



REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

STATEMENT BY HONORABLE ATARAKE NATAARA

MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

ON THE OCCASION OF

THE THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, HABITAT III

17TH – 20TH OCTOBER 2016, QUITO

President, Secretary General of the UN, Excellencies, Secretary General of the Conference, Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like on behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Kiribati begin addressing this august meeting by saying: Kam na bane ni mauri – meaning “may you all be blessed”.

President,

I am honored and delighted to congratulate you President on your appointment as Chair of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. I also wish to acknowledge the limitless efforts and strong leadership of the Secretary-General of this Conference, which have taken us this far in the process of formulating the New Urban Agenda.

President,

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Government and the people of Ecuador for their warm hospitality, which members of my delegation and I experienced since the first day we arrived here in this beautiful capital of Ecuador.

President,

We are all gathered here in Quito to finalize the New Urban Agenda, which was drafted at several UNHabitat III PrepCom meetings. I acknowledged the work of those involved in the PrepCom meetings and recognized that the zero draft has made attempts to address the issues and challenges of urbanization. I am grateful for the participation of my country Kiribati in this process.

President,

Kiribati like other small developing states continue to struggle to address the issues and challenges of urbanization stipulated in the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda. I recognized that they are creating severe pressure on our land use and economy in general, especially in the capital of Tarawa. Security challenges posed by climate change on the other hand continue to undermine our efforts to achieve sustainable development. I therefore appreciate the zero draft preamble makes reference to the SAMOA pathway on the needs of small island developing states, SIDS.

President,

It is encouraging that the zero draft preamble, and indeed much of the subsequent text, acknowledges the significance of building strategic partnerships among government at the global, regional and national, sub-national and local levels to facilitate a balanced territorial development and that local and sub-national government plays a fundamental role in ensuring the safety, security, livelihoods and wellbeing of our communities. I therefore support building the urban governance structure with supportive framework, which strengthens the partnership between central and local government to support decentralization and indeed urban development.

President,

I appreciate that the New Urban Agenda comes with the implementation plan. However I wish to briefly state the importance of adequate financing to ensure the effectiveness and success of implementation. Moreover I do appreciate as well the reflection of follow up and review in the zero draft as critical actions to be taken throughout the implementation to ensure the New Urban Agenda is effectively adopted, people centered and leave no one behind.

These two actions are complimentary, to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and key agreements namely the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework on disaster risk reduction.

President,

In relation to financing, Kiribati seeks to raise domestic revenue to support the Local Government and the growing urban centers. In addition to the financial support provided by international partners and bigger neighbors, the Government of Kiribati takes particular interest in the provision of climate finance and the idea of a sub-national window in the Green Climate Fund to enable small island states to secure adaptation and mitigation funding.

President,

There was a fourth Pacific Urban Forum in March 2015, convened by UN Habitat and CLGF that focused on the sustainable urbanization in the Pacific. I am pleased

to note that the outcome of the forum is reflected in the zero draft, hence the interest of Kiribati Government to register a support to the endorsement of the zero draft.

President,

In conclusion, I wish to affirm the commitment of Kiribati to work with you all in the pursuit of successful adoption and indeed the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Te Mauri Te Raoi ao Te Tabomoa, meaning Health, Peace and Prosperity to you all.

Kam rabwa – thank you and Gracius.