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The Statement of Korean Civil Society Network on UN Habitat III

20161020

Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

It is honour for me, on behalf of Korean Civil Society Network on Habitat 3, to have a chance to speak in the plenary session. The Korean Civil Society Network on Habitat 3 is consisted of total 42 NGOs, grassroots, and partnership organisations from women, the physically challenged, youth, housing, environment, and participatory governance.

We recognise that New Urban Agenda tries to propose a new urban development vision in context of many complicated global risks we face. In that regard, we welcome the tries UN Habitat has done.

However, we are sorry that it is difficult to find a concrete implementation, monitoring and reporting system for inclusiveness and participation in New Urban Agenda, which is important to realize the key values of New Urban Agenda at national and local level.

In the same vein, we would like to point out 4 issues in Korea for implementation of New Urban Agenda, particularly in terms of inclusiveness and participation.

First of all, the Housing right was legislated in Korea as an outcome of Habitat II. However, we are sorry that the effective implementation mechanism is not yet developed enough to realize the housing right. As a result, there are still many economically weak people who are in risk of access to housing due to gentrification and high rents.

Secondly, regarding participatory governance, more than 50% of local governments have established multi-stakeholder engagement system to implement local sustainable development, so called, Local Agenda 21, since 1995 after the adoption of Agenda 21 in 1992. However, such priceless social capital has not been supported enough and effectively by national government since 2008.

Thirdly, in terms of safe city from any danger and risks, nuclear power plant is an important issue we have to consider because it has fatal impact on the entire community economically, socially, environmentally and culturally for a long term as Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters have shown. Even though such huge influential policy must be consulted with and agreed by people, in particular, residents nearby nuclear power plants prior to be decided, we are sorry that public participatory system is not yet developed and promoted in time and in appropriate manner. Because of it, local communities are divided by conflicts and are also anxious about nuclear accident.

Lastly, we welcome the concept of Smart City for better inclusive and sustainable community. However, we doubt that 'Smart City' policy in Korea has been approached in perspective of social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability.

In conclusion, we all cannot delay our action for sustainable development. Based on our experience, the multi-stakeholder engagement system in decision-making process at national and local level is very important to implement agenda to achieve sustainable development. Only through a meaningful participatory system, more social capitals will be able to be mobilized effectively for contribution.

In this point, we hope that the multi-stakeholder engagement system with national and local government will be made concrete in the implementation of New Urban Agenda. In addition, we believe that regular and participatory monitoring and reporting system of sustainable development goals at global, national and local level will be decisive for effective implementation.

Thank you.