



## AFRICITIES SUMMIT

NAIROBI - KENYA, 18 – 22 September 2006

« Building local coalitions for effective implementation of the Millennium Goals in African Local Governments »

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### Special Session: The Positive Impacts of Urbanization

#### I) General Information

Date: Wednesday, September 20  
Time: 9.00 – 12.30  
Venue: Amphi

#### Chairperson:

- Ms. Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard, Director, Transport and Urban Development Department; World Bank

#### Panelists:

- Prof. Akin Mabogunje, Professor, Urban Geography and Planning, Nigeria
- Ms. Elisabeth Gateau, Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- Ms. Christine Kessides, Lead Economist, World Bank
- Mr. Gutema Bulcha, Director of the Urban Development Capacity Building Office, Ministry of Works and Urban Development (MWUD), Ethiopia
- Mr. William Cobbett, Manager, Cities Alliance

#### II) Description of the Event

***This session will highlight the opportunities linked to urbanization and focus on the way forward. Based on Christine Kessides' research on "The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa", the debate will centre on ways to make African cities more effective in promoting economic growth and poverty reduction.***

The urban population in Africa is growing at an unprecedented rate, averaging almost 5 percent per year. In 15 years, the population in African cities will have nearly doubled; and the "take off" is yet to come. This presents an enormous challenge for local governments and administrations – but, even more, a unique opportunity.

People gravitate towards cities in search of opportunities and a better life. Cities have always been the driving force behind economic growth and the birthplace of innovations. The economic growth that has taken place in Africa in recent years is mainly urban-based. How can this potential be translated into jobs for the urban residents, especially the poor?

Local authorities have a crucial role in overcoming the salient intra-urban inequalities, effectively combating urban poverty and getting ahead of future slum formation. At the same time, there is need for national governments and their development partners to actively support local governments and strengthen their voices - especially in the debate on economic growth and job creation. Moreover, it is necessary to include an urban focus in national strategies.

Together, governments, cities and their development partners can learn from the past, embrace the positive impacts of urbanization, and prevent widespread urban degradation and human misery.

### **III) Documents to be presented and/or distributed:**

Christine Kessides; The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa – Implications for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction; December 2005

Weblink: <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/wp97.pdf>

### **IV) Proposed Programme:**

<i>Programme</i>	<i>By</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Min</i>
Opening of the session	Chairperson, Ms. Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard	Director, Transport and Urban Development Department; World Bank	5
Introductory note – The Opportunities and Challenges of Urbanization	Prof. Akin Mabogunje	Professor, Urban Geography and Planning, Nigeria	15
Local Authorities and the Impacts of Urbanization	Ms. Elisabeth Gateau	Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)	15
The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa	Ms. Christine Kessides	Lead Economist, World Bank	30
The National Urban Strategy of Ethiopia – Cities as Engines for Social and Economic Development!?	Mr. Gutema Bulcha	Director of the Urban Development Capacity Building Office, Ministry of Works and Urban Development (MWUD), Ethiopia	25
Getting ahead of Slum Formation	Mr. William Cobbett	Manager, Cities Alliance	25
Debate, Q and A from the	Facilitated by Chairperson,	Director, Transport and Urban	60

audience	Ms. Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard	Development Department; World Bank	
Concluding remarks	Prof. Akin Mabogunje	Professor, Urban Geography and Planning, Nigeria	5