



Organization of
American States

Executive Secretariat for
Integral Development

WORLD URBAN FORUM EVENT
“Clean Energy and Transport Solutions: Lessons from the Americas”

Welcoming Remarks by

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Organization of American States

Medellin, Colombia
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- Ambassador Carmen Lomellin, US Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States
- Dr. Ricardo Arango, Manager, Local Organizing Committee, World Urban Forum
- Special Guests, Friends

First, let me thank all of you for joining us for this event.

The OAS has been working on development issues for more than 60 years and during that time we have learnt a few important lessons. One of them is that for development to be truly sustainable, it requires stakeholder buy-in. We also know that programs of cooperation in which capacities are aggregated, experiences shared have the potential to greatly enhance outreach and impact.

And so, as we developed a Sustainable Cities program, it was only natural that we leaned toward supporting community-based, collaborative initiatives. These community-supported programs have resulted in the development of innovative, environmentally friendly and replicable solutions to challenges associated with growing urbanization in the areas of clean energy and energy efficiency, resilience to natural hazards, sustainable transport solutions, and waste management, recycling (including electronic waste) and improved water resource management.

Today, we will be hearing from four grantees who were given a difficult twinning challenge on projects in the areas of clean energy and sustainable transport.

- Under **sustainable transport** -- Costa Rica and Salt Lake City, Utah will compare implementation strategies and performance for increased urban walkability and bicycle use.
- In the area of **clean energy** -- Guatemala and Central New York State will highlight the value of twinning under quite different socio-economic conditions and share their experiences in engaging communities to influence behavior and change attitude to reduce CO2 emissions.



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With lessons learned from these twinning exercises we can establish methodologies to scale these case studies up and spread their successes to the next town over and the one after that until it becomes a wider movement.

I am confident that both case studies will offer lessons on the importance of clear commitments and knowledge of what incentive structures work.

It is now my pleasure to invite Ambassador Carmen Lomellin to the podium.