



### **Habitat III PrepCom3**

**25-27 July 2016, Surabaya**

#### **Statement by Dr. Shipra Narang Suri on behalf of ISOCARP and General Assembly of Partners towards Habitat III (GAP)**

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Thank you, co-chairs, for your continued commitment to include stakeholders' voices in the discussion on the New Urban Agenda, and congratulations on the draft you released on 18<sup>th</sup> July. As you have already heard from different Partner Constituent Groups of the General Assembly of Partners (or GAP), we are happy with several elements in the new draft, but at the same time concerned about the dilution of some of our key concerns. I will not repeat what my colleagues have already said, other than fully align with their statements and reinforce some key points.

We deeply appreciate, of course, the acknowledgement of GAP (*para 113*) and the retention of the Multistakeholder Panel on Sustainable Urbanisation (*para 149*). We welcome the mention of the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments (*para 154*) and more concrete language related to gender and human rights generally, in this Draft. Retention of these elements in the final New Urban Agenda is vital from a stakeholders' perspective.

Upon closer scrutiny, however, we are concerned about the general weakening of elements of stakeholder engagement and partnership. For example, under Section B (Effective Implementation), paragraphs 74 and 75 related to urban governance in the previous version (Revised Zero Draft dated 18 June), have been removed. These contained important language on stakeholder participation in urban planning and policy-making. Overall, too, civil society's role in the implementation of NUA is significantly diminished, with scarcely a mention of grassroots, or of urban professionals, whose agency (and therefore capacity) is central in the pursuit of sustainable urbanisation. New forms of partnerships must include participatory age- and gender-responsive approaches to urban policy-making. Critical language on inclusion of labour standard clauses in public procurement and on taxation has been lost. Reliance on national statistics has been reinforced at the expense of participatory, disaggregated, qualitative and quantitative data collection. This, we believe, is regressive and will be detrimental to the effective monitoring of the NUA. As GAP we have made a strong recommendation on establishing multi-stakeholder monitoring mechanisms for the NUA, and we would like to re-emphasise that today.

Overall, we would like to see a strong role for all stakeholders, including major groups, in the follow up and review process. The documentation, review and dissemination of urban innovations and solutions must be included in follow-up, monitoring and reporting. The World Urban Forum (para 149) and appropriate regional forums must be strengthened as platforms for periodic voluntary reporting on the New Urban Agenda.

Excellencies, allow me to add a few final points on substantive issues. While welcoming the emphasis on planning, housing, land, decent work, the informal economy, gender equity, rural-urban linkages and resilience, among others, we would like to see stronger language on several other elements. These include, for instance, concerns of children in vulnerable situations in urban environments; the increasing urban risks and humanitarian crises, including those caused by recurrent and protracted conflict; creation of space for business activity at various scales; and supporting collaborative approaches for knowledge production. The New Urban Agenda must not miss the opportunity to address these critical issues at this critical moment in history. Stakeholders stand ready to support national and local governments in their endeavours.

Thank you for your attention.