

Thank you Mr. Moderator

I would like to begin by extending our gratitude to the secretariat, the panelists and many others who have been working diligently in the preparatory process for Habitat III.

In particular, Canada would like to acknowledge the importance of the 10 Policy Papers, the Thematic and Regional meetings and all the outcome documents that have been prepared so far. These will no doubt help to shape our collective way forward to ensure that no one is left behind.

The Habitat meetings hold a special place for Canada, as we convened the first international conference in 1976 in Vancouver. We see this third meeting as an opportunity to continue to foster engagement, empowerment and the participation of all actors, including not only at the national level and sub-national level, but also civil society, the private sector, academia and other stakeholders to respond to local needs for achieving a more sustainable future.

The efforts here are timely, and Habitat III is taking place after many key successful global outcomes such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the recent Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

As we strive towards a New Urban Agenda, we strongly recommend that it identify policies that promote access to housing, improve urban life, and eliminate discrimination. In particular, we must keep in mind the most vulnerable, as well as those who are most disadvantaged including older persons, women and girls, youth, children, new immigrants, persons with disabilities, the LGBTQ community and indigenous peoples to ensure that no one is left behind.

In the same vein, we align our position with those who have emphasized that any references to human rights should focus on already agreed upon terminology from the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, or from international covenants such as the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, or for example, article 11 of the Covenant on Economic social and cultural

rights. We would therefore caution the use of new language that has not been agreed upon such as the “right to the city”.

As we look to the future, Canada’s long term investments will contribute to support Habitat III objectives, in particular through achieving a more modern, cleaner economy and a more inclusive society.

Thank you/Merci.