



REMARKS ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. THANAVON PAMARANON, FIRST SECRETARY, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE HABITAT III INFORMAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING (New York, 27 June 2016)

Co-facilitators,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Allow me to first express the Group's appreciation for the timely release of the revised version of the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda. It gives us the assurance and confidence that we are on the right track and moving in a promising direction under your able leadership.

Since we received the proposed program for the informal consultations and the third Informal Intergovernmental Meetings for this week on Friday evening, we have not yet discussed these within the Group. Our preliminary view is that we should be able to go along with the proposed program for Monday to Wednesday, which will involve going through the revised draft section by section under your guidance.

As for Thursday, we would like to inquire how the informal-informals will be conducted and on which topics. The program for Friday indicates "Finalization of proposed text of the outcome document for PrepCom3 in Surabaya". We would like to seek clarification on the Way Forward. Should we expect another revised text to be issued, which would be used as a basis for negotiations at PrepCom3?

Co-facilitators,

We would like to thank you for your presentation of the revised draft, which gives us a better understanding of the rationale for the revisions. The Group would like to make our general comments on the revised draft as follows:

- We see improvement in the revised draft; it is shorter and more concise, while the main content has been retained. It is also better structured, thus, it is easier to read. Some of our inputs have been taken into account.
- However, there are still a great number of areas that in our view need to be strengthened and enhanced. As a starting point, the New Urban Agenda will only be effective if there is national ownership. We therefore wish to see a strong reference to implementing the New Urban Agenda in a manner that takes into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respects national policies and priorities.
- We still see more room for strengthening the interlinkages between the economic, social and environmental issues reflected in the document. Other examples of issues that need to be improved are the concepts of "compact city" and "slum": we see insufficient elaboration on city expansion or slum upgrading. When discussing transport and mobility, the focus is on the economic aspect, but attention should also be given to the social and environmental aspects. We recognize the attempt to strengthen the language on road safety, but it requires further clarity. In addition, there is still ample room to highlight urban-rural linkages, cultural diversity and cultural heritage, sustainable consumption and production patterns, and the need to build resilience.

- We have noticed that key issues for the group which we submitted in writing are not reflected in the revised draft, and we wish to see them reflected, particularly, the issues of unilateral coercive measures, the Right to Development, technology transfer, and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities. The issues of long-term integrated planning and urban governance, which appear in the policy units' recommendations and have been repeatedly pointed out by our group as key issues in the New Urban Agenda, being drivers of sustainable urbanisation, were also not taken into account.

- It has always been the Group's view that the outcome of the Habitat Conference should be focused, forward looking, and action-oriented by giving great emphasis to implementation. We note that the section on means of implementation largely focuses on the national and local levels. Notwithstanding the importance of the local level and its role, we do not think that this section in the current revised draft is balanced. We would like to see the role of international cooperation highlighted adequately because it is crucial in providing additional, adequate, sustainable and predictable means of implementation including finance, technology transfer and capacity enhancement as means to support national efforts and capacities to implement the Agenda we will be adopting. It is also important to acknowledge the existing gaps in capacities between developed and developing countries and that the international community should provide means of implementation to developing countries.

- Last but not least, we reiterate that the outcome document must emphasise the importance of the agencies, funds and programmes of the UN system and other relevant institutions in human settlements to support developing countries. We must ensure that the organizational machinery for implementing this Agenda is in place, and in this regard, the Group remains supportive of strengthening UN-Habitat.

Co-facilitators,

These are our general comments on the revised draft and we will provide specific comments when we go through each section. We look forward to a productive week and open discussion in order to advance our work and once again, please rest assured of the commitment of the Group of 77 and China in the preparatory process for the Habitat III Conference with the aim to reach a meaningful outcome.

I thank you.