

Opening Remarks by Dr Najat Zarrouk, UCLG Africa, UN-CEPA member, President of IASIA, Representing UCLG Africa Secretary General, Mr Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi

Follow-up Webinar:

“Future of Governance and New Mindsets, Knowledge and Competencies Fit for the 21st Century”

Wednesday, 2nd April 2025

**Dear Dr Adriana, Alberti,
Honorable participants of Tangiers Workshop,
Dear colleagues and friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good day to all of you.

On behalf of UCLG Africa and its Secretary General, It is an honor and a great pleasure to welcome you all to this Follow-up Webinar on the commitments we made together during the Capacity Development Workshop held in Morocco, Under the High Patronage of His Majesty King MOHAMMED VI -May God Protect Him, in the City of Tangier from 9th to 13th December, in the framework of the 8th edition of the African Forum of the Territorial Managers and the Training Institutes targeting the Local Government (FAMI8_2024).

This Workshop was also prepared and organized based on the solid, sound and solidaire Partnership between UCLG Africa Academy ALGA and the Division of Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of UN-DESA.

Let me take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Juwang Zhu for your Leadership and long-standing commitment to advancing governance capacity in Africa—and globally- which continue to be a source of inspiration and a driving force of change for all of us. Our eternal Gratitude for your Trust, your continuous support and the important sponsorship that allowed this gathering last year.

Allow me also to make a special mention for your outstanding Team, namely Dr Adriana Alberti, Dr Cristina Rodriguez Acosta, Mr Gregory Mcgann and Ms Francesca Zita Tomasino for their commitment, not only to this initiative but to the long-term empowerment of leaders, institutions and civil servants across our Continent Africa, with my sincere admiration for their engagement and professionalism from which we learn and we get inspired.

Our gratitude goes also to all the Group of participants from more than 30 African Countries who benefited from this Workshop, who came to learn, to share and to commit to do their part for the Governance we all want for our Continent.

Dear participants,

Based on an initiative from UN-DESA/DPIDG, this Follow-up Workshop is not just a routine check-in as said by Dr Adriana, it is a meaningful moment of collective reflection, accountability, and renewed commitment for the Future.

When we met in Morocco, we acknowledged the urgent need to rethink governance and shift mindsets, from the individual to the institutional level. We are committed to equipping ourselves and our institutions with strong values and principles, with the needed skills, and a transformational leadership approaches to be ready and able not only to respond to the governance challenges of the 21st Century, but also to deal with our current challenging global context.

Today, three months later, we come together to share where we are in that journey – the implementation of our takeaways, our achievements, our challenges, and the lessons we've learned along the way.

It's a space for open dialogue, grounded in trust and our common and shared vision for the needed transformation for the World We Want, and the Africa We Want, keeping in mind that one of the most meaningful outcomes of the Morocco Workshop was the spirit of ownership and solidarity that emerged among participants. You did not just attend a Workshop—you made personal and

institutional commitments. You agreed to come back, to reflect together, and to support one another in this timely journey.

We are, here in UCLG Africa, particularly proud of the politicians leaders, the practitioners, the academics, and civil servants who took part and who stayed engaged. This speaks volumes about the potential of Peer-Learning, accountability, and co-creation in transforming governance culture and mindset.

As we listen to your updates today, I encourage each of you to share honestly and openly: what worked ? what changed ? what was transformed ? and what still needs to be done or to be supported ?. And more importantly, let us use this space to connect, support one another in a Networking Spirit for positive change, and think collectively about how we can go further.

Let me conclude by reaffirming what we said in last December: **“Transforming governments starts with transforming ourselves. Through new mindsets, competencies, and values, we can lead change—not just manage it. We can be the architects of a new Public Sector, more agile, more inclusive, and more connected to the people it serves”**.

Thank you for your presence, for your ongoing engagement, and above all, for your leadership. I look forward to hearing your feedbacks, experiences and reflections throughout today’s session.

With our eternal gratitude and best wishes for a fruitful discussion and an awesome harvest./.