**United Nations (OHCHR) expert meeting on local governments and human rights**

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**Speaking notes by Markus Möstl, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO**

I am speaking on behalf of the International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO.

My contribution draws on the results of our international, online Academy and Conference series called "Human Rights Go Local - What Works”. Our Academy is based on research and inputs from local governments. Therefore, in the run-up to each Academy, we publish an issue of our publication series “Human Rights Go Local”, which presents topic-specific guidelines and promising practices for the protection and promotion of human rights at the local level.

At the Academy, we facilitate an open exchange on the given human rights topic between representatives of local governments, city networks and human rights experts from around the world. The results are then compiled in an Outcome Document that contains concrete encouragement addressed to local authorities worldwide. At the closing Conference, high-level politicians and human rights experts discuss and disseminate the key findings among a global audience.

Three key encouragements have emerged from the previous flagship events that should be taken into account when building the capacity of local governments.

First, evidence is key. Local governments still need to better understand how to base the development of their policies and programmes on research on human rights at the local level.

Second, we need to support local governments in moving from often only vague intentions to concrete commitments. These explicit commitments make clear how human rights norms and principles are to be incorporated into local laws and policies. And they are a prerequisite for capacity-building efforts to be effective.

And finally, human rights must be embedded in local administrations to be sustainable. Capacity-building efforts must focus on how to embed human rights in local public management systems, including local budgets.

My organisation has accumulated practical expertise in these areas for decades and is ready to support local governments and international organisations.

To conclude my brief intervention, I would like to cordially invite you to our next academy and conference, starting on 5 February 2024, where we will discuss human rights action plans as a tool to promote accountability of local governments.