

Honorable co-chairs,,
Representatives of the UN member states,
Distinguished delegates and ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honor to address this last session of PrepCom for Habitat III taking place in one of the most livable cities in Indonesia. On behalf of the Republic of Korea, I wish to thank the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the City of Surabaya for hosting this important meeting to discuss the crucial issues of sustainable human settlements development.

It has been 20 years since Habitat II which was held in anticipation of an urban century. We have subsequently passed the milestone of the world urbanization rate reaching 50 % for the first time in human history. Now 54% of the world's population lives in cities, and urbanization continues to proceed.

Through Habitat II, the international community came to agree that adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development were common goals for all human beings.

Progress has been made over the past two decades in the areas of poverty alleviation and the provision of shelter and basic services. Efforts have been made by many countries to establish systems to provide decent living environment for all.

However, it is hard to say that achievements so far have satisfied all people around the world at this moment. More than 800 million people still live in slums according to a report by UN Habitat. Urban problems such as housing shortage, traffic congestion, excessive energy use and environmental degradation are exacerbating in many countries around the world. In addition, many countries are now suffering from widening disparity among regions and people, socially and economically, and deteriorated living environment of vulnerable social groups. The incidence of natural calamities attributable to climate change is increasing as well, especially for the most vulnerable groups.

Looking ahead, a UN report projects 3 billion people to move into cities by 2050 and the world urbanization to reach 70%. If proper action were not taken now, things will get worse before they get better. So, it is very timely to discuss urban equity, poverty eradication and making cities sustainable, inclusive, ecological and resilient as key agendas at Habitat III. The New Urban Agenda, which will be adopted at Habitat III to tackle these and other challenges, will be crucial in shaping the future of our cities at least for the next 20 years and possibly many more to come.

Korea has achieved remarkable economic development and successfully managed rapid urbanization over the past 50 years. In recent years, it has recently leveraged diverse cutting edge technologies in cities to make cities more efficient, safer, and more livable for residents as well as sustainable and resilient.

In exploring the ways to make our cities more sustainable, livable and inclusive, and better cope with the climate change, we should take advantage of environment friendly technologies and ICT in designing, implementing, and monitoring urban policies to tackle such problems as over consumption of energy and water, and traffic congestion. These ingredients can be summed up in a smart cities approach which I believe can offer a model for the city of the future.

Korea has been sharing its experience in urban management with other countries around the world. It has also made a modest contribution to the Habitat III preparatory process by holding the national urban week in December 2015 including the international conference on the future of national urban policy. We are committed to continuing our efforts for knowledge sharing going forward.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

We should remember that cities are home for 54% of global population but their economic contribution comprises of the world GDP. This is why we need to make our cities work all the better.

For this, we need collective wisdom and concerted action engaging all stakeholders and the global community. In this regard, it is important to think ahead and to devise a mechanism whereby we will be able to implement Quito commitments to the New Urban Agenda and monitor progress made for the next 20 years to come. The zero draft of NUA suggests an International Multi-stakeholder Panel on Sustainable Urbanization as an option. I believe that the panel will provide UN-Habitat, urban policy-makers and experts of member states with a good opportunity to discuss diverse urban issues and share their experience and thus contribute to implementing the New Urban Agenda. The Republic of Korea supports the idea and proposes to host a preparatory meeting for launching the panel in Korea if Habitat III approves the proposal.

In closing, I sincerely hope that today's conference is a meaningful event to have an in-depth and productive discussion and move one step further to

realizing a sustainable future for all of us and our children.

Thank you.