

PRESENTATION AT CHICAGO'S COUNCIL/CARI/CABA

José Octavio Bordón, 16/03/21

Briefly, I would like to speak about the local government's role in the framework of weak democracies. They are at risk.

What do we need to do? Obviously, the main responsibility is at national and multilateral level. However, the local level has the capability to introduce new and better practices to increase the citizen's participation. For example: through urban design, security, transport, environment, welfare budgets, strategic development programs, neighborhood plans and budgets, and so on.

At this level we have many tools and skills to bring closer citizens to public policies and decision makers. These local public policies could generate a virtuous circle to overcome both, the people's lack of confidence on Political Representatives and the government's lack of confidence on the citizens.

Our institutional democratic system needs to recover legitimacy and credibility. The present paradox is that those who have credibility, have not enough power but they speak from the people's specific and nearby experiences.

This is the case of many Mayors and Mayoress. They are more reliable because they are closer to the people's problems, they work "hand to hand" with the citizens, trying to overcome the difficulties with scarce resources.

I believe that sharing 'know how', 'difficulties', 'better practices' and 'successful experiences' between Cities is a **'Big Issue'**. Not only to improve local resources but also to 'pave better roads' to increase governance and governability in our Democracies.

The relationship and the friendship between you can be the *Political Imagination*, the *Political Promise*, for a better global future.