



## PRESS RELEASE

### The General Assembly approves the most inclusive modalities ever on stakeholders and local authorities' participation for the Habitat III Conference

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*New York, 23 December 2015*

On 22 December 2015 the United Nations General Assembly, on its seventieth session, adopted the resolution on the 'Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)' (A/70/473) which refers to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development - Habitat III Conference's modalities. The Second Committee of the General Assembly previously adopted the draft resolution on 14 December 2015.

#### **Rules of procedure of the Conference and stakeholders participation modalities approved**

The resolution includes the approval of the outstanding issues in the preparations of the Habitat III Conference, such as the provisional rules of procedure for the Conference and the arrangements for accreditation and participation of major groups and other stakeholders as set out in annexes I and II of the resolution.

The approved rules of procedure for Habitat III recognise the participation of the representatives of local authorities accredited to the Conference in rule 64, as it happened in Habitat II in 1996.

Following Annex 2, the registration of municipal and other local or regional can be arranged under the auspices of an accredited non-governmental organization or as members of a national delegation through their permanent mission to the United Nations.

The Conference will also apply the provisions of paragraphs 14 to 16 of General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Thereon, the Habitat III Conference, while retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders shall be allowed to attend all official meetings of the forum; to have access to all official information and documents; to intervene in official meetings; to present written and oral contributions; to make recommendations and to organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat.





The resolution also acknowledges the second World Assembly of Local and Regional Authorities that will be held back to back with Habitat III in Quito, Ecuador, and recognizes their role in sustainable urban development and in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Finally, the resolution takes into account the support of the General Assembly of Partners for Habitat III in improving stakeholders' engagement in the preparatory process.

These decisions ensure the Habitat III Conference as the most inclusive ever organized by the United Nations.

### **Intersessional process adopted**

Aligned with the vision for the preparatory process and the Conference to be carried out in an inclusive, efficient, effective and improved manner, the General Assembly decides to organize five days of open-ended informal consultative meetings before the submission of the draft outcome in order to provide opportunity for feedback on the conclusions of the Habitat III policy units and the thematic and regional meetings.

It also invites the bureau of the Preparatory Committee to convene informal intergovernmental negotiations for three days in May, three days in June and three days in July. Local Authorities' associations and stakeholders are invited to participate in two-day informal hearings in May and June, respectively.

The General Assembly strongly encourages Member States to conclude negotiations on the draft outcome document at the third session of the Preparatory Committee that will take place in Surabaya, Indonesia in July 2016. In that respect, the General Assembly reiterated its appreciation to the Government of Ecuador for the offer to host the Conference and its gratitude to the Government of Indonesia for its offer to convene the Habitat III PrepCom3.

It also expresses appreciation to the Government of Malaysia and the city of Kuala Lumpur for their proposal to host the ninth session of the World Urban Forum. The World Urban Forum is considered to be the foremost arena for interaction between different groups of stakeholders. The World Urban Forum in 2018 will be the first one to focus on the implementation for the New Urban Agenda.

In the words of the Secretary-General of the Habitat III Conference, Dr Joan Clos, "the text is a historic agreement of Member States towards more inclusive and participatory decisions within the United Nations system, as well as a true sign of the sense of responsibility in advancing decisions on outstanding issues for a successful, meaningful and action-oriented Habitat III Conference. Dialogue among local authorities, stakeholders and national governments is the guarantee of an implementable New Urban Agenda".

