

Regional Governance Luxembourg, 31st March 2004

INTRODUCTION

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Minister, Partners and colleagues

On behalf of the Lead Partner, Groundwork London, I want to add my welcome to you all. We expect this to be a demanding, but we hope enjoyable, day of debates.

First, I want to thank the Minister for making time in his busy schedule to set us off in the right direction. I was pleased you emphasised the need to recognise the total integration of spatial planning with social and economic development, Minister. You explained why *SAUL* is relevant to Luxembourg. But it is also appropriate to say that Luxembourg is important to *SAUL*. Not just because the Grand Duchy has been a central and valued player in our partnership from the beginning of the earlier IIC project ‘New Urban Landscapes’. But because in *SAUL*, the Luxembourg regional strategy project provides an ideal test bed for the *SAUL* Key Issues; allowing all partners to address those questions in the context of a region which is looking for answers from an open and enquiring position, where structures and partnerships have not yet evolved so far as to make imaginative solutions difficult to implement.

I have been fortunate to visit Luxembourg several times over recent years, including this South region. Yesterday, some of our colleagues took part in the second Luxembourg Joint Planning Group, where we had a preview of how the region is now beginning to develop the partnership – building processes, which will be essential to enable you to find the answers to these *SAUL* issues from within your own southern region, in partnership with your Ministry. I was very impressed to see how much progress has been made since our last visit. So this Symposium today is clearly taking place at the right time.

By the end of it, I hope we will have contributed some ideas on regional governance for open space planning; and that we will all have learned a great deal from the Luxembourg experience.