



**STATEMENT BY HON DR BARYOMUNSI AT THE HABITAT III CONFERENCE  
HELD IN QUITO, ECUADOR 17-21 TH OCTOBER 2016.**

The Chairperson,  
Hon Ministers,  
Excellencies the Ambassadors and High Commissioners  
The Executive Director of UN-HABITAT,  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

**Mr. Chairman**

Since this is the first time Uganda is taking the floor, permit me to begin by congratulating the Government of Ecuador, the Habitat III Secretariat and UN-HABITAT for organising this important meeting of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) which is a land mark in instigating the new urban Agenda.

We welcome the opportunity presented at this august meeting where we are reviewing the final draft outcome document on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for all before it is endorsed by all of us as member states of the United Nations.

**Mr. Chairman**

At the outset Uganda would like to associate its self with the statements made by the Africa group and the Group of 77 and China. We fully support their sentiments.

We recognize the importance of Habitat III Conference and the unique opportunity it has provided to Uganda to engage with the rest of the global community. This opportunity will enable us address ways in which rapid urbanisation and planned human settlements development can be enhanced to serve as a transformative force

not only for us as a country, but also for its contribution to the overall global development.

Uganda was among the first countries to finalize its National Report on HABITAT III. The National Report reviewed the implementation of the Habitat II agenda in Uganda, and identified new challenges and emerging trends. These have been fed into the African common position paper which was fed into the draft Habitat III global report which would be discussed during this meeting.

The Government of Uganda therefore wishes to thank UN-HABITAT for the support it rendered to my Ministry in preparing our National Habitat III report. We also wish to thank Habitat III secretariat for the continued support it has given to the experts from Uganda who have actively participated in all the preparatory meetings of Habitat III.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Uganda National Report on Habitat III proposes a prospective vision for sustainable urban development and human settlements, as a basis for the formulation of a New Habitat Agenda in Uganda. We believe this will guide us in solving our challenges at country level.

In addition the Uganda National Report acknowledges the rising trends such as sustained positive economic growth rates, rapid urbanisation, the youth bulge, climate change and inequalities. It reiterates the importance of prioritizing structural transformation for inclusiveness and people-centred development in Africa and globally.

**Mr. Chairman**

In regard to the current challenges in Uganda, we recognize that the rapid urbanization rate in Uganda which is at the rate of 5.1% per annum has had severe social economic and physical repercussions which have not yet been fully resolved. These include inter alia; inadequate urban planning resulting in uncontrolled urbanization, urban sprawl, slum formation and informal settlements, environmental degradation, inadequate infrastructure and increased demand for services such as; planned housing development, public spaces, clean water and sanitation, education, public health and jobs.

My Government recognizes the need for effective policies as one of the vehicles for dealing with the these challenges and attaining sustainable urbanization. As a result my Government recently adopted the National Housing Policy which aims at ensuring Adequate Housing for All. My Government is also in advanced stages of finalizing an overarching National Urban Policy, the land –Lord Tenant Bill, the Housing bill and the

Real Estate Agent and Management bill. These policies and bills will provide modalities for effective intervention regarding Planned Housing development, human settlements planning, urban planning, infrastructure development, environment conservation, investment, employment, safety and above all governance that will enhance effective urban management and participation at all levels.

Effective policies on human settlements and urban development will also enhance rural-urban linkages in my country, which is an important ingredient for sustainable development and poverty reduction in Uganda. We therefore aim at making our human settlements and cities inclusive, livable, safe, resilient, productive and sustainable.

Uganda participated in the development of and has fully embraced the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning as one of the supporting instruments to attain the above objectives.

In order to realize good urban governance and planned human settlements, we intend to institute measures to strengthen institutional capacity for effective urban administration and management, enhance stakeholder participation in planning and decision making through urban forums and community groups, and promote the practice of good governance to enhance a management culture that is transparent, ethical and accountable. Mr Chairman, my Government operates a decentralised governance system which facilitates accountability at Community, City, Municipal and Town levels.

### **Mr. Chairman**

The challenges and interventions in Uganda that I have just mentioned are common to most countries in sub Saharan Africa and other developing countries within the Group of 77. There is therefore need for collective efforts to resolve them and carry the urban agenda forward as highlighted in the common position paper of Africa and the draft Habitat III report which is being reviewed at this meeting. We are therefore happy that the New Urban Agenda to be determined at this HABITAT III meeting has put into consideration solutions that are unique to African countries and developing countries within the group of 77. The solutions include issues such as the prioritization of poverty eradication to help boost people's living standards by enhancing access to better housing, food, clean water, sanitation, clean energy, jobs, and better transportation systems.

We are also happy that urban planning has been prioritized as the most critical issue within the HABITAT III process without which sustainable urbanization cannot take place. The ultimate goal of the plans is to ensure better infrastructure and greater access to basic services for our people.

Furthermore we are happy that the new challenges and emerging trends such as climate change have been emphasized in the draft outcome global report on HABITAT III. This is because the proportion of people living in urban areas is fast increasing, and cities and human settlements therefore have a key role to play in climate change mitigation by promoting energy efficiency in human settlements, appropriate land use planning, more efficient urban management, adequate public spaces and green building practices among others. The need to harmonize policy formulation and implementation relating to this important aspect of sustainable development is truly supported by Uganda.

On top of this Uganda believes that promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and taking into account shelter and housing needs as well as the economic and social needs of developing countries are critical. Their inclusion as priority areas in the Habitat III report is therefore fully supported. We take note that special focus has been placed on protecting the urban poor so that they are not further marginalized by the effects of the economic and financial crisis, including the rising prices of food and energy.

In this regard, Uganda fully supports the draft outcome report on sustainable cities and human settlements for all and calls upon other member states to adopt it as the road map to the new Urban Agenda.

#### **Mr. Chairman**

Uganda is aware that there is need to recognize the unique and key role that UN-HABITAT plays in the pursuit of Sustainable Development in developing countries where Urbanization is taking place at an unprecedented scale and pace. We therefore wish to assert that as we move towards the new Urban Agenda, the focus on cities should not result into neglecting UN-HABITAT's original mandate on Housing and Human settlements especially in cities and upcoming towns. Considering that it is predicated that cities would provide shelter for over 70% of the world's population by 2050, issues of Housing and Human settlements in African are very critical and should be prioritised as part of the new urban agenda.

UN-HABITAT and all other development partners should therefore continue playing a major role in supporting the efforts of developing countries in the provision of shelter for all, housing development, achievement of sustainable human settlements, urban planning and design, urban governance, urban economy, and basic services, social development, environment management and urbanization, transport and mobility, research and capacity development and urban development. These are critical issues that should drive the engine of Habitat III for the next two decades.

**Mr. Chairman**

Finally Uganda wishes to call upon all member states at this meeting to adopt the outcome document on "Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All" which will instigate the implementation of the **New Urban Agenda** aimed at readdressing the way cities and human settlements are planned, **designed**, financed, developed, governed, and managed. We believe, the New Urban Agenda will help to end poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions, reduce inequalities, promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, **in order to fully harness their vital contribution to sustainable development** improve human health and well-being, as well as foster resilience and protect the environment.

With those few remarks, I would like to once again thank the Government of Ecuador, the Habitat III Secretariat and UN-HABITAT for organising this important meeting.

I thank you for listening to me.

**FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY.**