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PRESS RELEASE

European mayors sign on a more active climate policy in Europe

Freiburg, 4 June 2008 – On May 22, 2008 the Mayors of Delft (Netherlands), Grenoble (France), Växjö (Sweden) with the consent of the Mayors of Kaunas (Lithuania), Miskolc (Hungary) and Vastseliina (Estonia) signed the Grenoble Declaration and thus committed to achieve and even go beyond the European Union target:

- at least a 20% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 compared to 1990;
- 20% share of renewable energies in overall EU energy consumption by 2020;
- 20% savings of EU's energy consumption by 2020.

Furthermore, the Mayors urge the European Union to take action on a more active climate policy.

The cities want the European Union to:

- strongly emphasise the more efficient use of currently-used energy sources and encourage the extensive production of renewable energy,
- subscribe to the principle of a climate tax on energy,
- invest in and stimulate sustainable energy measures at local level using the funds generated from above mentioned point,
- motivate actors in the construction and building management sector to apply energy efficient measures in the whole building process, from a sustainable life cycle perspective,
- support local governments and their associations to ensure they are empowered to lead the way in community sustainable energy development and local climate protection.

From 20 to 22 May the city of Grenoble hosted the annual General Assembly of the CONCERTO – SESAC project gathering administrators and energy experts. The Grenoble Declaration was drafted during this event. These six European cities are participating in the SESAC project which is part of the CONCERTO programme of the European Union.

Background information:

The European Sustainable Energy Systems in Advanced Cities (SESAC) project aims at showing how the local economy is able to thrive at the same time as less CO₂ is emitted. This is being translated into innovative energy measures in both new building development projects and the renovation of existing buildings. The measures focus on energy saving and the use of renewable energy for electricity, heating and cooling. Delft, Växjö and Grenoble are all carrying out demonstration projects while Kaunas (Lithuania), Miskolc (Hungary) and Vastseliina (Estonia) are gaining knowledge and experience through the local energy studies they are performing. The project budget is € 25 million, the EU funding € 10.4 million. Energie-Cités and ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability are both part of the SESAC project.

Energie-Cités

With over 160 members in 25 countries and representing more than 500 towns and cities, Energie-Cités is the association of European local authorities for the promotion of local sustainable energy policies (www.energie-cites.eu).

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

By coordinating and participating in various campaigns and networks, ICLEI helps local governments to generate political awareness of key issues, build capacity through technical assistance and training and evaluate local and cumulative progress towards sustainable development. The campaigns ICLEI co-ordinates and participates in are characterised by the fact that they build a worldwide movement of local governments who work together to achieve tangible improvements in key areas of sustainability (www.iclei-europe.org).

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