Statement by ISOCARP/ PCG professionals/ GAP in discussion following the Panel on Socio-cultural Urban Frameworks
Tuesday 26 April 11 am – 12 pm

Mr. Moderator

Thank you for giving us the opportunity again to speak on behalf of ISOCARP and GAP. As these are open-ended informal consultations, GAP would very much appreciate the inclusion of stakeholder views in the discussion, along with member states, in each thematic session.

While we are appreciate the effort that has gone into covering a wide range of issues under the ten Policy Papers, we are concerned about the fragmentation of such a critical issue as that of urban safety, into at least three separate policy units – the ones on Cities for All, Socio-Cultural Frameworks, Resilient Cities – if not more. **This is despite the fact that the concept note for this session begins with the phrase – "cities and towns should be safe for all their residents."** Urban safety and security is a complex, multidimensional challenge, which requires integrated solutions. Safety from natural and man-made disasters, safety from different kinds of crime and violence, safety from conflict, safety from everyday urban hazards such as road traffic accidents, building collapses, industrial accidents, fires etc, as well as land tenure security, are all important dimensions of urban safety. Most of these impact the poor and the vulnerable, including women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees and displaced persons, disproportionately. Unfortunately, none of the Policy Papers mentioned above have dealt with this set of issues comprehensively.

In this context we would also like to support the statement made yesterday by the representative of IFRC, who urged member states to pay attention to a wide range of urban crises in the New Urban Agenda. We would also like to point out that a new Global Alliance on Urban Crises is being forged as we speak, to be launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May in Istanbul, and encourage member states to support the same.

Many of the answers to these complex challenges of urban safety lie in two areas – improving planning, in terms of both its processes and instruments, and strengthening urban governance, i.e. decentralization, participation, transparency, accountability, effectiveness etc. Both these areas are also explicitly mentioned in the 2030 Agenda – Planning within SDG11, and Governance as SDG16. In outlining "action-oriented" recommendations for addressing these, we would like to recommend the use of language already agreed upon in the International Guidelines on Decentralisation, as well as the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, which outline explicit actions to be taken by national and local governments, civil society organisations and professionals. In this context, we would also like to strongly support the statement made by China yesterday emphasizing that urban planning is central to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, as well as that by South Africa earlier this morning on the importance of the IGUTP.

Thank you for your attention.

Delivered by
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