



**STATEMENT BY HON. EMMANUEL KWADWO AGYEKUM (MP),
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT AT THE THIRD PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
MEETING FOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND
SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HABITAT III) AT SURABAYA,
INDONESIA**

25 – 27 JULY, 2016

Co-Chairs of the Preparatory Committee

**The Executive Director of UN-Habitat and Secretary-General of the
Habitat III Conference, Dr. Joan Clos,**

Your Excellences, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I bring you warm greetings from the Government and People of the Republic of Ghana, and especially my President His Excellency John Dramani Mahama. I join other speakers in expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the Government and People of the Republic of Indonesia and the Mayor of Surabaya for hosting this event and the very warm hospitality accorded us.



I also want to commend the Executive Director of UN-Habitat and the UN-Habitat team for successfully guiding us to this very important moment towards the New Urban Agenda.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Urbanization is irreversible and inevitable. In Ghana, over the past two decades, the urban population has grown from 32% to 52%; a very rapid rise in the space of 20 years. We have resolved however that human settlement includes both urban and rural. This is essential because to deliver sustainable cities and towns require acknowledging the people within a context that reinforces urban-rural linkages. We therefore urge the UN-Habitat to continue addressing urbanization within the urban-rural continuum.

Co-Chairs,

In addressing the challenges posed by urbanization, the Ghana Habitat III Report acknowledges the need for effective management of urban growth in a coordinated manner that will ensure socio-economic development. This will ultimately lead to reduction in poverty and improve quality of life for all and deliver livable, safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities, towns and villages.



Co-Chairs,

Inspired by the Ghana National Urban Policy, a number of urban projects such as the Ghana Urban Management Pilot Project (GUMPP) are also being implemented. The project seeks to address urban infrastructure investment, spatial planning, street naming and property addressing, urban management and delivery of basic services. Through the Local Government Capacity Support Project, Cities benefit from an Urban Development Grant (UDG) for investment and service delivery. There is also the Participatory Slum Upgrading Project which seeks to improve slums. There are several other on-going interventions towards addressing complex challenges of Urbanization in Ghana.

Co-Chairs,

Indeed, at the Africa Regional Meeting held in Abuja in February 2016, African States addressed the very important issue of our position on Habitat III. Guided by the African Agenda 2063 as a strategic framework for ensuring inclusive socio-economic transformation, we urge that the New Urban Agenda will effectively address human rights and equity in all human settlements for sustainable



development. We also look forward to an outcome document that will address interventions for the physically challenged and vulnerable in society and ensure that health and educational issues are also key components of the New Urban Agenda.

Co-Chairs,

The Government of Ghana under the able leadership of His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, who is also a co-chair of the Eminent Group of Advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals, stands ready and will continue to support UN-Habitat and to ensure the outcome of the Conference stimulate the world towards a holistic approach to housing and sustainable urban development.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Teri makasi!