

*Opening statement*  
*by the Head of the Delegation of Bulgaria,*  
*Mrs. Lilyana Pavlova, Minister of Regional Development and Public Works*  
*at the*  
*Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development*  
*(Habitat III)*  
*Quito, 17 October 2016*

**Mr. President, Distinguished Co-Chairs, Secretary General, Heads of States, Ministers, Excellences, Heads of National Delegations, Representatives of national and local governments, Distinguished Delegates,**

**Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to thank Ecuador and the City of Quito for hosting the **Third United Nations** Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. I am proud to be part of this memorable event and I believe this conference would contribute to better identifying the needs and addressing the problems of housing and urban development in a global context.

I am glad to see here all the stakeholders united around a common cause and idea. It is our conviction that the challenges that we face today one more time emphasize the need to have **a collective vision for urban development** to streamline all our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

The Government of Bulgaria is a strong advocate of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and we hope that the Habitat 3 (three) Conference

will be a platform which will enable the development and the **implementation of real measures and more effective strategies** to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11 – that of **Sustainable Cities and Communities**.

**The New Urban Agenda** is a key step along the long path of achieving sustainable development and prosperity of the urban population throughout the world. **We have put a lot of efforts in order that the document reflects all important aspects of the urban development** as it affects topics that have been identified as challenges in the cities a long time ago – i.e. difficulties in the functioning of infrastructure, lack of basic services, deterioration of quality of life and settlements environment, insufficient jobs. The document raises also new issues that are particularly pressing nowadays – e.g. overpopulation and the challenging situation with migrants and refugees, flows.

The integrated approach is crucial for resolving numerous urban problems and promoting urban potentials. We need a long-term strategy, vision, scenario and policy for sustainable urban management in order to deal successfully with the challenges in the cities. In our view, one of the key elements to tackle the negative consequences is the targeted support for **balanced polycentric development of the territory**. This support can be achieved through the **strengthening of links and connectivity between small and medium-sized cities, and big cities and metropolitan areas**, with a view to exchange knowledge, experience and investments. The concept of polycentric and balanced territorial development has great potential and high added value to address key challenges in urban areas including those related to migration processes.

I am pleased to welcome the cities as **our most significant partner** in this challenging initiative. The New Urban Agenda aims to address urban challenges by giving the opportunity to work in **close cooperation with cities** for a sustainable development and a good quality of life. This **new model of urban**

**development and housing** integrates all aspects of sustainable development to promote equality, welfare, and shared prosperity.

Mr President, Colleagues,

The protection of human rights of children is of paramount importance for the Bulgarian Government. Today`s event provides us with an opportunity to influence the cities and make them responsive to the needs of children. We cannot waste the opportunity today not to improve the good governance and budgeting for children in cities, particularly the most disadvantaged ones. This will be a chance to reach every child in growing urban cities.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone for the substantial work to prepare the New Urban Agenda. The next steps we need to take are real actions for implementation and application in practice of the principles and the recommendation of the document. In this regard, the European Union made a significant step forward in this direction by adopting the **Urban Agenda for the EU** with a true result-oriented implementation framework.

On behalf of the Bulgarian Government I am pleased to welcome the adoption of the Quito Declaration and to fully support the New Urban Agenda implementation. The Government of Bulgaria has paid special attention on housing, jobs and skills in the local economy, climate adaptation, energy transition, urban mobility and improving the security and border control, which are among major priorities in our agenda.

The correlation between the two documents - the Quito Declaration and Urban Agenda for the EU, is a guarantee for achieving synergetic effect and a proof that we all are going in the right direction - finding the right balance between economic growth and quality of life, between economic prosperity and social welfare.

We are looking forward to working together on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda!

Thank you very much for your attention. And once again, on behalf of Bulgarian delegation I would like to thank the Government of Ecuador for the warm hospitality and organisation of this event.