

(Check against delivery)

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At the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III

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Thank you Your Excellences Madam Chairs,
Excellences,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me begin by expressing our sincere gratitude to co-chairs and the Secretariat of HABITAT III for their tireless effort to prepare for HABITAT III, including the drafting of the New Urban Agenda. We also express our sincere gratitude to the Government of Indonesia and the City of Surabaya for hosting this Preparatory Committee.

The Government of Japan supports a people-centered approach in accordance with the notion of human security. From this standpoint, inclusive, safe and resilient cities and human settlements are one of the fundamental necessities of human life. Without them, people cannot be protected and empowered. Inclusive and safe cities and human settlements make communities more resilient to shocks such as conflicts and natural disasters. It is Japan's hope that the New Urban Agenda will comprehensively address the key challenges to many of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In order to engage in a constructive discussion towards Habitat III, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the major points which we believe will contribute to creating sustainable cities through the New Urban Agenda.

First, from our experience of rapid urbanization and economic growth, spatial planning at both national and sub-national levels is necessary for sustainable and balanced territorial development and inclusive, sustainable and resilient urban growth. In this respect, I would like to stress the importance of such actions as promoting the “international guidelines of urban and territorial planning” by UN-Habitat and building a platform to share knowledge of national and regional planning.

Second, I would like to emphasize that developing quality infrastructure ensures economic efficiency, inclusiveness, sustainability, safety and resilience. With such features, “Quality Infrastructure Investment” is essential to promote strong, sustainable and balanced growth and to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, especially Goal 9 and 11.

Third, I would like to point out the importance of promoting effective actions of disaster risk reduction for sustainable and resilient cities. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted in 2015 includes the action priorities, which are totally relevant to building resilience of cities, which underline investment in Disaster Risk Reduction, raising public awareness and the “Build Back Better” approach among others.

Finally, as recognized in the process of the adoption of the Paris Agreement and SDGs, many cities around the world have developed and implemented various dynamic environmental protection policies to address such issues as climate change and waste management. Japan hopes that the New Urban Agenda will highlight the role of cities and encourage them as well as innovators and leaders to strengthen their policies in sustainable and balanced growth.

All these issues have been discussed and specified in the New Urban Agenda. The New Urban Agenda should facilitate actions by multi-stakeholders.

During PrepCom3, it will be useful to listen to the views of Member States. I hope all the diverse views expressed by countries and groups of countries will be taken into account in producing the New Urban Agenda. It is our hope that discussion of New Urban Agenda will be concluded at the earliest possible and I would like to reiterate our commitment that Japan is committed to continuing to contribute actively and positively to the discussions toward Habitat III.

Thank you.