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## **UN-NGO forum urges linking sustainable development with public engagement**



5 September 2011 –

The annual joint conference of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concluded today in Bonn, Germany, with calls for civil society to encourage people to realize that their local concerns were connected to the larger global issues.

Delegates to the three-day 64th annual conference of the UN and NGOs, organized by the Department of Public Information (DPI), in partnership with the DPI/NGO Executive Committee, Germany and the UN Volunteers (UNV) programme, stressed the need to “connect the dots” between civil society groups dealing with various issues for greater impact on global problems.

The theme of this year's conference was “Sustainable Societies Responsive Citizens” and was an opportunity for NGOs and civil society to interact as they prepare for next year's UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Brazil.

Kiyo Akasaka, the UN Under-Secretary for Communications and Public Information, told the conference's final news conference that the gathering was an important step in dialogue and cooperation between the UN and non-governmental organizations. The final declaration would be sent to organizers of the Rio+20 meeting, he said.

Flavia Pansieri, the Executive Coordinator of the UN Volunteers Program, said that the goal of “connecting the dots” between sustainable communities and public engagement had been realized. Ms. Pansieri expressed her appreciation for the constant and strong support of the partners with whom they had worked to organize the conference.

According to Felix Dodds, the Chair of the 64th DPI/NGO Conference, Germany was playing a major leadership role in the global discussions on environmental matters, noting that the conference was the first of three major environmental meetings the country would host in the coming months.

Mr. Dodds said the final declaration was rich in knowledge, information and ideas and encouraged organizations to use the document to trigger debate.

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[UN-NGO forum to focus on sustainable development and volunteerism](#)