

Exploring East Asian Sustainable Governance via Municipal International Cooperation

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Our motto, therefore, perhaps should be ‘Cities of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your slums, your poverty and your military expendability.’ On this note of modest long-run optimism, I had better conclude for fear that the pessimism of short-run catches up with us first.

Nobel Laureate Kenneth Boulding (1968: 1123)

Introduction

At the dawn of the 21st century, we are confronted with at least four serious challenges (Mayor, 1999: 7). The first is peace. The Cold War is over, but the present peace remains hot. Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall, some 30 wars, mostly intra-state, have ravaged vast areas of the globe. The illusions of perpetual peace and the end of history have vanished. The second challenge is poverty. Today, more than half of humanity lives in poverty on less than \$2 a day. The disparity between the income share of the wealthiest 20% and that of the poorest 20% of the world population has widened from 30 : 1 in 1960, through 61 : 1 in 1991, to 135 : 1 in 1995. The third challenge is environmental sustainability. Three planets like the Earth would be necessary for the whole of the world population to reach North American consumption levels. Replicating the patterns of the developed countries in the others would

require 10 times the present amount of fossil fuels and roughly 200 times as much mineral wealth (UNDP, 1994: 18). Now, humanity already uses over one third more resources than nature can regenerate. The fourth challenge is the ‘drunken boat syndrome’. As a result of globalization, most problems do not stop at borders and now call for international solutions. At the same time, many states appear to have mislaid their maps, piloting equipment and even the will to set goals.

In moments of crisis, as Albert Einstein admonished, imagination is more valuable than knowledge. Changing a worldview takes some imagination. Looking through a new lens of “fragnegration worldview” constructed by J. N. Rosenau (1997: 25-52), we are able to identify a constellation of looming global actors that have potential for contributing to solve the four challenges facing us in the polyarchic world polity. They are local actors. From a libertarian viewpoint, global governance is largely an artifact – founded and sculptured out of human values and learned skills, rather than out of nature’s givens that can be remodeled, maintained or demolished (Brown, 1996: 165-167). The structure and norms of global governance are the products of policies ‘chosen’ by the states and a plurality of other governing actors including local actors that make up the world system and its various subsystems.

For the past several decades, millions of people have decided to try to solve the world problems through local action. In thousands of cities, towns and villages, local authorities are teaming up with NGOs and CBOs to remold international relations. The history of local initiatives for global development suggests that a hundred or a dozen cities, or even just one bold village, can take leadership on a development issue and set off political tremors across the globe (Shuman, 1994: 38-53). In October 1992, Towns & Development, a consortium of local governments, local

government associations, NGOs and CBOs seeking to create a better world through local initiatives, organized and held an international conference titled 'Local Initiative for Sustainable Development' in Berlin in order to evaluate the performance of this new phenomenon. The delegates and participants from 53 countries adopted the *Berlin Charter and Action Agenda*. In September 1995, against the background of the growing involvement of municipalities in international development cooperation, the 32nd International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) World Congress discussed the topic of 'A World of Municipalities: the Local Way to Innovation in International Cooperation' in the Hague. In March 1997, the IULA's World Executive Committee adopted a statement titled *Promoting Municipal International Cooperation (MIC)* to guide its members forward to international cooperation. The statement emphasized MIC as an effective means for development assistance, democratization and municipal capacity building (IULA, 1997).

In this context, this paper aims to lay conceptual and practical foundations for initiating an MIC movement to support the development of East Asian Sustainable Governance. For this purpose, this paper examines the increasing demand of global public goods in a globalizing world, and argues for the potential of MIC in as an effective vehicle for rectifying the under-provision of global public goods. It also reviews the evolution, tools and issues of MIC activities, and examines the conceptual evolution of 'sustainable development' as a powerful catchword in current MIC programs and some exemplary cases of MIC in pursuit of sustainable development. This paper ends with a discussion about the need for an MIC approach to East Asian Sustainable Governance in the years ahead.

Global Public Goods and the potential of MIC

Global Public Goods

The dynamics of economic globalization, new technology and evolving global norms are clashing with equally powerful localizing dynamics. The resulting encounters between domestic and foreign affairs are rendering the boundaries between domestic and foreign affairs ever more porous, and creating turbulent domestic-foreign frontiers (Rosenau, 1997: 3-11). Today, the neat demarcation between domestic and international affairs is being lost.

In the era of glocalization, the blurring domestic-foreign frontiers accompanied by the softening of state borders imbues an ever-greater number of affairs with the characteristics of global public goods, and consequently causes the problems of non-rival consumption and non-excludable supply of public goods on the world scene. In an informative recent book published by the UN *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century* (Kaul et al. 1999), contributors and editors argue in unison that many of today's world crises from financial crises to humanitarian emergencies, drug trafficking, environmental degradation, the emergence of new disease strains, and the increasingly explosive gap between the rich and the poor result from the under-provision of global public goods.

Global Public Goods identifies three policy deficits that cause today's policy-makers to feel helpless in dealing with global public goods. The first policy deficit concerns a jurisdictional gap between the global boundaries of today's major issues and the national boundaries within which policy-makers operate. The second is a participation gap between the traditional major political powers and the new set of global actors including a number of developing countries, corporations, and civil

society. The third policy deficit is an incentive gap between the public good of all nations and the desire of individual nations to pursue their own interests rather than collective ones.

Contributors to the book also recommend all manner of proposals to bridge the three gaps. These proposals include creating an ‘UN Global Trustee Council’ as an honest broker on behalf of more sustainable and people-centered development and creating a ‘Global Participation Fund’ for expanding the ability of developing countries to represent their interests in international negotiations. Some contributors suggest the establishment of a ‘Global Knowledge Bank’ through new linkage between the UN Educational Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Others suggest different ideas such as establishing a ‘Participation Watch’ to monitor who makes decisions at the global level, separating official development assistance (ODA) to poor countries from ODA to support the provision of global public goods in the interest of all, expanding the G8 into a G16 which bring in 8 major developing countries to make a better North–South representation in international fora, etc.

The Potential of MIC

While it appears certain that *Global Public Goods* succeeds in its aim of sharpening the focus of the discussion surrounding globalization on the growing importance of global public goods (Kelleher, 2000: 155–156), the book is less successful in proposing a set of institutional innovation devices for rectifying the inadequate provision of global public goods. To my regret, the book failed to see the potential of local actors who are seeking decentralized solutions to global problems. It seems that this neglect stems from the realist, state-centric paradigm of international relations which serves as a cast-iron grid exercising a transcendent

despotism over reality (Alger, 1990: 494). Indeed, we have become so accustomed to treating states and national governments as the foundations of politics that we fall back on them when contemplating the prospects for global governance, thereby restricting the shifting boundaries, growing voices of local governments and proliferating NGOs to just the subsidiary status of public policy-making processes (Turner, 1998: 25–28).

Clearly, the changed reality of politics on a global plane needs a quite different paradigm to appropriately describe, explain and prescribe it. The emergent worldview of *framigration* is thought to be a reliable and persuasive alternative paradigm. The synthesized word ‘*framigration*’ implies the simultaneity and interaction of the fragmenting and integrating dynamics that are giving rise to new spheres of authority and transforming the old spheres (Rosenau, 1997: 36). It also serves to suggest the absence of clear-cut distinctions between domestic and foreign affairs, so that the local problems can become transnational in scope even as global challenges can have repercussions for neighborhoods. This *framigration* worldview is based on the premise that the world is not so much a system dominated by states and national governments as a congeries of spheres of authorities (SOAs) that are subject to considerable flux and not necessarily coterminous with the division of territorial space (Rosenau, 1997: 42). SOAs are naturally the core analytic units of this worldview.

It is through this worldview of *framigration* that the potential of MIC for global development looms large before our eyes. At first glimpse, local initiatives may seem too small to counter global forces, but global institutions make their operations concrete only through local actions. They cannot exist otherwise. It is at the grassroots that men and women can effectively struggle (Esteva & Prakash, 1994: 162–163). The evidence

to date suggests other advantages of MIC (Shuman, 1994: 11-19; Schep, 1995: 52-54; Knowles et al., 1999: 60-61, 133-135). It has been proved that MIC programs, in comparison to large country-to-country programs, have a lot of strong points. MIC programs are human scale and hands-on projects. They encourage personal working relationships between peoples, tap the wisdom and vision of the local people who are being 'developed', and promote the exchange and implementation of new ideas between counterparts who tend to regard each other as equals. MIC programs tend to generate voluntary community services, and enable better coordination between projects, thus reducing overlap and duplication. They also provide a means for local capacity building and good governance. Additionally, they contribute to strengthen decentralization and local democracy and can be sustainable over long periods because of their low cost.

Michael Shuman, who prepared a conference report reviewing 38 papers presented by participants from 21 countries and a dozen 'issue networks' in Berlin in 1992, made the following evaluative summary on the performance of MIC activities all over the world.

Twenty years ago many despaired that global problems were spinning out of control. But slowly, inexorably, communities have shown that global change is within their power. They have cut the world's problems down to manageable size and exerted influence far in excess of their numbers. They have ended wars, freed political prisoners, cleaned up the global environment, rebuilt villages and restored hope. (Shuman, 1994: 91)

Although, like any political movement, the MIC movement has not been without drawbacks, mistakes and even failures (Schep et al, 1995: 15-21), MIC activities over decades have proved themselves overall to be effec-

tive vehicles to promote people-centered development, foster friendship and solidarity among partners and ultimately humanize the world.

Evolution, Tools and Issues of MIC

MIC can be defined as a link between two or more communities in which at least one of the key actors is a municipality or alternatively a district/regional council (Sherp et al, 1995: 4). Therefore, the actors participating in MIC may comprise local NGOs, CBOs or private associations. And MIC partnerships have been generally assisted by national governments, funding agencies, national/international associations of local governments, etc.

Evolution of MIC

MIC first emerged in the late 1940s as a form of sister-city movement between West European cities to foster reconciliation, understanding, friendship and peace surmounting post-war animosity, resentment and scars. In the 1950s, sister-city links were encouraged in the United States by President Dwight Eisenhower's call for citizen diplomacy. Many cities in Canada joined in this citizen diplomacy. In the 1960s, Japanese cities became involved mainly in partnership with American cities. In the 1970s, Japanese cities sought additional partnerships with Chinese cities after China's liberalization process as well as with other Asian cities. These early forms of MIC primarily focused on cultural and friendship ties to improve human relations.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the focus shifted towards trade, aid and politics (Shuman, 1994: 12-13). The first trend emphasized trade as a central component of MIC. In the early 1970s, Japanese municipalities urged by central government began to form sister-city relationships with foreign local governments as a stratagem to encourage trade as well as friendship. In the 1970s, American municipalities faced with the decline of

federal assistance established numerous economic ties with foreign local governments to generate independent sources of income. Local governments in the Scandinavian and other countries followed the same path.

The second trend emphasized development aid. Since the early 1970s, a number of Dutch municipalities have become very active in development cooperation through city links, project links and fair trade initiatives. Municipalities in West Germany, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom and Spain were the early European pioneers of aid-centered MIC. Canada also started to shift its focus of MIC from trade to aid.

The third trend was that numerous municipalities engaged in MIC for political reasons. The anti-apartheid actions of municipalities from America and European countries, the 'Nuclear Free Local Government' movement promoted by municipalities from European countries, America and Japan, the solidarity protest by municipalities from America and European countries against American policy, and sanctions aimed at isolating the Sandinista regime of Nicaragua are some prominent examples in this trend (Shuman, 1994: 43-48).

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the subsequent fall of communism in Central and East Europe, a number of municipalities in the industrialized countries actively sought to establish partnerships with counterparts in the ex-communist countries. As a result, the drastic increase in the number of East-West partnerships redressed to a certain extent the previously predominant partnerships with North-North and North-South ones in the past.

Since the late 1980s to early 1990s, MIC has been characterized by increasing diversity and more complex relations worldwide. This trend partly reflects the expanding opportunities for MIC by way of decentralization and democratization processes worldwide, and continuous institu-

tional innovation, as well as the greater participation of donors related to specialization in MIC (Schep, 1995: 142).

Tools of MIC

The tools which MIC programs have used until now can be grouped into the following categories (Townes & Development, 1992; Shuman, 1994: 20-37; Gerrad, 1995; Dijksterhuis, 1995). Even though this categorization is somewhat artificial in that these categories are not mutually exclusive, it is helpful to understand the wide spectrum of MIC tools we can choose from.

Education: Raising awareness of world interdependence through direct experience, discussion and by educational activities both inside and outside educational institutions at all levels.

Twinning/linking: Forming formal or informal relationships with partner local governments of foreign countries.

Networking: Establishing or joining international networks to share information and experience on specific international issues.

Project support: Providing grants to NGOs, CBOs or counterpart local governments performing development projects on condition that they fulfill certain required criteria.

Technical and administrative assistance: Enabling staff and/or experts to share their technical and administrative expertise and know-how with counterparts abroad in a search for solutions to common problems.

Campaigning: Urging national, regional and international authorities to change their policy and behavior towards specific issues through persuasion and lobbying.

International agreements: Reaching and signing agreements between municipalities in different countries or declaring international statements to publicize their will to abide by them.

Preferences and sanctions: Using the power of the purse for strong legal and political resistance or support to enforce particular policies.

Regulation: Using the regulatory powers of local government for instance, passing laws or putting special tolls and taxes to enforce MIC policies.

Fair trading: Taking positive actions such as opening fair trade Shops, purchasing fair trade products at a fair price, etc., to guarantee good corporate environmental and trading practices by their suppliers and to encourage citizens to do likewise. Nowadays, more than 3,000 fair trade shops are operative alone in Europe.

Institution building: Creating public or quasi-public institutions for instance, setting up local coordinating structure, holding public hearings, producing an annual report such as *State of the City in the World*, and forming international agencies, etc., to manage all the MIC programs on a permanent basis

Issues of MIC

For several decades, visionary municipalities all over the world have practiced MIC programs covering a wide range of issues as follows (Shuman, 1994: 39-53; Schep, 1995: 71-100; Ahn, 2001: 368-391).

Cultural exchanges: Cultural exchanges are the oldest, traditional MIC channels to strengthen friendship and understanding.

Trade and business: Many municipalities have been eager to promote trade and business between the partners, but very few partnerships have been successful.

Human rights: Municipalities have pressed foreign governments to release prisoners of conscience, lobbied against foreign aid for nations with records of barbarism and mobilized shame against regimes guilty of practicing torture or genocide.

Anti-apartheid: Numerous municipalities together with NGOs from

America and West European countries allied for the anti-apartheid movement against Pretoria regime of South Africa. These MIC efforts greatly contributed to bring about the end of white rule.

Solidarity with Nicaragua: Numerous municipalities together with NGOs from America and West European Countries joined in the Nicaraguan solidarity movement against Reagan administration's aggressive policies towards the Sandinistas. This movement was very effective in squelching the robust US foreign policy for contra war.

Tension relief and peace building: Municipalities have contributed to relieving tension and building peace by launching anti-weapons protests and strengthening citizen diplomacy between confronted countries. The East-West German sister city movement before the fall of the Berlin Wall was a successful case of MIC in this field.

Assistance to conflict Regions: Municipalities have become more active in providing humanitarian aid to conflict regions such as the former Yugoslavia and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Educational and Social Development: Municipalities have begun to consider the solution of educational and social problems like illiteracy, destitute educational facilities and conditions, gender inequality, racial discrimination and poor labor conditions as important MIC issues.

Poverty alleviation: Municipalities have increasingly recognized poverty alleviation as one of the most significant MIC issues. For instance, the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty was created in 1998.

Health promotion: Health promotion has become an issue of MIC. Especially, in 1986 the World Health Organization (WHO) initiated a Healthy Cities Program that makes extensive use of MIC as an instrument for the promotion of city-dwellers' health. By 2000, there were already over 1,000 cities actively involved in the program, most of which

are European cities.

Capacity building: In recent years, enlarging the capacities of local governments and the resultant improvement in the quality of municipal services has become a popular MIC program. The creation of United Towns Development Agency (UTDA) of the United Towns Organization (UTO) and Capacity & Institution Building (CIB) Platform of the IULA reflects the significance of capacity building as a MIC issue.

Environmental protection: The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the Rio Earth Summit, accelerated greening MIC programs. In recent years, The ICLRI has taken the lead in promoting environmental protection through MIC programs. Around the world are now more than 350 local governments, full members of the ECLEI with hundreds of additional local governments participating in specific campaigns such as the Local Agenda 21 campaign, Cities for Climate Protection Campaign and various other projects.

Broadening the Concept of Sustainability and Its Impetus for Greening MIC Programs

In recent years, sustainable development has become one of the most serious challenges facing humanity and also become one of the most popular topics in MIC programs. The first international declaration of sustainability dates back to the UN Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) in Stockholm in 1972. Since then, there were a number of follow-up conferences, the most important being the Cocoyoc Conference in Mexico in 1974. The Cocoyoc Conference attempted to merge environmental protection with development concerns, to redefine development from the viewpoint of the south and to highlight the inequalities caused by the existing development model.

In 1980, a UN report *World Conservation Strategy* awakened the general

public to the significance of sustainable development. This report defined sustainability solely in terms of ecology, and subsequently failed to recognize the links between environmental degradation and poverty. In 1987, another UN report *Our Common Future* prepared by the Brundtland Commission was published. This report introduced the most commonly used definition of sustainable development: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This definition explicitly referred to balancing current needs with the future ones, but it left unsaid the need to redress inequalities in the needs of the present.

The most important event for the widespread acceptance of sustainable development as both a local and international public policy target was admittedly the 1992 Rio Earth Summit in Brazil. In this conference, the representatives from 178 countries endorsed the so-called *Rio Conventions* and *Agenda 21*. In the preparation and adoption process of the *Rio Conventions and Agenda 21* as the official UN documents, an international umbrella organization of associations of local governments, i.e., the G4+³ played a more prominent role than in any previous UN conference. The *Agenda 21* requested to harmonize the need to protect the natural environment with the social and economic needs of communities. Chapter 28 of the *Agenda 21*, in particular, emphasized the key role that local governments should play in practicing sustainability in partnership with all sectors of the community at the local level. It also recognized that local government could represent local needs and priorities through their potential influence over policy-makers at regional, national and even international levels. It also strongly recommended each local government to prepare and implement its own sustainable development plan, i.e., *Local Agenda 21*, by 1996.

In June 1996, the 2nd UN Conference on Human Settlements (UNCHS) usually called the City Summit of Habitat II was held in Istanbul, Turkey. The main theme of this conference was that local governments should be at the center of challenging enterprise in pursuit of urban sustainable development, in particular, via MIC. At the end of this conference, the representatives from 125 countries endorsed the global action program called the *Habitat Agenda* for building urban sustainable development. Again, the representatives of international local government associations took part in the committee drafting the *Habitat Agenda*. In addition, they were granted the privilege to participate with the right to speak, even though without the right to vote, on behalf of local governments all over the world in the conference deliberations.

In order to see the most recent development of this concept, we need to take a look at the *Earth Charter*. In March 1997, at the conclusion of the Rio+5 Forum in Rio de Janeiro, the newly created Earth Charter Commission proposed the Benchmark Draft Earth Charter on the basis of the endeavors of diverse groups over a decade to formulate a set of fundamental ethical principles for sustainable development.⁴ The Commission also called for ongoing international consultations on the text of the document. As a result of the worldwide consultation process over 3 years, the Commission issued a final version of the *Earth Charter* in March 2000. The *Earth Charter* was already adopted as an official action code for the sustainable future by 450 representatives from 62 countries at the 10th anniversary World Congress of the ICLEI in July 2000. Now, the proponents are seeking to have the *Earth Charter* endorsed by the UN Earth Summit 2002 called 'Rio+10', and furthermore to gain the status of international law with legally binding validity.

The *Earth Charter* provides a comprehensive conception of sustainable

development and sets forth fundamental guidelines for achieving it. The *Earth Charter* also indicates that the ultimate goal of sustainable development is full human development and ecological protection, and that humanity's environmental, economic, social, political, ethical and spiritual problems and aspirations are interconnected. Therefore, it affirms the need for holistic thinking and collaborative, integrated problem solving. After all, sustainable development involves community, ecological integrity, economic and social justice, democracy and peace.

The *Earth Charter* is composed of a preamble, 16 main principles, 61 supporting principles and a conclusion. Considering the limited space of this paper, let's take a look at only the 16 main principles of the *Earth Charter* (Table 1) to be observed in pursuit of sustainable development.

The 16 Main Principles of the *Earth Charter*

1. Respect and Care for the Community of Life
 - 1) Respect Earth and life in all its diversity.
 - 2) Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion and love.
 - 3) Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful.
 - 4) Secure Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.
2. Ecological Integrity
 - 5) Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.
 - 6) Prevent harm as the best method of environmental protection and, when knowledge is limited, apply a precautionary approach.

- 7) Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.
- 8) Advance the study of ecological sustainability and promote the open exchange and wide application of the knowledge acquired.
3. Social and Economic Justice
 - 9) Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative
 - 10) Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
 - 11) Affirm gender equality and equity as prerequisites to sustainable development and ensure universal access to education, health care and economic opportunity.
 - 12) Uphold the right of all, without discrimination, to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being, with special attention to the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities.
4. Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace
 - 13) Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making, and access to justice.
 - 14) Integrate into formal education and life-long learning the knowledge, values and skills needed for a sustainable way of life.
 - 15) Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
 - 16) Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence and peace.

Source: The *Earth Charter* (<http://www.earthcharter.org>).

Exemplary Cases of Sustainable MIC

Today, local governments are gradually becoming central actors in

pursuit of sustainable development programs both within their own communities and in collaboration with other cities around the world. This challenging enterprise usually involves many other participants including international organizations, national and subnational governments, NGOs, CBOs, businesses and individual citizens concerned about the adverse environmental impacts of human activities. Here, we are going to inspect four exemplary MIC cases selected carefully in order to get valuable ideas and inspiration needed for building East Asian Sustainable Governance via MIC endeavors.

Case 1. *Gronigen City's Global Policy*

The city of Groningen city in the Netherlands has taken the lead in practicing MIC for sustainable development. In 1989, Groningen published a comprehensive plan *The Municipality and Global Awareness-Raising* about how the community could promote sustainable development, peace, human rights and global ecological protection. As a result of that plan, already in 1994, the city had spent more than 300,000 guilders (\$162,000) per year on grants for a Third World Center, a Third World Shop (Fair Trade Shop), a Peace Information Center, the Groningen-San Carlos Twinning Project, the Samafco Project for refugees from Tanzania and a twinning with Transvaal in South Africa. Each administrative department within the city also designated a civil servant to help formulate the city's foreign policy. A coordinator oversees the departmental liaisons (Shuman, 1994: 87).

The key elements underlying Groningen's success are evaluated as an annual plan, the ongoing participation of NGOs and municipal staff, a major budgetary commitment and annual hearings (Shuman, 1994: 88). Particularly, Groningen's annual hearings deserve our special attention. The annual hearings are deliberately designed to ensure that all NGOs

and CBOs within the city have opportunities to shape and critique the plan. Communities everywhere should consider preparing and disseminating an annual report titled *The Current State of the City in the World*.

Case 2. Pune–Bremen Partnership

The Pune (India)–Bremen (Germany) link is a long-running partnership that dates back to 1976. It began with support for handicapped children in a hospital in Pune and consequently expanded into promoting self-help groups in villages around the city. There was a program to introduce biogas technology and a number of city slum improvement projects.

In 1980, the City Solidarity Forum as an NGO was established in each partner city. The aim was to develop links between the citizens, community organization and institutions of Pune and Bremen. Official agreements were signed between the local governments, universities and chambers of commerce. These formal links resulted in expert exchanges, training programs, business links, joint projects, cultural events and education programs.

The 1992 Rio Earth Summit gave the Pune–Bremen partnership a new dimension. The focus on Agenda 21 led to a collaborative workshop titled ‘Sustainable Development and Regional Problems: Environment and Economy’. This Workshop, held in Pune with delegates from Bremen, aimed to build on current cooperation with a view to implementing Agenda 21 at the local level. It also wanted to find ways to contribute to bilateral cooperation between India and Germany. The results from this workshop were an analysis of the ecological, economic and social situation in the Pune area, formulation of concrete measures for solving exiting problems and an agreement on joint action to improve sustainability in Pune.

In 1995, Bremen also signed an agreement with Pimpri (India) on sharing its experience and expertise concerning resource management in the field of converting biogas from solid waste and gas from sewage treatments into electricity. After that, Bremen, Pune and Pimpri also signed an agreement together on the establishment of the International Office-*Agenda 21* in Pune to strengthen their sustainable development cooperation. The Pune-Bremen partnership, as a model case of community-led multipurpose links with the municipalities in a supportive role (Schep, 1995: 126-129), is mutually beneficial with significant gains for both. *Local Agenda 21* activities in both Pune and Bremen have benefited greatly from the partnership. New structures have been developed through which much broader sections of society have been able to participate in the process of sustainable development. Generally, the focus for Pune has been on practical development projects such as controlling pollution, use of biogas, polio treatment, education of slow learners, slum improvement and economic research, whereas in Bremen there has been greater attention to sustainability education in the global context. Of course, other benefits to Bremen from the partnership such as reducing energy consumption, increasing research opportunity, promoting business links cannot be slighted (Knowles et al. 1999: 92-94).

Case 3. *The European Union's MIC Programs*

The European Union (EU) has been active in promoting MIC. Above all, the entire EU has supported MIC projects as effective instruments with which to further European integration. It also has used MIC programs as means of encouraging the process of reforms in Central and East Europe, supporting socio-economic development in Mediterranean non-member countries, and fostering mutual understanding and friendship with African and Asian countries, as well as expediting the sustaina-

ble development programs of local governments in its member countries. The EU often has done so in collaboration with regional or international associations of local governments, such as the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Eurocities, the IULA, the UTO, and the ICLEI.

The EU's MIC programs has been primarily funded through the European Commission, the operating arm of the EU. The Public Administration Reform in East Europe (PAREE) program and the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) program have provided support for capacity building at the local level and for twinning arrangements between East and West European municipalities. The Action Program for Local and Regional Governments in Europe (PACTE) and OVERTURE-ECOS have involved MIC in a wide range of themes between at least two municipalities in the EU and one counterpart from Central and East Europe. The EU has sponsored the Trans-Mediterranean Network of Local Governments (MED-URBS), which have established networks on municipal management connecting European and Mediterranean municipalities, and also supported MIC projects involving Europe and Africa (Gilbert, 1996: 77).

In 1999, the EU commenced the Asia Urbs program to build mutual understanding between Europe and Asia by promoting cooperation on urban issues to achieve a better quality of life in cities and towns. The basis for taking part in the Asia Urbs program and receiving financial support is a clear partnership involving at least two local governments and at least a local government from 16 Asian Countries. The program also encourages the partnerships to involve public and private sector players, as well as NGOs and CBOs. The program is particularly focused on project proposals that involve local communities that build

their own capacities around themes like social infrastructure, socio-economic development, environment, and management in urban areas. The EU funding can provide for as much as 65% of the total cost of a project up to a ceiling of 500,000 Euro. The remainder is to be provided by the local government partners involved in the project (<http://www.asia-urbs.com>).

Case 4. *The European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign*

The European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign, known as the European-wide *Local Agenda 21* activities, was launched at the end of the 1st European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns held in Aalborg, Denmark, in May 1994. Originally, the program of the conference was prepared by the ICLEI at the request of the co-conveners, the European Commission and the city of Aalborg. The conference was participated by more than 600 delegates from local governments, international organizations, governments, NGOs, CBOs, and scientific institutes from 30 European and 4 non-European countries. Major issues of the *Local Agenda 21* process were addressed in 37 workshops. The final day of the Conference saw the adoption of the *Charter of European Cities & Towns Sustainability* called the *Aalborg Charter*. The *Aalborg Charter* was unanimously approved and initially signed by 80 European local governments and 253 representatives of international organizations, national governments, research institutes, consultants and individuals (<http://www.iclei.org>).

The part III of the *Aalborg Charter* proclaimed that signatories of this *Charter* would seek to achieve a consensus within their communities on a *Local Agenda 21* by the end of 1996, and by means of their individual local action plans contribute to the implementation of the EU's 5th Environmental Action Program: 'Towards Sustainability'. A more elaborated action

plan of the *Aalborg Charter* called the ‘*Lisbon Action Plan*’ was endorsed at the 2nd European Sustainable Cities & Towns Conference in Lisbon in October 1996. Until today, more than 500 local governments from across Europe have joined the Campaign by signing the *Aalborg Charter*. They represent over 100 million European citizens from 30 countries.

The European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign is supported by five international associations or networks of local governments: the ICLEI, the UTO, the CEMR, Eurocities, and the WHO Healthy Cities Project, which are directly involved in creating campaign activities through undertaking sustainable development projects in which member local governments can participate.

The Need for an MIC Approach to East Asian Sustainable Governance

So far, I have discussed that in the era of globalization the human race is confronted with serious global challenges including conflicts and wars, hunger and poverty, environmental destruction, financial crisis, human rights violations and so forth, and that these global challenges are mainly caused by the chronic under-provision of global public goods. I have also emphasized that MIC for sustainable development, as an emerging approach to international cooperation, has significant potential to rectify this chronic under-provision of global public goods. Now, I am going to suggest using the sustainable MIC movement as a lever to realize the vision of East Asian Sustainable Governance in the near future.

In recent years, particularly since the financial crisis in 1997, East Asian countries have moved towards regional cooperation. In November 1999, the leaders of the ‘ASEAN+3’, i.e., the 10 Southeast Asian nations plus South Korea, Japan and China, issued the *Joint Statement on East Asia Cooperation*. This *Joint Statement* declared that they agreed to promote dialogue and to deepen and consolidate collective efforts with a view to

advancing mutual understanding, trust, good neighborliness and friendly relations, peace, stability and prosperity in East Asia...these are essential to sustained economic growth and indispensable safeguards against the recurrence of economic crises in East Asia. In March 2001, 'ASEAN+3' nations inaugurated the East Asian Study Group, which is to discuss ways to bring their countries closer economically, socially and culturally. Recently a reporter of the LA Times (November 29, 1999) depicted these current moves of regional grouping in East Asia as a first step towards the establishment of a common market, similar to the EU.

The USA and the EU have reportedly been concerned about the moves by East Asian nations to promote a regional grouping because of its economic potential. The number of East Asian people amounting to 1.95 billion accounts for one third of the world's total population. The combined gross domestic product (GDP) in the region stands at \$6.3 trillion, about 21 percent of the total world GDP. East Asia has rapidly become an economic center over the last several decades, and many western nations like the USA, Canada and Australia have switched their focus of attention from Europe to East Asia. According to a World Bank prediction based on the condition that the next 20 years will be like the past 50 years in terms of speed in economic development, 4 out of 7 so called G-7 countries will be East Asian countries by 2020. This means that in terms of the GDP calculated with purchasing power, in 2020, China will be the wealthiest country in the world. The USA will be the second, and will be followed by Japan. The 4th will be India, and the 5th will be the Unified Korea. The 6th will be Indonesia and Germany (Lee, 1999: 9). This prediction can be criticized as too rosy, considering the recent economic slowdown in the case of Japan and other countries, and the economic turmoil accompanied by political crisis in Indonesia. But,

many reliable indications support the general consensus that East Asia will be the most active and predominant hub of the world economy in the near future.

However, the other and darker side of East Asian region does not allow us to be leisurely satisfied with this optimistic forecast. We have already been confronted with at least three serious challenges engendered by rapid economic growth and incorporation of East Asia into the global economy. The first challenge is economic polarization. The globalizing process in East Asia for more than two decades has aggravated the income gap between the haves and the have-nots to a horrible extent both internationally and domestically. The economic polarization fundamentally stems from the exclusive nature of the global economy (Borja & Castells, 1997: 9). The global economy includes anything that creates value and is valued anywhere in the world. It excludes what is devalued or undervalued. It is at once an expansive system and a system that segregates and excludes social sectors, territories and countries. It is a system in which the creation of value and intensive consumption are concentrated in segments that are connected throughout the world, while for other broad sectors of the population a transition is setting in moving from the previous situation of exploitation to a new form of irrelevance (*ibid.*). These tendencies are not inexorable. Yet to counter them, creative measures to the present imbalances are needed as correctives.

The second challenge is environmental decline. East Asia is one of the worst regions in the world in terms of environmental sustainability. According to the Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI) Report unveiled at the January 2001 World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, most of East Asian countries are scored low in the sustainability rankings among the 122 countries analyzed. Japan is ranked

as the 22nd, Malaysia the 42nd, Singapore the 65th, Thailand the 74th, South Korea the 95th and China the 108th. (<http://www.yale.edu/envirocenter>). Indeed, the fact that China belongs to the lowest group of the ESI ranking, when considering the gigantic size of its population and its fast economic growth rate, is a horrible threat to the environmental sustainability of East Asia and the whole world. East Asia has already become one of the most polluted regions in the world, and has suffered from the accelerating desertification in the northeastern inland area of China and the massive destruction of the rainforest in the tropical Southeast Asian countries. The resource, especially energy and food, dependency of most economies and the growing needs for the Brown Agenda such as the provision of clean air and water, sanitation, and so forth caused by the continuing exodus from rural to urban areas. Now, these formidable environmental problems urgently require creative international cooperation in this region.

The third challenge is vulnerability to conflict. The East Asian region has been prone to intra-state and inter-state conflicts. The East Timor massacre is just a recent example of tragic racial conflicts occurred in this region. The presently ongoing conflict between Northeast Asian countries caused by the Japanese government's policy on the suspected distortion of history textbooks is evidence that the historic scars and animosities in this region have not yet been cleared away. The deep mistrust between Northeast Asian nations has been reflected in their recent military build-up competition even in the Post-Cold War era. East Asian countries have increased their military expenditures by 35 percent on average in 1997 compared with those in 1985. This was an exceptional phenomenon in the world. The whole world spent 34 percent less during the same period (Lee, 1999: 12). Chinese, Japanese and

Korean governments have all been eager to increase their military expenditures in recent years. North Korea was only the one exception that could not increase its military expenditure because of economic catastrophe. Instead, North Korea has been eager to develop weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear bombs, missiles and chemical weapons that were cheaper than modern conventional weapons systems. One major reason for the East Asian military build-up lies in their fear or insecurity about the future. Thus, the challenge to us is to find out and practice mutual reassurance measures for promoting trust and confidence among the East Asian peoples.

How can we cope with these serious challenges facing East Asian people at the dawn of the 21st century? Promoting a sustainable MIC movement is, I think, a creative response to these challenges. Therefore, I suggest that the newly created East Asian Study Group consider a sustainable MIC movement as a top priority agendum for realizing East Asian Sustainable Governance.

Notes

- 1 Professor of Public Administration Department, Dean of the Institute for Area Studies & Development, Daejeon University, Daejeon, Korea.
- 2 Frangmentation is a newly coined term, made of fragmentation and integration (Rosenau, 1997: 29).
- 3 G4+ consists of four world associations of local governments (IULA, FMCU-UTO, Metropolis, Summit) and six regional associations of local governments (Citynet of Asia, Eurocities, Union of Arab Cities, Network of Local Government Association of Latin America, Major Local Government Associations of North America and Union of African Towns).

- 4 Originally, the first international attempt at enacting a Earth Charter was tried during the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. But, the time was not yet ripe for its enactment. After then, the Earth Council and the Green Cross International launched other Earth Charter initiatives respectively in 1994.

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