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Groupe Huit



Djibouti

Habitat II+5

Next June, five years after the Istanbul Summit, the international community will make its first review and appraisal scheduled to take place in New York. Firstly, let there be no misunderstanding. Habitat II+5 is not to be confused with Habitat III. In 1996, Istanbul was host to a great planetary workshop which, in the form of a comprehensive urban assessment, brought to a close the cycle of United Nations World Conferences, initiated in 1992 in Rio with the Earth Summit. It was an exceptional event in every respect, as it was long, (two weeks), polymorphous, outward-looking and well-attended. New York will not be a repeat performance of Istanbul. The meeting to be held there in June is cast in a completely different mould. It is simply a session of the United Nations General Assembly which, though special in nature as it is entirely devoted to assessing the results of Istanbul, will be brief (scarcely three days) and will necessarily have a less open, more formal approach.

This being the case, what can we expect from this event? Obviously Habitat II+5 must enable us to accurately gauge the progress made and the obstacles encountered in implementing the global plan of action adopted in Istanbul. The force of inertia of urban structures and institutions is such that no spectacular results can be expected in just five years. Only a constant, dogged, effort, sustained over time, can get things moving to any degree. But the time has come to make the first progress report, to gather relevant information on achievements, ongoing developments and persistent difficulties and, based on the findings, to jointly establish a set of ranked priority actions for the short-to-medium term, without calling

into question any of the commitments made in 1996, so that we can progress more quickly and surely along the road mapped out in Istanbul.

But that is not all. The main aim of the New York session must be to further enhance the awareness of world opinion on the complex challenges facing the many and various cities of the world, and the considerable importance of the issues at stake in sustainable development of human settlements. Because the city is the unavoidable gateway to our future, it must become a real governmental issue. The political declaration to be adopted by the General Assembly at the end of the session must state this loud and clear. It must act as a booster to prolong and amplify the Istanbul conclusions.

The New York session must embody the ongoing partnership. A thematic committee within this partnership will enable governmental delegations, local authority representatives and civil society partners to exchange points of view and initiate concrete dialogue on some major issues. This should be a highlight of the session. Remobilizing world opinion, making a significant assessment of achievements, setting out guidelines for short-to-medium term action, establishing the dynamics of shared project partnership - we can expect no more from the "Habitat II+5" process. But if it succeeds in actively meeting these expectations, the New York session will be a landmark event. ■

Georges Cavallier
Habitat II national coordinator

From consultation to governance

Michel Mombrun, expert

Emergence of a new citizenship in the city based on consultation and participation, the rationale of governance towards sustainable development

The situation

Consultation is a new idea in France. The French word “concertation” does not appear in our dictionaries until early in the sixties, which shows that the concept is not an inherent part of our tradition and culture.

Our culture is one of head-on relationships: “Tell me what you want to do and I’ll tell you how far I don’t agree!” The result of this is a winner and a loser, considerable frustration and often no qualitative development of a project other than shelving it for the time being.

Frequent objections to projects result in an increase in the number of complaints and conflicts. The public interest no longer attracts across-the-board support, and representative democracy, which is the only legitimate system, does not weaken the citizens’ desire to be associated in decisions.¹

“Consultation” is the emergence of a new social requirement in which the citizen demands to be heard by the public authorities on any project that concerns him directly. The citizen has thus recreated the original exercise of the concept “being involved in politics” (in which the word politics comes from polis: city, interested in the life of the city”).

Consultation is not “spontaneous”

For reasons related to our country’s political and administrative “culture”, the training of our leaders, and practices firmly rooted in habit, civil servants and elected representatives

are not spontaneously inclined towards consultation.

Opening files, accepting debate, identifying interlocutors, studying alternatives, modifying projects, is in the order of a cultural revolution for civil servants and technicians!

As for the elected representatives, they are often divided between the exclusive practice of representative democracy, which has vested them with a power of decision for several years through an election, and consultation practices that jeopardize their representativeness, authority and power.

Another reason is that citizens are not ready to take part in open discussion and debate outside the traditional comfort of the head-on *opponent-supporter* relationship.

Consultation is first and foremost an expression of dissent

Consultation is the product of dissent, the emergence of an increasingly conscious, argumentative and organized opinion, which has all too often felt itself ignored and despised.

For all the partners, consultation is primarily a forum for expression, protest, assertion of identity and dignity. This is essential and healthy if the consultation is to subsequently be successful.

Public awareness of environment, nuisances, space use, the cost and relevance of projects, is developing a need to challenge and a deep-felt desire

to take part in decisions: dissent and consultation have become the necessary companions of project owners.

Consultation is not only consensus-seeking

The purpose of consultation can often be ambiguous. The aim is not to integrate everybody’s desires and demands, or to give them all satisfaction. Consensus-seeking at all costs, a “lowest common denominator”, “down-market” consensus, will be a source of disappointment and frustration, with a project that may be distorted, less relevant and less efficient.

Consultation must provide an opportunity to explain the project, the adopted solutions and the advantages and disadvantages, and to present alternative projects; it must enable dissent, opposition and proposals to be expressed; it must contribute to discussion and confrontation, and maybe to understanding. Consultation must take account of consensus and divergence. Consultation is never a process for decision-making, which devolves upon the elected representatives by law and under their full responsibility. This shows the strengths and limits of consultation: between popularity-seeking verbiage and substitution for lawful authority, consultation occupies a modern space for citizenship and shared responsibility.

Consultation is based on behaviour patterns and social and community practice

Consultation must be initiated **much in advance of the project**, using a totally transparent, approach that listens to and respects the participants

and takes their suggestions and alternative proposals seriously. Consultation will then generate meaningful dialogue and innovative dynamics that will produce a strong, well-tailored project under community ownership that builds up mutual satisfaction.

The future of consultation, and beyond this, real democratization in development or investment choices, will build mainly on the behaviour of the stakeholders, particularly the project owners.

This poses the problem of awareness-raising, education and training, which concerns all the parties involved: educational institutions and postgraduate colleges, civil servants, local elected representatives, public and private operators, project managers and associations, who must mainstream the participative and consultative approach into the management system.

But consultation cannot be decreed and it requires the social and community breeding ground to exist and be particularly enabling. Social and community diversity is essential to the balance of a democratic ecosystem in which consultation can flourish. But consultation must involve everyone and pay particular attention to excluded groups. “*All exclusion is an impoverishment for society as a whole*” wrote Albert Jacquart, who continued: “*The logic of people’s encounters is a mutually constructive logic – when they cannot converse together, they lose something*”.

Consultation has a cost

A cost in time, energy, media, studies, appraisals and counter-appraisals. These resources and tools must be available to all the participants equally. The cost must be included in the project

and the budget must be managed realistically with the partners to the consultation, which then becomes an integral part of the PROJECT. There is no comparison whatsoever between the cost of this consultation, including the modest financial cost, and the cost of errors, delays or nuisance.

Consultation has its requirements

- define a methodology
- specify the tools
- build capacity
- explain ways and means
- define ethics

But consultation does not only make use of information and communication techniques, including NICTs², it also needs human relations, and one of the most important of these consists in showing consideration.

From consultation to governance

It becomes clear that we must define and give substance to the following terms: **information - transparency - consultation - participation - mediation**. The consultation concept thus extends beyond the social requirement of giving one's opinion, and tends towards a **new practice of the exercise of power and responsibility**, in which "how to do" something is just as important as "what is to be done", in which decision-building opens up to all the stakeholders, and decision-making strengthens the politician's legitimacy and responsibility (representative democracy) and tomorrow's ethics form part of today's acts. The sustainable development concept, together with the regional and urban tools and strategies for implementing it, fully illustrate the bottom-line requirement of "**new governance**" which, if it is to be successful, will involve local stakeholders and citizens in the designing, preparing and implementing of a development project.



Villes en développement

Consultation about building in Banconi, Bamako, Mali

But sustainable development also calls upon us to engage in three basic ethical practices: PRECAUTION - RESPONSIBILITY - SOLIDARITY, which are indissociable and interdependent.

"Precaution" arose out of the realization that our knowledge build-up has shown the enormous extent of our ignorance and scientific uncertainties. It advocates the criticality of making a decision in order to avoid any negative impacts in the uncertain context of an act or an event. The precaution principle incurs the politician's responsibility (representative democracy) for solidarity measures over space (impact on today's environment and people) and over time (impact on future generations).

But how will the politician make his decision? In the past he could claim scientific certitude and the decision was obvious. But now he must **manage uncertainty and fully assume his responsibility**. Between "uncertainty and ignorance" and the "decision", there is a missing link, that of the **citizen's expression** (what risk is he willing to accept, what nuisance level, what reduction in space, mobility and

autonomy). This is termed by some as the **citizens' expertise**, the people's expertise, which refers back to humanities and social sciences with the same "certainties", no more no less, but are just as relevant and certainly have to be taken into account. We can thus state that sustainable development, with its concepts and ethical principles, gives us an additional series of reasons to use consultation and governance to enhance and renew democratic practices able to mobilize citizens in the city:

- Through a **decision-building process** involving methodological, pedagogical and ethical tools.
- Through **strengthened, legitimized identification of representative democracy** (the politician) in its **d e c i s i o n - m a k i n g** responsibility.
- Through **participation and partnership practices** for implementing decisions and projects.
- Through simple **assessment and monitoring tools** (indicators).

Sustainable development policies both depend on and contribute to the emergence of

this citizenship and ethical requirement, towards a new "art of governing" in harmony with a new "art of living together". This must form a citizenship and humanistic basis for a new "governance" concept which would otherwise only be a skilful manipulation by threatened power-holders. ■

1. Reference to works and writings of Jean-Marie Simon C & S Conseil.

2. NICT = New information and communication technologies.

Since 1990, Michel Mombrun has been implementing meaningful initiatives in various projects in France and abroad with national and local authorities and within CIFAL (International training centre for local actors on sustainable development and decentralized cooperation), an establishment set up by the United Nations in Geneva (UNITAR-UNOPS-UNDP). He has recently created the "Association Objectif 21", which he presides over, 14 rue Dubail, 75010 Paris, France.

Why use new words in international cooperation

Anne Querrien, *Annales de la Recherche Urbaine*

In recent years, there has been a proliferation of neologisms in international cooperation, which are a headache for Cartesian rigour: governance, sustainable development, educative city,...

Even the word inhabitant itself, began to be challenged during the World Assembly of Inhabitants held at the beginning of October 2000 in Mexico by the Habitat International Coalition and the Charles Leopold Meyer Foundation for the Progress of Mankind. In fact, Pierre Calame, President of this Foundation, was heard to exclaim “But I am not an inhabitant!...”, for he considered that the real inhabitant in this assembly was a person who was unable to be housed normally for want of money or urbanizable land. Unlike those colleagues who consider that we must not consent to these new words or take into account these new meanings, which might convey uncontrollable relations of authority, I believe, on the contrary, that it is useful to seek to build up a common meaning with others, even if this makes political, as much as poetic use of words, at least in the beginning. I feel that, far from resulting in the domination of one culture over another, these relatively new words are proposed to denote a fuzzy pooling and convergence-building space.

Take the term governance, much criticized in France. It has enabled political scientists to show that within the same national government system, there are different local government systems, particularly through the relationships between political players and economic players or “civil society” players

organized in associations. This intellectual realization was followed by practical initiatives to build urban government which, being more democratic, was more efficient. The focus on governance introduced the idea that it is possible to influence the components of public action, and that these components are not merely laid down by law. Conversely, among our Anglo-Saxon friends, an analysis of leadership in the conduct of public/private partnerships, caused them to draw inspiration from continental, and particularly French, experience and to increasingly contractualize relations and legitimize the political authority in charge of this contractual policy, through universal suffrage. But whereas in France, the focus on governance has resulted in closer consultation with the private sector, in Great Britain, it has further legitimized the public sector. In *Annales de la Recherche Urbaine*¹, Christopher Pickvance highlighted the fact that ongoing institutional decentralization in France was coincidental with recentralization in Great Britain, and this was making both systems tend towards a common mode of government specific to European democracies.

International cooperation consists in seeking together the best forms of government, even if the practical applications differ because they are rooted in different traditions. Some people may feel that the debate on

Villes en développement



Water supply, Pikine, Sénégal

these traditions, and the adoption of some characteristics derived from the traditions of others, is nothing but an abandonment of sovereignty, an abdication in the face of defence requirements and the development of a universal culture. But the international cooperation bodies that have been created with the aim of preventing the return of twentieth century wars, have been based on an assumption of diversity, the assertion of universality as a multiplicity, the building of multi-centre development, despite their hierarchized relations of economic domination. The sustainable development concept, which we have found it so difficult to accept in France, and which is now included as a well-established idea in all local public policy statements, is precisely based on this diversity, despite its unitarian formulation. It is to be assessed and implemented on a place-by-place, case-by-case basis insofar as it means that global development and transformation must not generate a more unfavourable situation for any member of the generation to come. We are far from achieving this objective, which is precisely

the progress we thought we were seeking since the industrial revolution and the French revolution. Some conceptual rethinking is necessary, such as that proposed by the economist, Amartya Sen, and by all those who are in search of indicators of quality of life rather than of income, and who accept the fact that activities not mainstreamed into national accounting because they are non-market activities, such as female domestic work, may be essential to the quality of life. The fact that the World Bank is one of the first institutions to have validated such thinking, must not cause them to being classed as neoliberal. Initiatives are converging towards remedying the harm done by progress and seeking to achieve progress in new directions. ■

1. No. 28 “Local Authorities” 1989

What can we expect from Habitat II+5?

Jean-Pierre Dufay, Director General of IAURIF¹

We know that the June 1996 Istanbul Summit took place in a much broader context than the Vancouver Conference held twenty years earlier. Although it continued the theme of a "shelter for all" through the question of "adequate housing for all", it mainly came into its own as a City Summit and focused much of its work and conclusions towards the problem of "sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world".

Five years later, the New York meeting in June 2001 will thus assess the results of some fifty statements, commitments and requests to States and to the international community, adopted by the Istanbul Assembly in its final declaration of 31 May 1996. One of the key aims will certainly be to see how the cities' role in development can advance a step further. I personally have some queries in this respect both as regards the conclusions of Habitat II and the subsequent discussions in various bodies in France and elsewhere.

1. In the last years of the XXth century, it came to be acknowledged, both in Istanbul and by the World Bank, that cities are the driving force in development. But will it be possible to consider "the City" as some sort of uniform concept for much longer. The only way for us to seek the means in New York to implement concrete policies will be to **recognize the diversity of "city modes"** and adapt policies and cooperation to their dimension and their role in national economies and the world economy (for as they develop, they become increasingly dependent on globalization).

The nature of urban problems, and of the form of governance most able to provide a solution, is not the same in "urban settlements" that contain 300 to 500,000 inhabitants and those

with two, six or 12 million. Therefore, reflection on the future of cities cannot indefinitely fail to include the specific phenomenon of metropolization. Whether its role is positive or negative, there is definitely a geography of global cities² that extends beyond frontiers all the more where the economies of large metropolises have a bandwagon effect on countries' economies. This has led some analysts to strive for a new defence and illustration of the urban framework as a relay network to country areas. I will not address this subject here, even though it touches on a prospective dimension which was also on the agenda of the Istanbul declaration. But we can certainly hope that Habitat II+5 will encourage a more diversified approach to *cities* and not only to "the city".

2. The main feature of Habitat II, the "partnership governance" concept, must also be fine-tuned and re-examined in New York. The arrival of civil society and local stakeholders in discussions on cities, previously the preserve of governments, has been a great advance. Yet "less State" to the benefit of local self-organization, for instance, is bound to give rise to fundamental political questioning. It will be interesting to see how the desire for the State to have a strategic and regulatory role rather than a centralizing and planning role,

and to implement active decentralization of power, has been achieved in cities and metropolises of the South. Have local authorities "followed suit", and have they really done so at the urban or metropolitan governance level and not only at the neighbourhood management level – and can the positive experience of Pôrto Alegre be both extended and reproduced? Does "less State" pave the way to increased privatization, as some people have suggested? And is decentralization-focused doctrine on the power of cities, as others fear, an "ideological G-string" (*sic*) aimed at dealing with cities at first hand and definitively giving rural areas the cold shoulder? From a less "macro" angle, we will also expect the New York meeting to indicate whether the governance concept must only be understood as a *decision-making* process or more as a *decision-building* process.

3. Habitat II also strongly emphasized the importance of capacity-building and of the human and technical resources of local authorities if they are to fulfil their new role in a world of cities faced with the challenge of real urban governance. In my view, this highlights the importance of a **technical approach to urban cooperation**, and not a mainly economic, social or environmental approach. The concrete means of new governance will

not be solely financial or institutional - luckily for us. They must also be based on tools such as geographic information systems (which are an excellent laboratory for local partners), and on practices that are really appropriate to the contexts of other partners (because they can never be transferred "as is").

But although much can be expected of international cooperation that is no longer the prerogative of governments, there still remains the problem of how the "UN of cities" (i.e. WACLAC) will manage to position itself at the New York meeting. This concerns its position *per se* (it is not expected to have a normalizing or abstract role but to act as an interface between associations of cities and multilateral financial and political bodies), and its position towards the various bilateral cooperation initiatives. This will enable us to see whether it can be our real chance for a new approach to development and urban management in the XXIst century. ■

1. Institut d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région Ile-de-France (Planning and urban development institute of the Greater Paris Area).

2. cf. J. Blindé "The lessons of Istanbul", *Futuribles*, 211, July-August 1996, p. 79

What do cities and authorities expect of Habitat II+5? —

Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi, MDP Coordinator

The second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in June 1996 in Istanbul, was a key event for local authorities. It was a watershed in the changing perception of the urban process, which until then had been considered a negative experience.

One of the positive impacts of the Istanbul conference was the confirmation of decentralization and participation as a new political strategy to speed up the fulfilment of sustainable development promises and projects. It is now recognized that many of the United Nations agendas will be inoperative if the urban and local dimension of these agendas is not better taken into account. Whence the build-up of the urban agenda within the United Nations agencies: the Alliance of Cities against Poverty (UNDP), "Cities - Messengers of Peace" (Unesco), "Children-friendly cities" (Unicef), Cities and Health (WHO). UNCHS, the Cities Agency of the United Nations, has undertaken a series of initiatives that include setting up a consultative committee of local authorities for the Executive Director, and launching the preparation of a World Charter of Local Self-

Government, in conjunction with city and local authority organizations, for which the project will be submitted to the approval of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul +5). The Istanbul conference also confirmed the partnership principle in the preparation, discussion and implementation of international agendas. Right from the start, local authorities were involved in preparing the Istanbul conference and they organized a fringe activity, the first World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities, attended by more than 800 mayors and local elected representatives from all corners of the world. Dialogue sessions organized during the conference enabled State delegates to examine the main suggestions and proposals of the parties concerned. The World Assembly of Cities recommended setting up a

world coordination of cities and local authorities (WACLAC) and this was done in September 1996 to act as an organ for local authorities in their dialogue with the United Nations system. The Declaration of the Heads of State and Government, adopted in Istanbul, recognized that local authorities formed the most grassroots government level and should therefore play a key role in implementing the Habitat Agenda. For local authorities, Istanbul was therefore to mark the end of a period in which local government organizations were registered in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as nongovernmental organizations, and they would henceforth enjoy specific recognition.

What is the situation five years later?

The awareness of the irreversible nature of urbanization phenomena has certainly been aroused but not everyone shares the conviction

that the fate of the world is mainly being enacted in cities. We have unquestionably come a long way as regards decentralization policy, even though local authorities have not yet received all the support necessary to fully exercise the responsibilities recognized as theirs. Specific status has not yet been awarded to local authority organizations within ECOSOC despite repeated representations to the UN Secretariat General. The project for a charter of local self-government was called into question by the second meeting of the preparatory committee for the special session (PrepCom 2), held from 19 to 23 February 2001 in Nairobi. The partnership principle itself has been greatly challenged, with some PrepCom delegations going back on Articles 61 and 62 of the procedures which enabled the effective participation of local authorities and NGOs in the various work phases. Some PrepCom delegates felt they must bring up the risk of an Istanbul minus five if this rejection were to persist during the special session next June. Meanwhile, cities are increasingly at the forefront of the fight against poverty and

Publications



Enjeux urbains au Mozambique. De Lourenço Marquês à Maputo by Brigitte Lachartre.- Paris: Karthala, 2000 - 320 p (Hommes et Sociétés coll.).

This work on political economy, taken from a doctoral thesis, defines the urban management methods that have succeeded one another in Maputo: colonial, socialist and then liberal. Decentralization, the creation of local authorities and the first municipal elections, which form an integral part of democratization "piloted" by international donors, have not changed the relations between city-dwellers and political authority.

Price: FRF 160

Politiques et dynamiques territoriales dans les pays du Sud, under the dir. of Jean-Louis Chaléard and Roland Pourtier,- Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2000.- 255 p. (Géographie coll. - 15).

The texts are grouped around three themes. The first concerns planned policies on space organization such as development programmes of medium-sized towns in Mexico and the transmigration policy in Indonesia... The second focuses on a geographic analysis of armed conflict in the region of the Great Lakes, Brazzaville and Uganda. The third addresses the question of networks and politics, including drugs transit or market networks in Niger.

Price FRF 150

Les défis urbains dans les pays du Sud by Michel Rochefort.- Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000.- 184 p. (Géographies en Liberté coll.)

Very large third world cities are analysed and their specificities are highlighted compared with metropolises in developed countries, in terms of population growth, their locations in the country, and their social and economic characteristics. From one continent to another, the differences are illustrated by case studies on Lagos and Abidjan, Bangkok and Calcutta, Mexico and Sao Paulo, Cairo and Tunis.

Price: FRF 120

exclusion and that of safety and prevention or inter-community conflict management. They have a key role in environmental protection. They must find the mechanisms to protect citizenship and solidarity, which globalization is tending to call into question. It is therefore not surprising that cities organizations have decided to strengthen their unity of expression and action. The Rio Congress, scheduled for 3 to 6 May 2001, on the fringes of which the second World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities will be held, will accordingly confirm the coming together of the two most important umbrella organizations of world local authorities, IULA and FMCU, and the will of local authorities to make their voice heard in global governance. The international community would be sorely neglecting its duties if it did not take greater account of the world's urban future and the need to take more decisive steps to tackle urbanization challenges, particularly in developing countries. The dignity and future of millions of men and women who have opted to live in an urban environment depend upon this action, and we know that their numbers are set to multiply.

Istanbul +5 should provide an opportunity to reaffirm at the highest level the international

B. Desjeux



The City of Rosso, Mauretania, slums in the foreground, 1987

community's commitment to rise up to the challenges posed by the world's urbanization and globalization, the need to preserve its diversity in the face of forces of uniformity, and the compelling duty to bridge the increasingly wide gap between the developed and the developing worlds that cities reproduce in their midst, no matter where they are in the world. This special session should provide an opportunity to deal more resolutely with the problem of the financing of urbanization. The "Cities Al-

liance" initiative, set up to define new urban development strategies and to meet the ambitious objective of cities without slums, should receive special attention, with financial commitments equal to expectations.

Istanbul +5 should confirm the partnership spirit which prevailed in Istanbul and resulted in this tremendous mobilization of players at all levels thereby making the Habitat Agenda the most consensus-building of the United Nations political agendas. Local

authorities are convinced that it is possible to develop win-win coalitions in which the private sector, civil society and central and local governments help to build safe, sound cities, that are socially and environmentally sustainable. ■

Jean-Pierre Elong Mbassi was Secretary General of WACLAC from 1996 to 1998.

Conferences Training

- The cities' response to the new demand for mobility
- The city and projects
- Land tenure negotiations

The cities' response to the new demand for mobility

From 13 to 16 May 2001, INTA (International Network for Urban Development) is organizing a seminar in Paris in conjunction with RATP (Paris public transport system). The plenary sessions devoted to urban mobility trends, the choices of elected representatives and the collective effort in favour of public transport, will be accompanied by workshops more particularly intended for local policy-makers. An exhibition will present the partnering companies.

→ Contact: INTA: www.inta-aivn.org/francais/20-Activites/html/ville-en-devenir.htm

The City and Projects

A "DESS" postgraduate diploma in urban planning, created at the Université des Sciences et Techniques, Lille, by the Department of Geography and Planning in partnership with the Ecole d'Architecture, Lille, aims to provide a general land development and town planning qualification. The course is based on issues corresponding to current trends in urban planning trades: urban project designing, city policies, land use planning in the European context.

→ Contact: DESS Ville et Projets, USTL, Claudine.Denis@univ-lille1.fr

Land tenure negotiations

A two-day seminar run by Vincent Renard, on 26 and 27 April in Paris, will cover the general negotiating framework, negotiations between the land owner and the developer: from prospecting to signing the deed, negotiations between the public authority and the developer, and negotiation conditions between the public owners, local authorities and land operators.

→ Contact: ADEF (land studies association): www.adeff.org

It is important to emphasize the action of the UTO (World Federation of United Cities) and IULA (International Union of Local Authorities), which will take the first steps towards unification at the Congress from 3 to 6 May in Rio de Janeiro.

This congress, one month before Habitat II+5 in New York, is a historic opportunity for the international presence of local authorities.

More than ever, it must be stressed that cities are the real actors in decision-making concerning the citizens. Hence the importance of the theme of this congress "The Community Agenda", for discussions will include efficient administration, social inclusion, administrative decentralization and participative democracy, which are all crucial points both for developing and developed countries.

The event was considered important enough for the 2nd World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities (WACLA) to be held in Rio on 6 May 2001, instead of in New York in June, at the same time as the United Nations Conference "Habitat II+5" (or Istanbul+5).

→ Contact: Website: www.rio.rj.gov.br/iula-fmcu

Cities Alliance

The Cities Alliance Consultative Group met from 30 November to 1 December 2000 in Rome, under the dual presidency of Mrs Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UNCHS and Mrs Nemat Shafik, Vice President of the World Bank. The main item on the Consultative Group's agenda was the current work programme and that planned for 2001, and the aims and internal organization of the Alliance.

During the discussions, the Cities Alliance Secretariat was asked to state the aims and the added value that this initiative can provide for its partners. For the current work programme, 31 new applications for financial contributions have been made to Cities Alliance, totalling USD 9.3 million. In all, 12 files have been submitted and accepted, amounting to USD 4.2 million. A second group of 7 files, amounting to USD 1.9 million, is still being examined.

It has been decided to set up a select steering committee (entrusted to the United Kingdom and Holland and seated in the Habitat Brussels office). In response to a call for funds for 2001, Holland, Italy and the World Bank announced a further contribution and Canada, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom confirmed their already-announced contributions. Only France, Japan and Norway were unable to announce a contribution for 2001. During a recent visit to France, Mr Mark Hildebrand confirmed that the Asian Development Bank was about to join the Alliance and that negotiations were underway with the European Union.

Closer collaboration was sought with the French Partners, in particular with Isted, to foster the dissemination of information to French-speaking publics.

Approach to markets of "countries in transition" in the public works sector

The Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing has entrusted Isted with a study on the approach to markets in countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia in the public works sectors. This study, led by the Directorate of Economic and International Affairs (DAEI), the French Foreign Trade Centre (CFCE) and Isted has been assigned to Michel Prouzet, an independent consultant and specialist on the reform of public administrations in Eastern Europe and Asia.

The study aims mainly to facilitate access to these countries' markets for small businesses and consulting firms. These "countries in transition" offer significant market prospects for French companies. The countries covered by the study are Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. The study aims to be a didactic and operational guide.

→ Contact: Isted, "Cities Department", Christine Pointereau, E-mail: cpointereau@isted.com

"Urban Development and Cooperation Professionals" Association

A dinner-meeting on "What is the purpose of Habitat 11+5", organized by the "Urban Development and Cooperation Professionals" Association, brought together 35 people around Mr Georges Cavallier and Mr Jean-Pierre Dufay on 30 January. The participants, of various professional origins: consultants and members of engineering firms or NGOs were thus given a closer insight into the issues at stake at Istanbul +5, and were able to hold a number of discussions, the main content of which is covered in this issue of Villes en Développement.

The Association is preparing its one-day conference, scheduled for Friday 7 September 2001, on the subject "Social poverty/exclusion and spatial exclusion". More detailed information on the venue and participation will be given at a later date.

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Urban Services

Under a contract with the Ministry of Research, jointly financed by the Institute of Delegated Management and by Isted, Dominique Lorrain has directed teamwork with four other researchers to analyse international delegated management experiences of foreign (mainly Anglo-Saxon) groups. A report entitled "Experience Feedback (7 cases of delegated management abroad)", is a logical follow-up to this author's work for the Sustainable Urban Services working group, led by Isted, which analysed similar experiences of French groups.

A publication grouping these studies should be available shortly.

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