

Statement of the 1st General Assembly of Asian Mayors Forum

Tehran, 2008

We the Mayors and Authorities of 89 Asian cities convened in Tehran, and kindly hosted by the people and municipality of Tehran, on 19-20 November 2008, for the first meeting of the Asian Mayors Forum representing our respective Municipalities and Localities do hereby:

Appreciate the pioneering role of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly in promoting a comprehensive approach to regional cooperation in Asia and recalling its Tehran Declaration of 2007 encouraging “Asian local governments, city councils, and mayors to exchange information and experience with a view to promoting cooperation and integration in Asia;”

Welcome the initiative by His Excellency Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf the Mayor of Tehran for organizing the Asian Mayors Forum as a new institution aiming at promoting and facilitating further cooperation and networking among Mayors and Municipalities of Major Cities throughout Asia;

Acknowledge the contribution of Asian Major Cities, as the cradles of civilization, to the development of human society at large; Underscore the essential role of cities in realization of good governance, sustainable development, and human prosperity, at national, regional, and global levels;

Underscore the essential role of cities in realization of good governance, sustainable development, and human prosperity, at national regional and global levels;

Envisage Asian Major Cities as coherent cities which are historically significant; economically strong; socially prosperous; culturally diverse; politically influential; technologically advanced; environmentally clean; and internationally proactive;

Recognize that further interaction and integration among Asian Major Cities, will facilitate urban development and pave the way for higher standards of living throughout Asia;

Recall the enormous potentials of Asian Major Cities for city-to-city cooperation in areas such as urban planning and management, urban tourism and architecture, trade and investment, energy, science and technology;

Express concern about the common challenges facing Asian Major Cities, including rapid urbanization, environmental degradation, vulnerable socio-cultural identity, uneasy transportation and mobility, underdeveloped health and safety, urban inequality and poverty, unstable financial resources, and natural disasters;

Support the development of new networks among Asian Cities for the exchange of information, organization of expert conferences, and initiating joint research projects as well as training programs, to meet the common challenges facing the efficient urban management in Asia;

Express satisfaction with growing awareness vis-à-vis the effectiveness of local governance and public participation in the improvement of urban services in the Asian Major Cities;

Determine to promote policies and practices providing greater role for public participation in decision-making processes of urban management;

Resolve to collaborate with regional, international, and Asian sub-regional organizations and fora in promoting further cooperation and integration across the continent;

Decide to establish and maintain an information portal on the Internet linking all Asian Cities with a view to promote further communication and facilitate “virtual cities” as effective infrastructural means for city good governance;

Decide to convene annually in the meeting of the Asian Mayors Forum to be hosted by a volunteer city in order to discuss matters of our common interest and coordinate efforts in meeting our common challenges;

Appreciate the generous initiative by the Municipality of Tehran to set up and host the Secretariat of the Asian Mayors Forum in order to facilitate future networking activities and follow up the realization of this Final Statement.