

Welcome remarks





Mr. Jérôme Pasquier

Consul Général de France à Hong Kong

Mrs. Secretary General, Mrs. Dubois-Taine, Ambassador Leblanc, Distinguished guests, Good Morning.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to open, this morning, this Sustainable Cities Task Force seminar, which launches a new 2-year program on Sustainable Urban Services. To stress this sustainability topic is of great importance here in Asia, around the Pacific Rim, and more generally the world over. But you may ask yourself why I, Consul General of France, am launching today this seminar. In fact, as you certainly know, this event is a PECC event. PECC, Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, as I suppose Mrs. HUI will explain more in detail later, is an association where 25 economies, located around the Pacific Ocean, meet. It is a tripartite organization including representatives of governments at different levels, of enterprises and of academics, working on practical policy issues to enhance trade, development and economic development in the region. PECC was created 20 years ago and France integrated this association as an associate member in 1996, thanks to the French Pacific territories. In order to participate as best as possible to PECC's work, France proposed to set up a new task force, i.e., the Sustainable Cities task Force. This task force was launched during the 13th General Meeting held in Manila in October 1999. It is a great

honour indeed for France, to have had this proposition to coordinate a task force accepted by the PECC members. The role of a task force is to stimulate the reflection inside the Pacific Rim Region and the topics it is responsible for, in order to put forward recommendations, rules, and best practices for local governments. Therefore, the aim of the task force is to help bring together all the best of what is done in all the contrasted countries around the Pacific Rim, with all their diversity and their richness. Diversity and richness in the degree of development, culture, geography and climate and in the solutions of development they have found to reach sustainability. Everyone knows that the best way to propose realistic policies is to start from the bottom, from the local authorities. Thus, even if France is responsible for this task force and coordinates (French are very happy of this, of course), we have no intention to impose French and European solutions, but much more to share and add to all this Pacific Rim richness some wiser thinking, some practices, that have helped us in Europe to go forward towards sustainability. All countries, the world over, have to deal with this essential question of sustainability, and coordinating all efforts can only help to find realistic and opportune ways to reach sustainability. I wish full success to this seminar. Thank you very much. ■



Mrs. Nancy Hui

General Secretary

Hong Kong Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation

M. Jérôme Pasquier, Mrs. Dubois-Taine, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good morning.

Let me first extend a very warm welcome to you all. I am delighted that the Sustainable Cities Task Force has chosen to meet in Hong Kong, before the 14th General Meeting of the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council. We are having our General Meeting next week. I wish at this time every success and hope that you will all spend an extra day here in Hong Kong to take in and to appreciate the attractive and colourful lifestyle of this Asia's World City.

Mr. Pasquier just mentioned the PECC, maybe I can tell a bit more about Pacific Economic Cooperation Council. This is a truly non-governmental organization, we gather 25 economies around the places and countries around the Pacific area. This is also sort of a unique forum; we are made up of academics, businesses and Governments representatives. It is actually a gathering of brains also to do research and to work on topics of general interests to the area. We are doers, we are not only a talk shop, and we are also an achiever. We are doers in the sense that you can see from our task force, what people are doing in some parts of Indonesia, in the Philippines. They also have projects for task forces in China. I hope this seminar will also come up with something for us later on.

Let me go back to the subject of today's seminar, which is about sustainable cities. Urban service is actually an integral part of our life, it polices

with clean living conditions, recent developments in areas like waste recycling, IT, Bio-Technology, alternative energies, which can contribute significantly to the efficiency of urban services. Sustainable solutions are not only about technical innovations, but also about integration of social and environmental, and to a certain extend, cultural considerations equally if not more important. After all, sustainable development implies a broad feel of our well-being, a long-term perspective of the consequences of today's activities, and co-operation at both the regional and international levels to reach viable solutions.

Sustainability is a key party of the development strategy of the Hong Kong SAR Government, insofar as urban services are concerned. We strictly clean our air, water and harbour. We shall reduce our waste, our urban fabrics full of phosphate, according to what is indicated in our program of urban renewal. We shall decide new stances, which are totally environmentally friendly. Our percentages from the government may give you some idea on how Hong Kong is doing.

We welcome and support this seminar, open discussions and debates, and a forum like this helps us and the community know more about how Hong Kong needs can be met in waste, that will not overstretch the natural capabilities of our environment. We will not compromise, I think this is very important, the potential available to our future generations.

I wish you the very best over these two days and I look forward to how it goes.

Thank you. ■



Mrs. Geneviève Dubois-Taine

Sustainable Cities Task Force Coordinator

Thank you very much all of you for being here and having decided to debate with us on this important issue of urban services. Thanks to some of you for chairing the sessions, to many of you for giving a lecture, for helping us to progress in this question and thanks to all the participants for being here to discuss, to share opinions, to share knowledge, in order to have an interesting first seminar on sustainable cities.

As said by Mr. Jérôme Pasquier, the Consul General of France, the PECC Sustainable Cities Task Force was launched in Manila fall of 1999. After this first session in Manila, a first General Meeting was organized in Bangkok in October 2000. Some of you attended this meeting, Dr. Kusbi-antoro, Dr. Carino, Dr. Chiu... and others. During this Bangkok General Meeting, researchers from 12 different countries located on the Pacific Rim gave general presentations of the ways chosen by major towns to deal with the many questions of sustainability: we were able to pinpoint the main problems and the main ways of thinking related to urban sustainability in its economical, environmental, social and cultural dimensions. In order to disseminate the results of this very rich meeting, Christian Henriot, Director of the French Institut d'Asie Orientale and myself edited a book entitled: «Cities of the Pacific Rim: diversity and sustainability». This book contains all the lectures and, as editors, we wrote an introduction in which we analysed the major issues related to urban sustainability. Sustainability has four dimensions: an environmental or ecological dimension, a social dimension, an economical dimension and a sociological dimension, and these dimensions have to deal with the short term and the long term.

After this meeting, the PECC Sustainable Cities Task Force organized a joint meeting with the Transportation Task Force in Christchurch, New Zealand, last April, dealing with «airports and sea-

ports and their connections to the towns». Chris Kissling, Coordinator of the Transport Task Force edited a CD that contains all the lectures and discussions of this meeting.

For the two next years, the Sustainable Cities programme will examine sustainable urban services. As everyone knows, urban services are a necessity to make urban life possible and attractive for all the communities for sanitary reasons, hygiene, comfort, decent living conditions... No community building is possible without. The higher their quality is, the more they are able to attract people, tourism and investors and to play a role in the promotion of the town and the region. These services include: water supply services, water treatment, sanitation infrastructures and waste management. Although issues such as health, education, transport... are also urban services, during the next two years, we will not deal directly with these.

The programme is based on the analysis of contrasted case studies selected in a dozen Pacific Rim Economies. These analyses, always presented by localspeakersfromgovernmentandlocalauthorities, business sector, civil society and academia do not dwell on technical aspects but much more on issues of process, management, partnerships and financing (in as much as they take into account social, environmental, cultural and economical dimensions).

How will the Sustainable Cities Task Force work during this 2-year program? First, it will hold four seminars, the first one here in Hong Kong and it will analyse four cases: Jakarta, Manila (water supply to the poor population), Hong Kong (waste management in an economy where environmental awareness is very high) and Bangkok (waste management). Later, we will hold a seminar in Santiago in July 2002 during which towns such as Mexico City, Santiago, and also towns from Colombia, Peru and Equator (those towns are not yet known) will be studied.

After that, during a seminar to be held in Nouméa in October 2002 (joint meeting with the Pacific Islands Nations) the specific problems of these islands in terms of urban services will be at the heart of the discussions. The Island problems will be perhaps compared to those of New Zealand and Australia. Last, the Sustainable Cities Task Force will hold a meeting in North-eastern Asia in spring 2003, where it will analyse cases coming from some of the following PECC economies: China, Chinese Taipei, Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Singapore. A symposium will end this work.

What are the main issues of this Hong Kong seminar, of the four seminars? How to decline «sustainability» when applied to «urban services»? Some directions can be drawn:

- social sustainability has to do with social equity. This equity concerns the management of resources and distribution, the building and the reinforcing of the well being of communities, and the necessary access of all to decent life conditions. It will be analysed in different manners in the Manila, Jakarta and Bangkok cases.
- environmental sustainability has to analyse how waste and landfill managements can help respect the environment, how not to pollute ground water and air, not to exhaust natural resources. This topic will be particularly studied in the Hong Kong and in the Jakarta cases.
- economical sustainability has to highlight how to reach affordability for local governments and inhabitants, how to find ways that create and boost all kinds of local sustainable economies as well as major businesses, how should investments and financing be managed on the short and long term. (Manila, Jakarta)
- cultural sustainability: how to take into account and preserve heritage, traditions, religions, how not to destroy local cultures when implementing and improving urban services such as water for example?.

Beside the four dimensions of sustainability, some other dimensions must be integrated, such as the right scale of intervention, time, institutional arrangements and so on.

Sustainability has to do with territory. A few problems can be solved only locally. For example, how not to pollute the neighbourhood? (Hong Kong case). How to find the critical mass in order to solve the problems at all dimensions? (Manila and Jakarta cases). It is necessary to tackle this question of urban services at the right scale in order to have the right dimensions to negotiate with others and to embrace the whole problem. How to involve all the necessary actors in order to manage entire problems as in Jakarta? What are the best international and legal arrangements to take this into account?

Sustainability has to do with time. Each improvement has to be integrated into a long-term process, and this process is implemented thanks to legal and institutional agreements, which have also to be thought in the short term and long term. To be effective they have to be flexible and realistic and have to be regularly re-discussed to solve the problems and to integrate all the unexpected solutions. This process is implemented by stakeholders i.e. states, local governments and the administration's bodies, enterprises, local associations and NGOs. The more all the actors are involved, the more the population is involved, and the more the process will be sustainable as shown in the Manila and Hong Kong examples. Laws, institutional arrangements, regulatory offices are the necessary tools for the involvement of actors. They also change and have to evolve constantly as shown in Hong Kong, Jakarta and Manila.

And finally, what are our objectives? Thanks to the four seminars, to the lectures given by very different bodies on very contrasted situations, highlighting very diverse processes, tools and ways of implementation, all the network involved in this work will be able to propose remarkable experiences and know-how, to put forward guidelines, elaborating processes and recommendations for public policies on the national and local levels, for financing modes and for adequate public-private partnerships.

All this work will serve as basis for the symposium that will be held fall of 2003.

Thank you all. And now, let's work. ■