

Habitat III

Draft

Distinguished co-chairs, excellences, Delegates, ladies and gentlemen, ****

Thank you for the opportunity to address this meeting.

During the Preparatory Committees, the ILO made statements highlighting the interfaces between the themes of the Habitat III Summit and Decent Work.

In 1996, the Habitat II Agenda included references to employment creation. Now, the Habitat III Agenda includes references to Decent Work, which is a broader concept. It does include employment creation, which continues to be crucial. And it also includes social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue, which are also critical for poverty alleviation. Therefore, Habitat III has taken an important leap forward to in regard to urban livelihoods.

Now it is opportune to discuss ways through which the Habitat III agenda can lead to concrete policies and actions which combine housing, human settlements' development and decent work.

Initiatives such as infrastructure provision, upgrading of low-income neighbourhoods and inner-city regeneration will be viable and will lead to inclusive growth when employment-generation and working conditions are properly addressed.

Decent work should be integral part of urban policies and management. To use the expansion and maintenance of the built environment to provide opportunities of decent work. Conversely decent jobs are an important lever for inclusive urbanization.

We suggest four lines of action:

1. Include labor standards in the procedures for public procurement contracts and other elements for the implementation of the Habitat III Agenda.

2. Raise the awareness and build the capacity of government authorities and public sector workers to embed decent work in its activities to expand and upgrade human settlements and via policies to stimulate the local economy.

3. Link support to business development with the promotion of decent work including compliance with labor standards.

4. Provide innovative financial mechanisms to create decent jobs. If finance generates more jobs and improve working conditions, this will have not only a social but also an economic impact on human settlements, generating further financial resources through progressive taxation systems.

Employment creation policies must be carried out through a process of social dialogue, involving local government authorities and local business social

partners, with respect for workers' rights, and by providing them with social protection.

The ILO can provide knowledge on decent work applicable to the context of Habitat III, through inter alia, conventions, recommendations, training tools and policy guidelines.

The ILO is already working in municipalities, with a number of local governments, workers, employers, and communities. Habitat III provides an opportunity to further explore synergies between the activities of those and many other actors engaged in the Summit. The sustainability of human settlements requires such partnerships.

Let's continue to work together.

Thank you for your attention.