



Ministry of Panchayati Raj
&
Ministry of Urban Development



Institute of Social Sciences

India-Brazil-South Africa Local Governance Forum (IBSA-LGF)

17-19 January 2008, New Delhi

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It was a historic day, the 19th January 2008. In New Delhi, Indian Panchayati Raj Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar launched the India-Brazil-South Africa - Local Governance Forum (IBSA-LGF) amidst cheerful clapping of hands and thumping of desks by about one hundred fifty representatives of the three major democracies. Witness to many epoch-making national and international events, the Vigyan Bhawan saw another dream come true — a solid civil society

democracy now has a forum for sharing the best practices and emerging trends in the field of grassroots democracy and learning from each other's experiences.

With the support of the Ministries of Panchayati Raj and Urban Development, Government of India, and ActionAid International, the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi organised a three-day international conference (January 17-19, 2008) as a backdrop



Minister for Panchayati Raj Mani Shankar Aiyar (middle) launching the IBSA-LGF. Also seen (from L to R) B.B. Biyela, Municipal Manager, uThungulu Municipality, George Mathew, Director, Institute of Social Sciences, Jose Alberto Fogaça de Medeiros, Mayor of Porto Alegre and Nelly Rodrigues, Chairperson, Zilla Panchayat, South Goa.

initiative for regional cooperation in local governance with the slogan: 'Long Live India-Brazil-South Africa People's Solidarity through Local Governments'. The ever-growing community of practitioners and activists of local

for the launching ceremony. The conference was inaugurated by Urban Development Minister of India S. Jaipal Reddy. While the Institute's Director George Mathew welcomed the participants, Delhi Mayor Arti Mehra, ActionAid

International's Governance Coordinator Sandeep Chachra, Porto Alegre's Mayor José Alberto Fogaça de Medeiros and Zululand District Municipality Deputy Mayor Vusimuzi Osburn Mbuyisa, in their addresses, spoke of the background and significance



Councillor Theresa Thembi Nzuzza presented the Charter of IBSA-LGF at the launching ceremony





Minister for Urban Development S. Jaipal Reddy (left) inaugurating the IBSA-LGF Conference. Also seen Delhi Mayor Arti Mehra (right) and George Mathew..

of this historic conference. After the inaugural session, there were five thematic sessions, several presentations and three special addresses by Panchayati Raj Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar, Member of Parliament and former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah and Magsaysay Award winner Aruna Roy. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma, Brazilian Ministry of Cities' Chief International Advisor Luiz Carlos Fabbri and South African Democracy Development Programme's Executive Director Rama Naidu addressed the valedictory session. Summing up the proceedings, Institute's Associate Director Ash Narain Roy thanked the participants and all those who contributed to the success of the meet.

Participants representing the three countries constituted the veritable who's who in the field of advocacy and practice of local governance. Representatives from Brazil included National Municipalities Confederation

government's Special Advisor for International Affairs Alberto Kleiman; Curitiba City Hall's Secretary of International Affairs **Eduardo Pereira Guimarães**; Paraíba State Government's Cooperate Coordinator Sonia Maria Germano de Figueiredo; and Porto Alegre's Secretary of Political Coordination and Local Governance Cezar Augusto Busatto.

South African representatives included eThekweni Council's Executive Committee member and Democratic Alliance Caucus leader Cllr. John Steehuisen; Zululand District Municipality manager JH De Klerk; eThekweni Municipality councillor Jayraj Singh; S A L G A National Executive Committee member and Governance chairperson Cllr. Dickson Masebola, uThungulu District Municipality's Municipal Manager B.B. Biyela; councillor Theresa Thembi Nzuza; councillor and United Democratic Movement's National Treasurer Thandiwe Christobell Nontenja;

president Paulo Roberto Ziulkoski; Curitiba City Hall's Municipal Secretary of Management Jose Richa Filho; Porto Alegre City's CIDADE Director Sergio Baierele; Diadema City Hall mayor Jose de Fillipi Junior; National Municipalities Confederation's International Advisor Gustavo de Lima Cezario; Brazilian



Deputy Mayor of Zululand District Municipality (South Africa) Vusimuzi Osburn Mbuyisa and Mayor of Porto Alegre (Brazil) Jose Alberto Fogaca de Medeiros at the inaugural function



Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma and former Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir and Member of Parliament Farooq Abdullah at the valedictory session

Romano and Babu Mathew and Local Governance Expert Brian Meir were among the distinguished speakers. Inderjit Khanna, State Election Commissioner, Rajasthan and K.C. Sivaramakrishnan, former Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development, were other

special guests. Thekwini Municipality councillor and caucus leader Wayne Thring; SALGA National Executive Committee member Cllr. Nandi Mayathula-Khoza; and SALGA CEO Xolile George.

The Indian side was represented, among others, by Kochi mayor Mercy Williams; Srinagar mayor Abdul Rashid Pandit; Bhopal mayor Sunil Sood; Agra mayor Anjula Singh Mahour; Faridabad mayor Brahmwati Khatana;



South Africa's Democracy Development Programme's Executive Director Rama Naidu addressing the valedictory session

Jammu Deputy mayor Rani Gargi Blowria, Mysore Municipality chairman Jayaraman Lingaraj; Goa Zilla Panchayat chairperson Nelly J. Rodrigues; North District Zilla Parishad (Sikkim) president Lobzang Gyaltzen Tenzing; Nalgonda Zilla Parishad president Kasiratty Narayana Reddy; Pune Zilla Parishad president Kanti Devi;

Kanyakumari Zilla Panchayat president Ajitha Mano Thangaraj; Srinagar councillor and Association of Local Governance of India president Abdul Gani Khan; and Bellandur Gram Panchayat president K. Jagannath.

ActionAid International representatives, International Director (Asia) John Samuel, Country Directors of Brazil and India Jorge

special guests.

After three days of deliberations over various issues pertaining to local democracy, the conference unanimously adopted the following Charter of India-Brazil-South Africa - Local Governance Forum:

WHEREAS India, Brazil and South Africa are committed to democratic forms of government and aim at taking the democratic process to ever higher levels;

WHEREAS as delegates of cities and municipalities of the three major countries, we strongly believe that no democracy can be meaningful and vibrant without a strong base of local government system;

WHEREAS the three democracies of Asia, Latin America and Africa have launched the local democracy programme on a national scale;

WHEREAS there exists a vast scope for mutual cooperation and collaboration in different fields of local governance;

WHEREAS we strongly feel that there is urgent need for the formation of a multilateral forum to institutionalise cooperation and collaboration among the cities, municipalities and civil society of the three countries;

we, the local authorities, practitioners, researchers, activists of local governance and civil society, therefore, resolve to form the India-Brazil-South Africa - Local Governance Forum, that is IBSA – LGF, to further the following goals and objectives:

1. *TO PREPARE* necessary ground for: exchange of ideas and experiences;



Minister Mani Shankar Aiyar (middle) with Paulo Roberto Ziulkoski, President, National Municipalities Confederation, Brazil (left) and Jose de Fillipi Junior, Mayor, Diadema City Hall, Brazil.

exposure to best practices; experiments, new methodologies and research in an environment of learning from each other for the evolution of ideal local democracy systems suited to the unique situations and genius of the three countries, their cities and their peoples;

2. *TO PROVIDE* a platform for all those who are committed to and are working for the promotion and strengthening of local governance;
3. *TO WORK* towards making governance at the local level more democratic, participative, transparent, just and humane;
4. *TO SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE* federal values in the constitutional, administrative and fiscal spheres for effective management of local government in each country;
5. *TO DEVELOP* multilateralism in the grassroots practices of local democracy;
6. *TO PROMOTE* international solidarity and cooperation in support of decentralised governance;

and commit ourselves to execute and expand the following programme in order to achieve the above-mentioned goals and objectives:

1. *BUILD* alliances, partnerships and networks with cities, municipalities, academic centres, research institutions and civil society

organisations engaged in practice, study, research and advocacy in the field of local democracy;

2. *INTITUTIONALISE* linkages between research and advocacy organisations working in the area of local governance in the three countries;

3. *ENCOURAGE* active participation of under-privileged sections, particularly women and other marginalised groups;

4. *FORMULATE* and undertake joint studies,

actions and programmes to spread the ideas and practice of participatory democracy;

5. *SHARE* research findings, best practices and innovations;

6. *HOLD* conferences, discussions and meetings on all aspects of decentralisation;

7. *ORGANISE* exposure visits of elected local government representatives, functionaries, research scholars, activists and media persons;

8. *PUBLICISE* actions, programmes, events, research findings, visits, etc. through various forms of mass media, by bringing out books, periodicals, monographs and other publications and creating portals and websites, producing films, videos, documentaries, cassettes, etc.;

9. *ESTABLISH* an International University of Local Democracy in any one of the three countries with country chapters in the other two;

10. *CONDUCT* comparative studies and surveys as well as election watches for a better understanding of each other's local governance system and devise tools for creative interventions to achieve better local development, transparency, accountability and service delivery.