



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. THANAVON PAMARANON, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE THIRD SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE IN HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HABITAT III) (Surabaya, Indonesia, 25 July 2016)

Co-Chairs,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Group would like to first express appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the city of Surabaya for hosting the third session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom3) for Habitat III. We would like to also thank the Secretary-General of the Conference for the progress report on the activities undertaken by the Secretariat in preparation for the Conference.

We have an important and challenging task this week. The Committee will review the organizational as well as the substantive preparations for the Conference. The Group 77 and China wishes to reaffirm paragraph 17 of the Resolution 70/210 which strongly encourages Member States to conclude negotiations on the draft outcome document at the third session of the Preparatory Committee. Please rest assured, Co-Chairs, the Group's constructive and active engagement in the next three days.

The Group shares the view that the New Urban Agenda should be concise, focused, forward looking, and action-oriented by giving great emphasis on implementation.

Co-Chairs,

The Group would like to reaffirm all the agreed principles of Habitat II, including Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and the Twin Goals of the adequate shelter and sanitation for All and sustainable development in a urbanizing world.

The Group would like to emphasize that the New Urban Agenda is an agenda for cities and human settlements. Urban and rural areas are not only interdependent and mutually supportive, but are also important engines of economic growth, poverty reduction and environmental protection. And this Agenda should take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities, as well. Our general comments on the New Urban Agenda revised draft (18 July) are as follows:

First, the Group takes note of some progress in some areas of the revised draft; a number of the positions of the Group were taken into account. The document is comprehensive, seeks to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development and that cross-cutting issues such as people-centered approach, planet sensitive, climate change, culture, and resilience are reflected in the document. Moreover, issues concerning poverty eradication, reducing inequalities, adequate housing, urban-rural linkages even needed to be reinforced and territorial planning being highlighted and the diversity of human settlements are recognized.

We think, however, that there is need to seek balance in section to do with follow up and review. In our view, the outcome document must strike the technical and political balance which will be a

challenging task ahead of us.

Second, we welcome the references and clear interlinkages of the New Urban Agenda to the agreed outcomes of the new sustainable development framework. It is of utmost importance to advance towards an inclusive agenda to be founded in relevant outcomes and international agreements including the 2030 Development Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, among others. The 2030 Agenda, including its Goal 11 shall contribute to our efforts towards the effective management of the challenges, and provide an opportunity to promote a positive mutually reinforcing relationship between cities and their surroundings across the human settlements continuum through innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared development.

Third, there are areas of the Group's interest which could be strengthened and elaborated further, such as international cooperation and commitment of developed countries, means of implementation, follow up and review, long-term planning, and disaster risk reduction. We are guided by a vision of cities and human settlements characterized by quality of life, equity, sustainable environment and an inclusive economy, ensuring cities and human settlements as a positive force for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Essential to this realization is the need for the foundational principles of integrated territorial planning, urban governance in the way we plan, develop, and manage sustainable human settlements, and appropriate financing mechanisms.

Fourth, a strong organizational machinery for implementing the New Urban and Human Settlements Agenda must be put in place. The Group remains firmly supportive of strengthening UN-Habitat, both its normative and operational work which is captured in some sections of the revised draft. The Group remains firmly supportive of strengthening UN-Habitat in order to fulfil fully its coordinating role of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and welcomes mainstreaming its role and the inclusion of the specific details of strengthening as captured in some sections of the revised draft.

Fifth, on follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda, we think that it is important to include the review of the global progress in the implementation of the Agenda as part of the integrated and coordinated follow-up process to the United Nations conferences and summits, aligned with the General Assembly, ECOSOC, the High Level Political Forum and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review cycles, as appropriate, taking fully into account any existing mechanism of Habitat I and II, the UN-Habitat Governing Council for instance.

Madame Co-Chairs,

The Group of 77 and China would like to stress the importance of human settlements and its direct impact on achieving sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Our approach to urbanization and human settlements should enhance the Right to Development accordingly with the Declaration on the Right to Development, in particular for developing countries.

The role of international cooperation is crucial in providing additional, adequate, sustainable and predictable means of implementation including finance, technology transfer or capacity enhancement as means to support national efforts and capacities to implement the New Urban Agenda. The United Nations and developed countries have important roles in assisting developing countries in this regards.

Co-Chairs,

We wish to assure you, once again, 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, ambitious and implementable outcome. This we believe will provide support and assist in resource mobilization in particular to developing countries, to enhance a truly global partnership.

The Group of 77 and China would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our support to the Government of Ecuador as the host of the HABITAT III Conference as well as to the Government of Indonesia as the host of the third session of the HABITAT III PrepCom. We are confident that both countries shall spare no efforts in ensuring a good preparation and organisation for a successful conference.

I thank you.

