

STATEMENT OF BRAZIL

SURABAYA, 26 JULY 2016

PREPCOM III – HABITAT III

Madame la Co-Présidente, Señor Co-Presidente,

In the name of the Brazilian government and in particular the Ministry of Cities allow me to thank the government of Indonesia, the people and the local government of Surabaya for the warm welcome in this beautiful and interesting city. Allow me also to acknowledge the great deal of effort that you and the entire secretariat of Habitat III have made in the preparation for the coming conference in Quito. Although there are still many points to be decided, the amount of work carried out and the level of consensus reached are quite remarkable.

Member countries, the co-presidents and the bureau have all made considerable efforts to define the main directions in the preparation for Habitat III, which should not only allow national governments to participate but also make sure that local governments and civil society have a say in the urban debate. Equally, the declaration project has also advanced thanks to the dedication of people and governments aware of the historical importance of such a document.

From a more substantial point of view, there are very few points still to be agreed upon. We are glad to see that important issues such as housing, sanitation and urban mobility have all enjoyed wide consensus so far, as much as the commitment to strengthen sustainable development in the cities context. We remain, however, still surprised with the reluctance to debate and advance the concept of Right to City in the New Urban Agenda. This concept has been discussed and matured over at least two decades and it precisely encompasses and systematizes the very consensus we are about to reach here. So we should not be afraid of dealing with it. If there are countries that face difficulties with the concept, we should at least leave some room in the text for those who are ready and willing to work with the idea of the Right to the City.

The issues concerning the follow-up and review and the means of implementation of the New Urban Agenda still need our close attention. An effective and participatory mechanism should be put in place to help countries and cities in the implementation of this bold new agenda, especially those regions that are going through rapid urban transformations. These countries are also the ones who are in need of more substantial financial and technical support, for which we should give special attention, making sure international cooperation finds the means it requires.

We should not forget either the important role UN-Habitat may play in this context. We have to draw maximum advantage from the the agency's expertise and practical experience in the field of housing and urban planning in developing countries. If some member countries feel uncertain about the role and capabilities of UN-Habitat, we believe this is a good opportunity discuss and advance important questions, including the strengthening the organization, including the financial and institutional support it requires.

The Brazilian government is proud to be here. Our country has gone through massive urban transformation since 1960s. Our cities have grown exponentially and we have faced all types of challenges, to some of which we believe we have provided adequate answers.

We could talk about different programs and initiatives, but allow to say a few words about our housing program called *Minha Casa, Minha Vida*, especially designed to help the least privileged segments of society. This program has been able to build more the 2,5 million houses, benefiting over 10 million people in Brazil over the last few years. In 2016 alone, we are expecting to provide adequate shelter for more than 2 million people.

It has become a state program, rather than just a specific government initiative. We are committed to further its development and improve it. The financial difficulties are being dealt with in a sound manner, so they won't prevent the expansion of the program.

We are committed with its continuity and we are ready the share our experience with countries and partners interested in it. We believe it is not only a good way to contribute with

the implementation of the New Urban Agenda but also a possibility to learn more and refine our public policies.

Thank you.