

**Address by**

**H.E. The Minister of Housing of the Kingdom of Bahrain  
Habitat III - United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable  
Urban Development  
Quito, Ecuador  
October 2016**

**Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is with immense pride and great pleasure that the Kingdom of Bahrain is participating with you today in Habitat III here in Quito,--- the beautiful capital of the friendly Republic of Ecuador. I take this opportunity to thank the government of Ecuador -- and the officials of the city of Quito and its people --- for the warm welcome that we received.

I am honored and delighted to convey to you the greetings of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and of the Bahraini

Government led by His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister.

There is no doubt that the Habitat III conference opening today is held at an extremely important moment in history, in light of the formidable challenges across the world in the area of sustainable urban development.

I am confident that the presence of so many people from all over the world here offers the best opportunities to exchange viewpoints, and review successful experiences in this field in order for us to agree on recommendations that truly contribute to sustainable urban development.

**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Kingdom of Bahrain has over the last five decades given great priority to the issue of urban development in all government programmes and plans. Such a dedication is inspired by the strong

belief of Bahrain's leaders and government in the importance of providing all Bahrainis living conditions worthy of human dignity and respect.

The commitment to achieve such a goal has been largely based on the principles of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 launched in 2008 which places the citizen at the core of development through improving the efficiency of government services, including suitable housing, high health standards and education excellence. As part of Bahrain's keenness on promoting educational excellence, the UNESCO-King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize was launched.

Throughout the era of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa, the government has taken significant steps to diversify the economy, with the objective of increasing productivity, upgrading the standards of living and providing job opportunities for the citizens.

Bahrain has set up an integrated system for social protection to ensure social equality and provide support for the whole population.

With regard to the global sustainability of urban development, Bahrain has given great importance to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Bahrain's success story was well documented in its Report regarding the MDGs 2015 and the National Report for Habitat III. Both affirmed that Bahrain has achieved all development goals and striven to ensure sustainable development, recognizing its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Bahrain's early accomplishment of the MDG's was the product of the futuristic vision adopted by the Government led by His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa the Prime Minister who received in recognition of these achievements the MDG award in

2010. In 2007 he received the Special Citation to the Habitat Scroll of Honor.

Subsequently H.R.H the Prime Minister established an award to promote sustainable urbanization, which has been bestowed on two occasions to recognize outstanding projects in Burkina Faso and Brazil and was recently bestowed on Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka.

In recognition by the international community of Bahrain's efforts in the area of sustainable development, His Royal Highness the Prime Minister of Bahrain received the UNESCO "Avicenna Gold Medal" in 2009, followed by the Award for Sustainable Development in ICT.

Such an active commitment to progress has made Bahrain a leading example recognized regionally and internationally. For Bahrain, the achievements to date are stimulus to strive even further.

**Mr. Chairman,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Finally, Bahrain has paid special attention to social housing for its limited income citizens.

Bahrain has focused its programmes on this for over fifty years, achieving outstanding success in providing homes for tens of thousands of Bahraini families by constructing mega residential projects and cities and providing financial and social support for them.

Bahrain continues to pay great attention to housing in compliance with the directive of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, through the construction of 40,000 housing units. Bahrain is determined to move forward with the implementation of this programme aimed primarily at boosting the standards of living for all and putting housing at the core and fully in line with the New Urban Agenda.

In line with the ONE-UN principle, the Ministry of Housing will shortly sign a cooperation agreement with UNHabitat and UNDP, to review and update Bahrain's housing policy and strategy in support of

sustainable urban development reflecting our country's commitment towards the UN, the sustainable development goal and the New Urban Agenda.

Thank you.

**Basim Bin Yacob Al Hamer,  
Minister of Housing  
Head of the Kingdom of Bahrain's delegation**