

PrepCom3 - Speaking points – Ms Karla Šlechtová, Minister of Regional Development of the Czech Republic

- Acknowledgement, thanks, appreciation – PrepCom3 is an extremely important event.
- Draft of the “New Urban Agenda” - a very good basis for the discussion during the PrepCom3 – in several days to come. Hopefully the “New Urban Agenda” will be successfully negotiated this week and then finally approved during the “Habitat III” conference. To support this process of successful consensus about the final text in October – personal political support will help to crown these discussions.
- Inters-sectoral approach is an imperative of our current global world. Example - in relation to urban development, tourism can serve as a stimulator of growth and jobs creation and as an important factor from the point of view of the local cultural and heritage aspects. Tourism is a growing sector in many parts of the world and has also strong impact on housing and local development. Politicians should be open, flexible and should be able to anticipate possible development; in favour of citizens. People create cities, not walls.
- In March this year in Prague, the Czech Republic hosted the “European Habitat” – the regional UN conference on housing and sustainable urban development. With 4 thousand participants, it was the biggest event of the preparatory process towards the “Habitat III” conference. The theme was “Sustainable Housing in Liveable Cities”, since sustainable housing plays a key role in human quality of life in general. Therefore, it is important that the draft of the “New Urban Agenda” adequately reflects the importance of housing, right to adequate housing and housing policies for sustainable urban development.
- After the “Habitat III”, the “New Urban Agenda” will have to be progressively implemented with strong support from the Governments all over the world. The Czech Republic sees the “Habitat III” process as an excellent opportunity to globally and thoroughly discuss possible responses to all our common challenges related to housing and urban development.
- The Czech Republic is rather urbanized country, where about 80% of ten million inhabitants live in cities. Therefore, sustainable urban development agenda is one of priorities. Many countries all over the world face similar challenges - so they can teach one from another and can cooperate internationally in the fields of housing and urban development effectively.
- As regards the implementation of the “New Urban Agenda”, the preparation of the periodic progress reports is important provide a qualitative and quantitative analyses of the progress made - in line with reporting on the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.
- There are many existing platforms being able to provide opportunities for inclusive and participatory discussion and exchange of views. Except for expert international cooperation, political support for urban development is crucial. So it is very important that “Habitat III” will provide a high-level political platform to establish creative framework for such cooperation for next 20 years.