



**VELEPOSLANIŠTVO REPUBLIKE SLOVENIJE
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
BRASÍLIA**

Quito, 17 October 2016

STATEMENT

by Ambassador Alain Brian Bergant

**at Habitat III – UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
(17-20 October 2016, Quito, Ecuador)**

Distinguished Co-Chairs, Under Secretary General Clos, Ministers, Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Colleagues and Friends,

It is a great honour and pleasure for me as Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to the Republic of Ecuador to address this plenary meeting at the Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and to present the Slovenian statement. I would like to highlight at this point that Slovenia fully aligns with the statement earlier delivered by the EU Commissioner for Regional Policy Madame Corina Crețu.

Let me thank first to Ecuador for hosting one of the first major United Nations global summits after the historic adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development and the Paris Agreement. My gratitude also goes to the City of Quito for its warm hospitality.

Slovenia presents one of the smallest countries but is well known by its beautiful nature and rich cultural heritage. We are fully aware of the importance of our cities as generators of local, regional and national economy, places where people can live healthy, safe and prosperous lives. We are led by the principle of creating sustainable and inclusive urban environments where no one is left behind and high environmental standards are respected.

We recognize the importance of defining a national framework for sustainable urban and spatial development, where through cooperation among cities, national government, citizens and other stakeholders inclusive and effective urban development policies can be created. Our positive experience is in leading a dialog with our cities enabling a long-term and integrated urban and territorial planning. This year our major cities reached a political approval of their own integrated sustainable development strategies, supported by financial resources to implement main investment priorities.

I have the honour to say that Slovenia is fully committed to the transformative pledge of the New Urban Agenda. Especially we note the importance of promoting sustainable and accessible housing for all. Less than a year ago National Assembly of Slovenia has accepted a modern and cross-sectoral Housing Programme for the period 2015 – 2025. With this document we address main challenges providing a concrete action plan to stimulate the supply of various options for citizens to find affordable, adequate, safe and healthy residence.

Slovenian capital Ljubljana is a city that will surprise you and exceed your expectations. It is unique – small by surface area, but huge in terms of hospitality and quality of life. Numerous changes have happened in a short period, which is one of the reasons Ljubljana has become European Green Capital 2016.

The city center, which was once the domain of cars and buses, is now mostly dedicated to pedestrians and cyclists. With the electro-mobility policy the city is embarking on an even more ambitious development. Our citizens are locally provided by natural drinking water without prior treatment. Green areas, making up nearly three quarters of the entire territory of the City of Ljubljana are pointing out its distinctly green identity. City development is directed mainly at regeneration and renewal of degraded parts of the city.

It's hard to believe that today's green capital was so very different less than a decade ago. Therefore we firmly believe that Ljubljana represents a best practice in the terms of sustainable urban development.

Less than one month ago Slovenia has become the world's first country to be declared a green destination. Based on an assessment by the Netherlands-based organisation Green Destinations, our green, active and healthy country established 96% compliance across 100 criteria.

Ladies and Gentleman,

Today I have also the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Human Security Network, a cross-regional Network composed of Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Switzerland, Thailand, South Africa as an observer and my own country, Slovenia. The Human Security Network is an informal group of States that promotes the integration of the human security approach in policies and programmes at international, regional and national levels.

The Network is advocating a people-centred, holistic approach to human security, complementing the more traditional understanding of national and international security, also when it comes to the current global challenges. Ensuring peace and security as well as building peaceful and inclusive societies must remain at the forefront of international community endeavours.

Habitat III is taking place as one of the first major United Nations intergovernmental conference after the historic adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and presents the opportunity to address urban and human settlements challenges and obstacles to achieving sustainable development in all three dimensions worldwide.

At its core, human security is about protecting people from threats to their life, safety, fundamental rights and dignity and with that it's also closely linked with the principles of sustainable development enshrined in the 2030. The New Urban Agenda provides another important impetus to the implementation of the respective goals and targets and mandates not only safe and sustainable housing as an engine for human security and prosperity, but also all human settlements, free from all security threats and vulnerabilities including crime and other violent acts. As stated in the New Urban

Agenda this is another historic opportunity to leverage the key role of cities and human settlements as drivers of sustainable development in an increasingly urbanized world. Development and human security are interlinked and mutually dependable.

Human security is a unifying concept that bridges notions of security at all levels, from the individual, community, and/or local (i.e. human security) to the national and global levels and can thus offer guidance in our common endeavour for true sustainable development.

We, therefore, encourage States to integrate the human security approach in their policies and programs to help address effectively the persistence of multiple and complex challenges we are facing today, including poverty, growing inequalities, environmental degradation, but also challenges such as natural disasters, effects of climate change, armed conflicts with a direct impact on sustainable urban development.

True sustainable development can only be achieved if all stakeholders are committed to transforming the common global vision of not leaving no one behind into concrete action at all levels.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude with the following words:

We have gathered here in the beautiful city of Quito at this historical conference to adopt the New Urban Agenda, a document that presents an important step forward in addressing specific urban challenges and obstacles to sustainable development worldwide. I am convinced that we are setting up an important milestone for all of us, but most importantly we are empowering cities and their citizens to step into action and help us jointly reach our main goal – that everybody on the Globe can live a better and prosperous life.

Thank you.