax payments to services to promote greater accountability and promote the community's trust in the municipal government's effectiveness. Disclosure of information, and regular engagement with residents, as well as encouraging their active participation in planning, all helped to create goodwill. By encouraging and being open with the community the council was able to use the bond money to finance projects that people wanted. He indicated the importance of local economic development in the city. Having a strategy in place helps the council to enable job creation and he sees economic development as a thread running through all the services that the council provides and key to social mobility.

Mayor Bradley said that there had been a paradigm shift in the sector, with local government's role developing from being primarily about tax collection and basic service delivery, to enabling and facilitating local development. In terms of local economic development he emphasised the importance of research and understanding the local economy, and highlighted the value of building on synergies to build strategic partnerships for a more collaborative and inclusive approach.

Hon Faiszer Mustapha, Minister of Provincial Councils and Local Government, Sri Lanka explained that there are three levels of government in Sri Lanka. He said that the will is there, but there are no formal mechanisms for councils to borrow independently or to enter into PPPs. In fact, to date, there have been no successful PPPs in Sri Lanka involving local government. To enable local governments to borrow, provisions need to be put in place from the centre, notably constitutional recognition of local government as a tier of government. But it is important for the Ministry to engage with local bodies and to give teeth to the functions that they have. A strong local economy is an important basis for effective local government that is independent of, but not detached from the Province. He also explained that they are introducing a 25% quota to encourage more women into local government. There is a paradigm shift underway in the country, which is seeing an increase in autonomy at the local government level and steps being taken to ensure more accountability including through the use of e-systems. Encouraging good local politicians with a commitment to promoting economic growth is an important step in building stronger public private partnership at the community level in Sri Lanka.

Governments around the world are increasingly acknowledging the need for strong economies as a basis for effective and sustainable local development according to Zambia's Minister, **Hon Vincent Mwale**.

Zambia has central and local government: five city councils, 15 municipal councils and 89 town councils. Over dependence on mining to sustain the economy and enhance economic development at the local level is being addressed through effective citizen participation in the development process of the country. The Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) was created in tandem with the values and principles outlined in the National Planning and Budgeting Policy. Legislation must be amended to allow Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) he said, and more trust in ICT and Knowledge Management is needed to empower local governments to deliver LED in communities. National development plans must be aligned to the decentralisation agenda. He explained that financial resources are provided through: the Local Government Equalisation Fund; the Constituency Development Fund; grants in lieu of rates; and empowering local authorities to impose local taxes to generate revenue. Key investments and the number of major companies have increased. Long term leases have empowered small, local traders to establish shops, creating around 300 new jobs directly and 600 indirectly. With the updating of revenue sources, council revenue has increased and councils are saving money as the cost of solid waste collection is being borne by the generators. Local government capacity building must be prioritised working with local and international stakeholders. LED is an important entry point for localising the SDGs and enhancing PPPs. Institutional Knowledge Management and Information Communication and Technology (ICT) must be prioritised and funded.

Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network



CLGF chose the conference at which to launch a new network for Commonwealth Women in Local Government. With the aim of supporting more women to get involved in local government as politicians and practitioners, and to increase the influence of women in the decisions made about local priorities, male and female delegates gathered at the beautiful Verdala Palace, the summer residence of the President of Malta, HE Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, who hosted the event. Presided over by CLGF's Chair person, Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo, the first speaker was the President via video link. This was followed by speeches from Rt Hon Helen Clark, New Zealand's first elected women Prime Minister and Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

In a video address, the President expressed her pleasure in sharing a few introductory remarks about the launch of the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network.

First of all, let me take this opportunity to welcome all the international delegates attending for this event, to our Maltese Islands. I hope that you shall find some time to explore the beauty of our islands and our Mediterranean Culture.

Your presence in Verdala Palace, united from all over the Commonwealth of nations, sends a powerful message about our mutual commitment to prioritise and to promote processes of gender equality, equity and inclusion.

I believe that it is essential for us to not only continue emphasising the importance of women's participation, but to take action, to ensure that women's participation is effectively engaged across all positions of leadership.

Where equality is lacking, there is a democratic deficit. Hence, it is of utmost importance that equality, equity, and inclusion prevail in democratic processes of governance without our communities and our societies.

Also, as a Commonwealth of Nations, we are bound by the Commonwealth Charter, which emphasises the importance of gender equality as a critical precondition for effective and sustainable development.

The role of women's leadership must take place as part of a collaborative and special effort whereby all stakeholders partake in such efforts to develop our institutions and societies.

To ensure effective and genuine democratic participation, the voices, experiences, and aspirations of women, alongside men, must be heard at all levels of governance and leadership.

Indicators from the World Economic Forum present us with a stark reality. They show us that we have no more time to lose, as it shall take 170 years to achieve meaningful gender parity on a global scale, if we keep our present pace of development.

It is clear that in order to pursue the goals of gender equity and equality, without our governmental institutions we must first find effective strategies to reform our systems, both nationally and across the Commonwealth.

We must challenge the status quo which, unfortunately, still maintains the marginalisation of too many women and girls.

I believe that we must be bold and take practical and timely measures to reform these systems.

I truly believe that we cannot be complacent.

We must do more to ensure that active and equitable participation of women in local governments and beyond.

We must acknowledge that gender parity is a vital contributor to the success of all of our institutions and across our communities and societies.

Gender parity is not only a point of moral necessity, but also it makes good social, economic and political sense.

In the areas of economic development, a recent Gallup study of more than 800 participating business units from the retail and hospitality industries noted that gender diverse business units have scored better financial outcomes than those that are dominated by one gender.

Research also suggests that gender diverse teams perform better than single gender teams because of the different perspectives and insights that collaborative teams, which include people of all genders, can bring.

Therefore, gender diversity will not only help our societies, but also our economic sectors. Women must be encouraged to share their talents and expertise, as valued collaborators, with a unique contribution to make across all facets of life.

In the political sector I can say that, from my own experience, there is an urgent need for us to promote more inclusive spaces for women, to feel welcomed and encouraged, to make their necessary contributions within the political life of our communities and societies.

In order to make these goals a reality, I believe that we must, first and foremost, find ways of making gender equality an issue which is understood and embraced by everybody.

This is why the celebration of gender diversity is a specific goal of the United Nation's Agenda 2030 with its seventeen sustainable Development goals.

Goal Number 5 commits all of our nations to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls by 2030.

This goal can only be achieved if, and when, we call for the deep rooted reform of our social, economic and political institutions so that they reflect the depth of our aspirations for equality equity and inclusion.

On concluding, let me reiterate that the role of women's leadership is essential in guiding and transforming our societies.

I am certain that women's leadership will bring about the necessary participation of all the members of our communities, thereby resulting in stronger, more resilient, and more inclusive societies.

We are all called to be the builders of sustainable and inclusive peace, particularly at this uncertain time in the history of our world.

The full force of the Commonwealth Charter and the United Nations' Agenda 2030 can only become a reality when we address the fundamental inequality that still keeps too any women and girls from reaching the fullness of their aspirations.

Finally, let me augur you all a successful conference and let me urge the women present today to come together as part of a powerful network.

You can be activists for positive change, sharing good practices and experiences, while also supporting one another, to ensure that women's voices are heard more prominently.

Let us do all that we can to make sure that the empowerment of women and girls, within our communities and societies, is a top priority on the agenda of all nations within the Commonwealth. Thank you for your attention.

Thursday 23 November

09.00 **Plenary 3: Local governments working smarter to be more efficient and effective**

Enabling local government to work smarter, using new technologies to improve organisational managements and professionalise services, build skills and capacity, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and better understand and respond to the needs of local communities.

- Keynote: **David Burrows**, Managing Director – International Organisations and Worldwide Public Sector and Industries, Microsoft
Digital transformation for delivering the Sustainable Development Goals
- **Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi**, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments Africa (UCLGA)
- **HE Joash Mwaagi**, Deputy Governor, Kisii County Government, Kenya
- Representative from Malaysia
- **Cllr Buumba Malambo**, Kafue District, Zambia
- **Mayor David O'Loughlin**, President, Australian Local Government Association

Q + A

11.00 Refreshment break

11.30 **Working groups B**

Six parallel sessions offering in-depth discussions on particular aspects of the theme.

- Leveraging finance in secondary cities and local governments
- Localising international funds for development: Green/climate finance for local investment
- Digital Cities and local government – opportunities for improving efficiencies and accessibility

- Inclusive decision making: ensuring everyone has a voice in resourcing local government
- Innovative financing models for local development
- Ensuring equitable economic growth

13.15 Lunch

14.30 **Plenary 4: Debate – Innovations in financing to support sustainable development**

Innovations in financing and supporting local development, through partnerships with civil society, other spheres of government and access to national/global development funds, the private sector and social enterprise

Participants:

- **Dr Ravi Kanth**, Chairman and Managing Director, Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd, India
- **Lord Mountevans**, Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC) and former Lord Mayor of London
- **David Jackson**, Director, Local Development Finance Practice, UNCDF
- **Cllr Innocent Uwimana**, President, Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities
- **Hon Des van Rooyen**, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, (COGTA), South Africa

16.45 Close of session

19.00 Cultural evening/Gala dinner hosted by the Government of Malta at La Valette Hall, Mediterranean Conference Centre

Plenary 3: Local governments working smarter to be more efficient and effective

Decentralised functions, reduced fiscal transfers and increasing demand for services require new ways of thinking, new operating models and smarter ways of looking at the capacity needed to fulfil SDG commitments, according to Microsoft's **David Burrows**. Government is about making services more accessible, efficient and transparent to the people it serves. Challenges include resource shortages, competition between regions, states and cities; demographic shifts; legislation, policy and fiscal realities. Greater use of ICT for services can assist governments with social engagement, lower costs, open up access to cloud computing, data and analytics; but governments also need to make a shift to the data culture. Devices we have are changing how we live, work and play; and with cloud connectivity are making us more mobile and able to think about how we can deliver new innovative services. Analytics has become more important with an increase in connected devices, allowing us to obtain good insights from all data. Local government needs to do more for less, build new efficiencies, reach out to communities and target services. ICT can help: improving the infrastructure which underpins our local economy and support for services to citizens and businesses; providing new citizen engagement mechanisms to get better feedback, crowd source data and reach out to marginalised and hard to reach community members. ICT driven innovation is important because doing *more with less* is being followed by doing *new with less*. We need to think differently, using IT as a catalyst, he added. Governments need to be more responsive and ask how they can invite citizens to participate: a shift from *broadcast to receive*. The SDGs have shown the importance of listening to citizens and a new data culture is needed around how we think about the 17 goals and 169 indicators, together with an agreement on data standards. Through e-health care and digital solutions an estimated 1.6 billion people will gain access to affordable medicine; 450 million will have access to education; and there will be significant cuts in carbon emissions. SDG 11 is about cities but many other goals and targets also relate to cities and we need to look at how this work connects. Technology is a catalyst for supporting and driving economic growth to make us more competitive and attractive. Five points for successful use of ICT as a tool for development revealed at the recent Microsoft workshop pilots in Australia included: the need to create a safe environment for experimentation; engage with the community; partner with key actors to develop a strategy; recognise the importance of space and place; and the importance of leadership to ensure a long-term vision and a supportive culture.

Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, highlighted the importance of local government capacity building. When mayors discuss decentralisation, many talk about fiscal decentralisation and the financial resources they want from national government or others, he said. Few understand that the main conduit for change is human capital. In Africa, local administration jobs need to be the first option for young people going into the labour market, which is far from the case at the

moment with little interest by young people in these roles. He talked about having a mechanism that aims to professionalise local administration and seeks to create an Academy for local government in Africa. Although the continent has lots of training institutes, he said, there are no norms or standards for training in local government and it is important for people to understand that building a road is not like building a street; being a good accountant in the private sector does not mean you can be a good accountant in local government. All training must be adapted to fit the context of local government. Lack of financial capacity can be compensated by the human capital that can be found in the community. Local government needs to be professionalised in order to help achieve more inclusive local government. He said a Masters qualification is needed for city managers, technical officers should receive longer term training and this should be reinforced by short-term, three-month courses, ideally focusing on key challenges like climate change, participatory budgeting, health etc. The Academy should work with local institutions to deliver capacity building. Local administrations must be competent to fit into the new era of development and meet the demands of the SDGs and climate change. He said that the academy should also launch an observatory for local jobs in local administration; and provide a bench mark

“ Decentralised functions, reduced fiscal transfers and increasing demand for services require new ways of thinking, new operating models and smarter ways of looking at the capacity needed to fulfil SDG commitments ”

for performance to share with local government. He called on all mayors and local officials in Malta to back this initiative. Unless there is human resource capacity at the local level, local government will not be able to deliver.

Deputy Governor of Kisii County **HE Joash Mwangi** indicated he was representing the Council of Governors, a body established following the enactment of Kenya's new Constitution in 2010. He explained that the constitution had ushered in a new system of government with two tiers, national and county. Both

levels, he said, are distinct and interdependent and work on the basis of consultation and cooperation. The main goal of devolving government systems in Kenya was to take services closer to the people. Devolving functions, resources and decision-making has been done to increase inclusivity. He said that central government has a critical role in service provision and bringing local development closer to the people, but the counties also have an important role. The Constitution outlines the apportionment of responsibility for services: agriculture falls within local government but foreign affairs and international trade remain with national government. Functions like roads, water and infrastructure are shared. Like other governments there is pressure from citizens to see delivery in return for their taxes and for government to be accountable. Citizens are demanding transparency of government actions and the impact of implementation. He said that cities are committed to achieving sustainable development in terms of the government's five year integration and development plans. In Kenya, institutionalising a performance management framework (PMF) is seen as the only way to demonstrate efficiency improvements by local government/sub national government. PMF is being used to demonstrate the benefits to citizens and had helped to eliminate a silo approach. He said that it was also important to set performance targets for staff, setting out the expectations of employers and employees with agreed targets and expectations.



Cllr Buumba Malambo from Zambia explained how she was using social media to transform the ward she represents. By posting photos and messages about her community in Kafue District on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and email, she was able to highlight some of the improvements needed. Pictures of children walking to school barefoot resulted in a thousand pairs of shoes being sent to Kafue, dramatically improving the situation. A picture of four girls highlighting their slim prospect of getting an education was spotted by someone in the USA who offered to sponsor their schooling. Over 600 girls now take part in this programme, with 65% of the sponsors from Zambia. Posting a picture of children standing in the rain encouraged donations of building materials to create shelters for students and raising awareness of attacks on girls walking to school through dense countryside resulted in 150 bicycles being donated, making the journey much safer. The importance of education in changing lives had been instilled in Buumba by her teacher parents, but access to education is difficult without books, she said. Making this point on line, a publisher saw the posting and Kafue received 34 large boxes of books. Low numeracy and literacy levels amongst the women in the community prompted Buumba to take to social media and quickly resulted in donations of desks, books, pencils. More than 450 women are now improving their skills at night classes and Buumba is seeing real change as these women are able to contribute more in their families and communities with new-found skills. As a young leader herself, Buumba told delegates she understands that local government can appear boring and unappealing to young people, but she continues to encourage them to volunteer in their communities and consider standing for election. Social media has enabled Buumba to connect her ward to the rest of the world.

Mayor David O'Loughlin, President of the Australian Local Government Association, explained how councils in Australia are *working smarter* and delivering more for local communities. The three main components to this are: understanding and responding to the needs of the local community; building skills and capacity in communities; and harnessing new technology to improve efficiency and service delivery. Examples of how local government in Australia is using technology include: sensor street lighting, which dims when no-one is around, comes back on when people

are there and produces pulse lighting in response to screams to alert people; smart parking, identifying vacant spaces; water leak technology, indicating water loss and location of leaks; pedestrian counter devices, showing numbers and movement of people; traffic monitors, allowing adjustments according to the flow of traffic.

Technology is improving daily lives, for example, helping to reduce certain waste. In the longer-term, he said, it will enable councils to plan more intelligently for the future by using the latest information on trends and habits. He emphasised that the core purpose for using technology is to serve people and communities better. Investing in systems can reduce costs, improve service delivery and help to engage with citizens but local people must be consulted and involved in identifying problems and finding solutions. With good planning technology can address local needs and create better communities. Data collection and how we use it is important and local government must be able to demonstrate how data usage is bringing about improvements - especially to the business community; and the benefits of fostering a digital economy. He cautioned, however; that new technology is not without its risks, cost for one. He described how a partnership with the Federal Government is helping councils in Australia to trial various projects: renewable energy and rain water storage; electric vehicle shared ownership; park irrigation, monitoring systems; real time data on the thermal performance of newly built houses to see if products are as energy efficient as they claim; and a trial of driverless electric shuttle services to reduce congestion. Partnerships he emphasised are a very good way to share the risks, costs and gains.



Working groups B

Working group 7 – Leveraging finance in secondary cities and local governments

Facilitator: David Jackson, Director, Local Government Finance, UNCDF.

Presenters: Hon Maya Moiwo Kaikai, Minister of local government and rural development, Sierra Leone; Innocent Uwimana, President, RALGA, Rwanda; Derek McCallan, CEO, NILGA, UK.

Panel recommendations: promote role of secondary cities in transforming country's economy; empower local governments to raise funds; find new funding sources to implement development; local and central government must work together as allies in development; use political judgement to decide which mechanisms to use, depending on the different returns.

Working group 8 – Localising international funds for development: green/climate finance for local investment

Facilitator: Hon Slumber Tsogwane, Ministry of Local Government, Botswana.

Presenters: TBC, Global Fund for Cities Development; Carwyn Holland, Mayor of Linden, Chairperson, Guyana Association of Mayors; Hemanthi Goonasekera, Secretary-General, FSLGA, Sri Lanka.

Panel recommendations: increase finances to tackle widespread and complex areas affected by climate change adaptation and mitigation; galvanise all sections of society into action and partnership working; foster a sense of community responsibility to provide support; work with ministries to lever national capacity for local delivery; local government to take the lead in adaptation efforts; address issues around mistrust of local government and perceptions of role; identify more simple, low or no-cost actions for implementation to increase resilience in daily activities.

Working group 9 – Digital cities and local government: opportunities for improving efficiencies and accessibility

Facilitator: David Burrows, Managing Director, Worldwide Public Sector, Microsoft.

Presenters: Andrew Hawkins, Microsoft; Dennis Hovendon, Vice President, Local Government Professionals; CEO, City of Frankston, Victoria, Australia; Angeline Hongo, Ministry of Planning and Decentralisation, Kenya; representative, Malta.

Panel recommendations: ensure political stability; transparent systems, clear enforcement and consistent oversight; understand different priorities, cultures, and expectations of each partnership; use private sector expertise and increase public clarity; invest in ICT education, skills and capacity building; build effective central/local government partnerships; use appropriate ICT option for each situation to help improve communities and engage with marginalised citizens; use data to better target investments, improve services and meet community needs; promote knowledge and experience exchange between cities and local government, drawing on existing mechanisms like CLGF's Innovation Hub.

Working group 10 - Inclusive decision making: ensure everyone has a voice in resourcing local government

Facilitator: Marlou Hermsen, Chief Operating Officer, World Merit

Presenters: J S Saharia, Commissioner, Maharashtra Election Commission; Dr Helena Dalli MP, Minister, European Affairs and Equality, Malta; McMahan Campbell, former councillor, Freeport city council, Bahamas; Leo Bhoroma, CLGF Programme Manager.

Panel recommendations: increase partnership working to foster support; introduce quotas; focus on educating girls; ensure funds to finance citizen participation; develop more grassroots projects; increase public awareness and education about diversity and inclusiveness; use role models for women, young people, disabled and LGBT community; create access and inclusion officers roles; offer safe spaces for women; ensure effective communication and build in opportunities for consultation in all local planning and development; remove age limits for councillors.

Working group 11 – Innovative financing models for local development

Facilitator: Dr Eris Schoburgh, University of the West Indies, Jamaica.

Presenters: Carlos de Freitas, Co-Director/Director of Programs, FMDV; Global Fund for Cities Development; Mayor Tariq Abul Ala, MAB, Bangladesh; Gideon Mhlongo, CEO, Mbabane, Swaziland.

Panel recommendations: Create Infrastructure investments to meet demands of population growth and increasing industrialisation; renew outdated systems and provide new infrastructure to support new economic sectors; provide information and examples of PPPs, special purpose vehicles, municipal bonds, social enterprise partnerships, joint ventures, development banks/international cooperation and explore the challenges and opportunities they present to local governments of different sizes; consider role of different stakeholders in various initiatives.

Working group 12 - Ensuring equitable economic growth

Facilitator: Arif Zaman, Executive Director, Commonwealth Business Women's Network.

Presenters: Representative, Uganda Ministry of Local Government and LGA; Lungile Dlamini, CEO, Manzini, Swaziland; Christopher Kang'ombe, President, Local Government Association, Zambia.

Panel recommendations: Ensure LED strategies cater for formal/informal business sector; improve access to finance, provide seed funding for youth and women; ensure marginalised in community can access council services; map and profile local LED; develop local procurement policies; establish National Lead Agency for LED implementation; provide government incentives to attract local investment; apply gender sensitive planning/budgeting to increase involvement and access; invest in targeted education/skills programmes for girls and women; abolish discriminatory policies/laws; develop policies that allow women to own/co-own land; make local governments aware of current policies and legal framework.

Plenary 4: Innovations in financing to support sustainable development.

Dr Ravi Kanth, Chairman and Managing Director of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation in India, noted that the world's population has increased from 1 billion in 1805 to 7.2 billion in 2014 and urbanisation will reach 67% by 2050, resulting in a massive increase in demand for housing and infrastructure. In India he indicated that local government plays a key role in achieving the SDGs, but finding the finance to meet the projected \$14 billion dollars required to achieve the SDGs is a major challenge and tax and non-tax revenues must be deployed. Using land as a resource and unlocking land values is key, as is access to market based funds and more use of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). He shared examples of successful cases in India such as the joint sector company established in Tirupur to implement a water supply project; and innovative PPP financing with local government that HUDCO is supporting to deliver housing and sewerage in a number of states.

Lord Moutevans from the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC) noted the role of cities in supporting local economic development and that they are often centres of innovation and inclusive growth. He explained that cities and local authorities are more nimble and closer to market capacity to raise sub-sovereign bond finance, but many need further support to be able to access those resources. He explained that, in London, an ecosystem of city development partners - *London Partners* - has been established in this regard.

David Jackson, Director Local Development Finance Practice, UNCDF, noted that issues around public infrastructure are often seen to be dry and that more focus should be given to the importance of urbanisation. He outlined some of the major drivers for investment at the local level, namely: 1. Climate Change - with a potential temperature increase of 2-3 degrees by the end of the century, governments need to be ready with a regulatory environment for climate adaptation and, although local government plays a key role in adaptation, most climate finance is not currently accessible to local government; 2. Migration - which is often a result of climate change and can provide both opportunities for growth but also conflict; 3. The SDGs - universal and promote synergies between efforts towards city-level resilience; and 4. Globalisation - which has resulted in access to capital finance, although there is no guarantee that this growth will continue. This is why cities and local governments must also focus on collecting own-source revenue and exploring more imaginative ways of financing development. Models that include land value capture and PPPs provide opportunity, but it is important that key principles such as accountability are built into their design. Concessional finance and capital funds can provide access to cheaper finance; and long-term investment in, for example, pension funds could also offer low-risk funding. The diaspora and their remittances are huge flows of money and capturing these in bonds and city bonds back home could potentially open up investment streams for cities. He emphasised the importance of empowering cities to experiment and innovate.

Clr Innocent Uwimana, President of the Rwanda Local Government Association (RALGA), emphasised the importance of community work and indicated that Rwanda had built 3000 schools using this approach. Local governments in Rwanda are borrowing to invest in infrastructure, but some have struggled to service debts and it is important for governments to ensure that regulations are

in place to guarantee some control. In Rwanda, a PPP law has been passed encouraging the use of a range of models at local level from management control to build, operate transfer; and to lease, operate and develop existing infrastructure. The goal is for developments in financing and good governance to underpin the achievement of Rwanda's Vision 2020 and political commitment is central to that.

Carlos de Freitas, Co-Director/Director of Programs, FMDV, Global Fund for Cities Development, explained that the private sector invested \$71.5bn in infrastructure in 2016. He suggested that since localisation is the new globalisation, there is an increasing appetite for investment in cities and municipalities; however, they need to understand more about the capital market, and banks need to be confident that their assets will be protected. Developed countries are already managing debt, but he suggested that we need institutions and professional teams, eg. municipal development funds, pooled financing options and financing designed for small cities. Cities also need to sub-contract in expertise to ensure they have done their research properly when putting together a proposal; to feel comfortable experimenting with different financial adaptation models; and to establish a relationship between financing and local economic development to build on their capabilities. PPPs offer sustainability, but the majority are not currently successful and innovations are still needed. He noted that levels of crowd funding in 2016 increased to \$34bn offering important lending opportunities, particularly for small cities.

Hon Des van Rooyen, Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, South Africa noted that, in theory, it is clear that local government in most countries will bear the greatest responsibility in achieving the SDGs and integrated funding is essential to ensure that they can deliver. In South Africa local government has access to local taxation; a share of the national fiscus; they can charge for services; and also receive inter-governmental transfers. This needs to continue to be augmented with greater use of their borrowing powers, corporate social investment and development of the bond market. Johannesburg and Cape Town have both issued bonds, with Cape Town issuing the first Green Bond in 2017. He noted, however, that PPPs still present challenges for cities in South Africa and it is important for cities to continue to innovate. Other resourcing models being developed include pool financing; tax investment financing (future gains in taxing); investment in pension funds and investment in renewable energy.

Cultural evening / Gala dinner

Delegates came together at the historical La Valette Hall for the cultural evening. Councillor Philip McPhee, who stood down as Vice Chair of CLGF during the meeting after a number of years gave some reflections about his time in this position.

Friday 24 November

09.00	<p>Plenary 5: Fit for the future: outcomes and recommendations</p> <p>Chair: Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo, Chairperson, Commonwealth Local Government Forum</p> <p>Fit for the future: outcomes and the way forward</p> <p><i>Presentation of outcomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ CLGF spokespersons ■ Cllr Joe Cordina, Local Councils Association, Malta ■ Hon Owen Bonnici, Minister for Justice, Culture and Local Government, Malta <p>Closing address: Ohere Abubakar Sadiku, on behalf of the Governor of Kogi State, Nigeria</p>
11.30	<p>CLGF General Meeting (members and invited observers)</p>
13.15	Lunch
13.45	<i>Depart for study visits</i>
14.00-17.00	<p>Study visits</p> <p><i>Visits to local council areas in Malta to see initiatives and developments related to the conference theme</i></p>
17.00	Return transport to Mediterranean Conference Centre

Plenary 5: Fit for the future outcomes and recommendations.

Acknowledging all delegates, **Cllr Rev Mpho Moruakgomo** noted the adoption of the 2005 declaration on the principles of good governance and local democracy, the *Aberdeen Agenda*, and subsequent statements from Auckland, 2007; Freeport, Bahamas, 2009; Cardiff, 2011, Kampala, 2013. He also recalled the Gaborone Declaration - *Local Government Vision 2030* - which committed the CLGF and its members to achieving Agenda 2030 and the Paris Climate Accord. He indicated that as local government is preparing itself as partners and active players in the implementation of these global agendas, it is important that they have the resources and capacity to deliver. Following the successful conference deliberations, full of exciting discussions and robust interactions, he explained that the secretariat had collated the key outcomes and recommendations into a draft outcomes document. He invited CLGF Deputy Secretary-General, Lucy Slack to introduce the draft Valletta Outcomes Statement.

Lucy Slack said that a small working group had been developing the outcomes document to capture key points raised throughout the event. She explained that the group had tried to pull out the main recommendations for the CLGF members and secretariat to consider as local government works towards achieving the SDGs. She described the document consisting of a preamble to set the context, recalling agenda 2030 and other major international

agreements that reference the role of local government and acknowledging the role of the Global Taskforce in localising the SDGs. She explained that the document builds on the conference in Botswana in 2015 and looks at the shift to implementation, acknowledging that if local government is to be a full partner in achieving the SDGs, they must have the necessary resources and capacity to fulfil this role. The document is structured with four sections to mirror the four themes of the plenary discussions, namely:

- Delivering sustainable development through fiscal decentralisation and local revenue mobilisation
- Local governments working smarter to be more efficient and effective
- Strong local economies as a basis for efficient local development
- Identifying innovations in finance to support sustainable development

She explained that the outcomes would be shared with the Commonwealth Secretariat at the Commonwealth Summit in London in April 2018.

A discussion followed with a number of suggestions and amendments proposed. The conference was asked to support the outcomes document which would then be presented at the CLGF General Meeting where the members of CLGF would be invited to adopt the Valletta Outcomes.

Hon Frankie Campbell, called for a vote of thanks on behalf of CLGF for the successful CLGC2017. He thanked the Maltese Government, including the Prime Minister, for the warm hospitality and praised the city for its hospitable welcome and its cultural and historical beauty. He thanked delegates for sharing best practice and making it possible to learn from each other. Following the agreement of a comprehensive set of resolutions, he said that the duty of everyone present should be to go back home and implement. He welcomed the historic launch of the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network (ComWLGW) and said that, at the next conference, the aim should be to have equal representation of women, and a high number of young people. Local government is at the centre of service delivery and achieving the SDGs. He concluded by wishing everyone a good journey home and successful implementation of the Valletta Outcomes.

The Valletta Outcomes - fit for the future: resources and capacity for effective local government

Preamble

The Commonwealth Local Government Conference *Fit for the future: resources and capacity for effective local government*, Malta 21-24 November 2017, inaugurated by Hon Dr Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta and dedicated to the memory of Cllr Joe Attard.

Recalling the Agenda 2030; The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA); HABITAT III, all of which recognise the key role of local government in global development;

Acknowledging the work of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for ensuring global recognition of the role of local government in achieving global sustainable development;

Building on the 2015 Commonwealth Local Government Conference, and the Gaborone Declaration, where local government's role in global development was asserted;

Recognising that the SDGs are a universal and progressive agenda, and that aligning vision and action with them will be a powerful tool for taking communities towards sustainable local development;

Welcoming the agreement that if countries are to achieve the SDGs, local government must be engaged as a full and willing partner and a leader in its own right in ensuring that no-one is left behind;

Expecting that the forthcoming Commonwealth Summit and other high-level meetings will give formal and practical recognition to the importance of adequate resourcing of local government to play its full role in achieving sustainable development;

Accordingly agrees the adoption of the Valletta Outcomes – Fit for the future: resources and capacity for effective local government by CLGF members and partners as follows:

1. Delivering sustainable development through fiscal decentralisation and local revenue mobilisation

1.1. The adoption of the SDGs provides a new lever to refocus attention on the importance of effective decentralisation.

1.2. Local government and central government must work together as allies to achieve national development goals. Local governments are fundamental partners in reaching these goals. Fiscal decentralisation, local democracy and local taxation are important elements in mobilising resources and matching them with locally accountable decision making, within the context of national regulatory and legislative environments. With respect to accessing private sector resources, different blended financing mechanisms provide different returns and political judgements as to what will be appropriate for a given context must be made, ultimately decentralisation must result in improving the lives of the citizens. To ensure no one is left behind, special attention must be paid to those whose voices have often not been heard including women, youth, and marginalised communities.

1.3. In pursuing sustainable development, local government must be open, receptive, and worthy of the people's trust with the

administrative capacity for public financial management and revenue generation from local tax systems. Trust is built when zero

tolerance for corruption is coupled with political stability, transparent systems, enforcement, oversight and political will. In all cases Intergovernmental transfers remain an important component of local government finance. There is an opportunity for central government to realise the potential of local government and to incentivise own-source revenue creating a revenue generation ecosystem that enables them to deliver. The new global paradigm means that existing funding sources of transfers and own-source revenues need to be supplemented by new sources of finance and blended finance models with a range of partners.

2. Local governments working smarter to be more efficient and effective

2.1. Effective partnerships help maximise capacity and are central to the achievement of sustainable local development. Good governance, probity, increased efficiency and effective use of funds are essential elements to ensure local government is an attractive partner. Local government must start by getting the basics right. Funds will not be used effectively unless they build on a foundation of political stability, and transparency, performance culture, clear enforcement and consistent oversight. Effective partnerships with the private sector, civil society and other actors involve navigating the different priorities, cultures, and expectations of these partners so as to build trust and target mutually beneficial outcomes. Planning for development and sharing plans publicly is a key element in increasing clarity for all community members on where there will be synergies with their projects and opportunities for investment and development.

2.2. A lack of experience in public private partnerships and/or multi-stakeholder relationships can limit local government's ability to seize key opportunities and draw on the expertise of the private sector. Greater investment in education, skills development and capacity enhancement within local government is essential for local government across the Commonwealth. Staff and leaders must be ready to work on a regenerative model of development, across silos and departments, and in partnership with other spheres of government to achieve their targets, using tools such as audited key performance indicators to monitor progress.

2.3. Local leaders must be empowered to act at the local level, and central and local governments must work together to build capacity and develop frameworks which allow leaders to draw on the widest range of tools available, while ensuring adequate oversight. Training and capacity building cannot be disconnected from devolution and decentralisation. Without an empowering framework and a holistic vision of how local and central government will work together to achieve development, no amount of training or efficiency savings will be effective.

2.4. While it is not a substitute for human social skills and interaction, ICT is a critically important tool which can help councils reach out to citizens (including through social media) and enable data to drive policy. Technology is a driver of innovation and efficiency. Local leaders need to ensure they use ICT as a tool to make communities better; and critical thinking on priorities, as well as paying special

attention to those whose voices have traditionally been marginalised is important prior to choosing any technological solution so as to avoid widening the digital divide. It must be remembered that there is no one size fits all solution, national context and local capacity and priorities will determine what actions will be the most effective. Data can inform decision making processes and better use of data can help councils target investments, improve services and respond to community needs.

3. Stronger local economies as a basis for effective local development

3.1. Economic development is a vehicle for social development and poverty reduction. It creates social mobility and generates increased taxes for public investment and infrastructure projects. Local governments must be enablers and facilitators of local economic development, creating spaces that support and stimulate opportunities for local economic development, with policies to encourage the participation of women in the local economy and models of LED. Sustainable local economic development is a context specific process of harnessing local resources, skills and capacity, taking account of environmental needs, to enable more equitable economic growth and opportunity. A new perspective on LED based on the importance of place with a shift from needs alone to resources using asset mapping methodologies needs to be adopted.

3.2. Local government can provide the space to nurture and create industries, skills and talents to promote LED.

3.3. An enabling environment comprising constitutional, policy and legislative frameworks is essential for cities and local governments to be catalysts for economic development; institutional arrangements that enable different tiers of government to coordinate economic development; strong leadership; and creation of a favourable macro-economic policy environment (by central government) that is conducive to trade and investment at a city/local government level is key.

3.4. In many countries the informal sector, particularly in cities, is often a significant contributor to the local economy, yet seen as a problem or even illegal. Equitable local economic growth requires this to change in favour of greater engagement, support and facilitation of the informal sector. National urban policies that take account of all towns and cities, as well as their relationship with rural areas can enhance sustainable local economic development, and local governments should adopt inclusive strategies that promote trade, innovation and resilience.

3.5. Special attention needs to be placed on the needs of small states and particularly their ability to rebound from natural disasters to stay on track with the sustainable development goals.

4. Identifying innovations in finance to support sustainable development

4.1. For local government to be fit for the future, particularly to successfully localise the SDGs, adequate resources and capacity are essential prerequisites, without which local government cannot be drivers of change.

4.2. Own source revenue and intergovernmental transfers are insufficient to meet the growing infrastructure gap due to pressures from rapid urbanisation, the effects of climate change, and the imperatives of meeting the SDGs. Alternative sources of revenue to ensure sustainable development at local level need to be explored. However there is no single solution and local development

financing needs to be looked at as an ecosystem with several integrated components.

4.3. Development finance options available, include public-private partnerships (PPPs), municipal bonds, sub-national pooled financing, climate financing, diaspora bonds, pension funds, land value capture, community work, crowd funding and social enterprise partnerships. Opportunities to use local government controlled land as a resource for infrastructure and revenue generation should be pursued where appropriate.

4.4. Each local government is different and local authorities should be allowed freedom to experiment with financing options best suited to their specific circumstances. However some important foundations need to be in place to ensure sustainable development is achieved.

4.5. An enabling policy and legislative environment is required for local government to access more innovative mechanisms. This requires open dialogue and healthy working relationships between local and other tiers of government, among local governments and with other actors. Local government must optimise its available own source revenue streams, including collection and compliance. Working to access new sources of funding does not abdicate local government's responsibility to generate own source revenue.

4.6. Robust financial management and good governance systems and practices need to be in place, as well as technical capacity to develop successful capital investment programmes and service delivery plans to be implemented through blended finance solutions, etc. This requires effective institutional and human capacity. Creditworthiness and fiscal capacity to repay debts requires comprehensive planning, as well as management of the many risks involved.

4.7. Relationship and partnership building at several levels is critical. In particular local government understanding the dynamics of working with the private sector and vice versa, together with building and maintaining trust and credibility are essential.

Recommendations

1. Promote greater dialogue and engagement, and enhanced political will and management, between the local government sector, ministers of finance and local government financing agencies at the national, state/provincial, regional and Commonwealth level, to encourage a more holistic approach to fiscal decentralisation to enable local governments to contribute effectively to the achievement of Agenda 2030;

2. Establish a Commonwealth taskforce, building on CLGF's intergovernmental mandate, on mobilising finance for development at the local level, providing a space for dialogue and identifying options and innovations to deliver on the recommendations of the Conference;

3. Support local government advocacy efforts for greater access to the Green Climate Fund and other sources of development finance;

4. Strengthen local capacity to enable local government to lead in the achievement of the Agenda 2030 through policies based round strong service delivery. Core skills and capacity to deliver their existing mandates should be enhanced with new skills to enable more effective partnerships. Efforts to professionalise the sector are essential and CLGF must support capacity development; promote and facilitate knowledge and experience exchange between cities and local government, and draw on existing mechanisms and

institutions, including dedicated local government training institutes and the Commonwealth Innovation Hub;

5. Mobilise the Commonwealth Network of Women in Local Government, launched at the Conference, to ensure gender equity leading to better staff and elected leadership capacity across the sector and more inclusive decision making, planning and service delivery;

6. Promote practical steps to encourage young people to participate in local decision making and political processes, through awareness raising, mentoring, training, establishment of municipal youth councils, etc. and ensure that young people have the space to meaningfully Provide safe spaces for experimentation in innovative approaches to engagement and more efficient and effective service delivery, including greater use of ICT.

Expresses warm appreciation to the Government and People of Malta, especially Hon Prime Minister Dr Joseph Muscat, to Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Commonwealth Secretary General, Rt. Hon Helen Clark, Patron of CLGF for their contributions; to HRH the Prince of Wales for his video message; to HE Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta for her address at the launch of the Commonwealth Network of Women in Local Government; to Hon Owen Bonnici, Minister of Justice, Culture and Local Government, Cllr Joe Cordino, Local Councils Association, Malta for hosting the CLGF Conference, and for their kind hospitality; to Dr Marc Sant for his work; to all speakers and resource persons for their participation, to CLGF's corporate partner Microsoft, DFID; EU, UN Habitat and other sponsors, and to the exhibitors for their support.

Valletta, 24 November 2017

Study visits

Delegates took part in a series of study visits to observe the work of local government, including a tour of Valletta, taking in a 1723 Fort built by the Knights of Malta and now the setting for community and educational activities; a visit to a primary school project coordinated by the local council, focusing on the integration of immigrant parents supported by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund; a visit to Gozo's capital Victoria, where an EU funded project has allowed the local council to improve tourism through better utilisation, conservation, enhancement and presentation of the natural and cultural heritage; a tour of Zejtun to showcase the council's rehabilitation and regeneration of a rural area which has suffered from years of neglect, using EU funds and private support; a tour of Valletta's physical and social regeneration projects linked to heritage, tourism, and cultural industries with opportunities for improved transport links and living conditions through EU funded exchange of expertise with partners from other countries; a visit to a youth project to hear about activities relating to citizenship and the future of democracy; and a tour of the Microsoft Innovation Centre, which is creating opportunities for entrepreneurs and start-ups, and supporting the development of IT skills.

CLGF would like to thank the hosts of all the study visits and everyone involved in making the visits so interesting.

Research colloquium, 20-21 November 2017

The research colloquium was more diverse than usual bringing together 50 academics, researchers and practitioners, covering a wide range of topics relating to capacity building and resourcing. The issues covered a range of countries where systems vary, and the context of the local government has changed over the past few years. Challenges that were discussed included issues of fiscal decentralisation; intergovernmental relations and public private partnerships; leadership; and deliberative democracy and participation. Researchers presented their work on these areas as evident in Malta and UK, Kenya and Canada, South Africa and Jamaica, India and Rwanda, Pakistan and Sierra Leone, Trinidad and Tobago, and non-Commonwealth countries including Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Somaliland and Kosovo. Prof Bhaskar Chakrabarti presented the key findings of the colloquium at the opening plenary of the Commonwealth Local Government Conference.

The Research Advisory Group was also happy to report that CLGF's flagship journal, the Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance published by the University of Technology, Sydney is now internationally accredited with Thompson Reuters, now Clarivate Analytics
www.clgf.org.uk/resource-centre/clgf-publications/cjlg



Monday 20 November

08.45	Registration and welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Philip Amis, University of Birmingham, Chair CLGF Research Advisory Group ■ Gareth Wall, Research Officer, Commonwealth Local Government Forum ■ Anne Marie Thake, Head, Department of Public Policy, University of Malta
09.00	Background paper Chair: Gareth Wall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paul Smoke (video), Terry Parker, and Munawwar Alam
09.30	Panel 1 Resourcing local development Chair: Philip Amis , University of Birmingham, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Eris Schoburgh <i>Community Priority Plans: Untapped Potential or Missed Opportunity for Resourcing Local Development?</i> University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica ii Jaap de Visser, <i>Resourcing basic services in South Africa</i>, University of Western Cape, South Africa iii Bhaskar Chakrabarti <i>The Community Development Block in India's Development Discourse</i>, Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, India
10.30	Panel 2 Devolution and local leadership Chair: Alison Brown , University of Cardiff, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Philip Amis, <i>Kenya and local government finance</i> ii J S Saharia, <i>Assessing the Gender Gap in Elected Representatives in Rural Local Bodies in Maharashtra, Maharashtra State Electoral Commission, India</i> iii Andrew Walker, <i>Manchester Exceptionalism? Lessons from the devolution experiment</i>, Queen Mary University, London
11.30	Coffee break
11.45	Panel 3 Innovative finance for local government Chair: Eris Schoburgh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i P.Balan, 'Many a Little makes a Mickle' <i>Experience of Kumily Gramapanchayat on Revenue Generation in Kerala, Indi</i>, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, India ii Lincoln Bobb <i>A Derivative of The Triple Helix Way to stimulate innovation and efficiency in the operations of the Arima Borough Corporation, Trinidad and Tobago</i> iii Phindile Ntliziywana <i>The use of Public-Private Partnerships for local economic development</i>, University of Cape Town, South Africa
13.00	Lunch

14.00	Panel 4 – Local government capacity building Chair: PS Reddy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Lungelwa Dzulisa <i>Understanding the dynamics of the human capacity constraints on local government performance</i>, South African Local Government Association ii Virginia Makanza <i>Interrogating capacity development models in Zimbabwe</i>, Midland State University, Zimbabwe iii Jean Paul Fabri <i>Enhancing local government capacity and service delivery: the design of a balanced scorecard system for local governments</i>, University of Malta
15.15	Coffee break
15.30	Panel 5 Local services Chair: Bhaskar Chakrabarti <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Aaron Moore <i>Toronto's Market-Oriented Subsidised Housing PPPs: A Risk worth the Reward?</i> University of Winnipeg, Canada ii Allison Anthony <i>Relational construction procurement law for local government in South Africa: a gateway to legal reform?</i> University of Western Cape, South Africa iii Collin Pillay – <i>using academia to address local policy issues – the case of MILE</i>, Municipal Institute of Learning, eThekweni, South Africa
16.45	Finish for the day
18.20	Reception, hosted by the High Commission of the UK

Tuesday 21 November

09.00	Welcome and registration
09.15	Panel 7: Urban governance Chair: Jaap de Visser <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i PS Reddy <i>Metropolitan Revenue management: a review of the South African experience</i>, University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa ii Ninik Suhartini <i>Urban Governance in Developing Countries, focusing on mid-sized cities</i>, University of Sydney, Australia. iii Tinashe Calton Chigwata - <i>When fiscal decentralisation meets an unstable macro-economic environment: The challenge of local government financing in Zimbabwe</i>, University of the Western Cape, South Africa iv Vivien Lowndes <i>Understanding Local Government Responses to Austerity: Mobilising, Generating and Contesting Local Government Traditions</i>, INLOGOV, University of Birmingham, UK
10.30	Refreshment break

- 10.45 **Panel 8: Financing the cities of the future**
 Chair: **Vivien Lowndes**
- i Amitava Basu *New Means of Municipal Financing in India*, Consultant, India
 - ii Angelita Kithatu-Kiwekete *Financing African Cities for Sustainable Development*, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa
 - iii Saeed Ahmed – *The informal economy and resourcing local government in post-conflict Karachi*, NED University of Engineering and Technology, Pakistan
- 12.00 Discussion of CLGF research activities and partnerships, the research advisory group membership, and the Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance: Gareth Wall and Alison Brown
-
- 13.00 *Lunch*
-
- 14.00 **Panel 9: Building stability through decentralisation**
 Chair: **Philip Amis**
- i Gareth Wall - *Decentralisation as a post-conflict strategy in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland*
 - ii Besnik Tahiri: *Rethinking Decentralisation in Kosovo*, Institute of Local Government, Kosovo
 - iii Alison Brown *Emerging governance and economy in post conflict Somalia*
- 3:15pm **Recommendations to the conference** led by Bhaskar Chakrabarti with Philip Amis and Gareth Wall

Young people's forum

CLGF worked with the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Royal Commonwealth Society, and the Commonwealth Youth Council to deliver a two day Young Leaders' Forum immediately before the main conference. It brought together young councillors and mayors with youth civil society leaders from across the Commonwealth with the aim of ensuring that there was a youth voice at the conference, that the outcomes reflect the needs of young people, and to strengthen the advocacy role of CLGF in supporting young people in local government. The forum was highly participatory and interactive with participants sharing challenges as well as successes. Aligned to the theme of the main conference, the forum explored recommendations to help local government create the necessary enabling environment to better engage with youth and meet their needs as citizens. Panel discussions and working groups looked at governance and holding local government to account; mobilising financial and other resources; understanding local government and its role; leadership and how better to attract and support young councillors, particularly young women. Participants produced a statement of recommendations and took their key messages into the main conference with opportunities to speak on panels and in working groups.



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 Council Secretary, Kaoma District Council

Mayor Christopher Kang'ombe,
 President, LGAZ

Margaret Chanda Kapanda,
 Director of Administration, Ministry of Local Government

Jean Knoedel-Keane,
 GIZ Local Government Advisor, Local Government Association of Zambia

Buumba Malambo,
 Councillor, Kafue Council

Amos Malupenga,
 Managing Editor, Post Newspapers Ltd

Eugene Mapuwo,
 Mayor, Livingstone City Council

Zakeyo Mbao,
 Town Clerk, Kasama Municipal Council

Namukolo Mubiaelelwa,
 Delegate, Ministry of Local Government

Elizabeth Mvula Choseni,
 Decentralisation Secretariat, Cabinet Office

Hon Vincent Mwale,
 Minister for Local Government

Mpatanji Namumba,
 Information Officer, Local Government Association of Zambia

Nixon Nkwapu,
 Provincial Local Government Officer, Ministry of Local Government

Alfred Sakwiya,
 Director of the Decentralisation Secretariat, Cabinet Office

Dr Buumba Malambo,
 Queen's Young Leader

ZIMBABWE

Leopold Bhoroma,
 Project Manager, Commonwealth Local Government Forum

Lucy Edith Furamera,
 Secretary-General, Zimbabwe Local Government Association

Tsungai Makore,
 Vice President, Urban Councils of Zimbabwe

INTERNATIONAL

Angelo Baglio,
 Head of Unit Civil Society and Local Authorities, DEVCO

Eric Beaume,
 Head of Cooperation, European Commission

Ionica Berevoescu,
 Policy Specialist, UN Women

Wouter Boesman,
 Policy Advisor, Platforma

Diana Lopez Caramazana,
 UN Habitat

Rt Hon Helen Clark,
 Former Prime Minister of New Zealand, Patron, Commonwealth Local Government Forum

William Cobbett,
 Director of Cities Alliance

David Jackson,
 Director of Local Development Finance, UN Capital Development Fund

Natali Luana,
 Programme Analyst, United Nations Development Programme

Elong Mbassi,
 Secretary-General, UCLG

Professor Paul Smoke,
 NYU Wagner Graduate School, US (by video link)

Arif Zaman,
 Executive Director, Commonwealth Business Women's Network

Technology partners



Microsoft has been a longstanding supporter of the CLGF's conferences and CLGC2017 continues that association.

Technology is transforming the world at a rapid pace – often referred to as the fourth industrial revolution. Cloud computing, smart devices, the digital transformation of products and services all contribute to the changing nature of our society. But the benefits of this new technology remain out of reach for almost 60% of the world's population. Microsoft is developing tools, services and programmes to help local communities harness the power of this technology and bring the benefits to more people.

The Microsoft mission is to empower every person and every organisation on the planet to achieve more. This commitment extends to helping empower citizens, governments and public organisations through the use of enhanced technology in education, economic development, health and social care, environmental protection and many other areas. It recognises the extensive reach of the public sector and the key role local government plays in delivering services and improving the quality of life for all.

As part of its mission to create more sustainable, prosperous and economically competitive cities, Microsoft's global initiative - Microsoft CityNext - puts people first. It helps cities unlock people's potential by delivering innovative digital services that can help citizens lead safer, healthier and more educated lives. Cities can tap into the extensive public sector expertise, experience and solution portfolios of Microsoft and innovate at their own pace, deploying real-time solutions that can interoperate with their legacy IT investments.

Microsoft will be a plenary speaker at the 2017 conference and will run a special workshop session on using smarter technology and data to improve service delivery. Microsoft will also have a stand in the CLGC 2017 Expo area, to meet with delegates to demonstrate some of the latest tools available. They will also provide a gallery area which will showcase examples of how technology tools have been used, for example: better data for agricultural planning; cloud-based banking in remote villages; wireless technology supporting first responders to respond to those who need help in crises; how AI is helping prevent outbreaks; and intelligent sensors that improve the lives of visually impaired people.

Exhibitors

Exhibitors at the conference include:

- Advenio eAcademy
- Arts Council Malta
- CLGF
- Creditinfo Malta
- FEICOM
- GreenPak
- Green MT
- Henley & Partners
- Idroplast
- Local Councils Association of Malta
- Local Government Information Unit, UK
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