

Official Statement

The 3rd Preparatory Committee Meeting (Prepcome3) of the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), 25-27 July 2016, Surabaya, Indonesia

Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

(Introduction)

- Co-chairs of the Preparatory Committee, Ministers and Mayors, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, the OECD congratulates the bureau members, all the member countries, as well as the Habitat III Secretariat, on the development of the draft New Urban Agenda.
- On this occasion, OECD would like to offer a few comments how to further improve the draft New Urban Agenda, especially regarding the call for National Urban Policies.

(National Urban Policy – collaboration is key)

- First, the OECD would like to stress the importance of collaboration across all levels of government, civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in the process of designing and implementing National Urban Policies.
- National Urban Policies should provide institutional, and formal as well as informal, frameworks for mobilisation and active participation of all relevant actors. In the same vein, horizontal cross-sector policy approaches need to be promoted, in order to exploit synergies for effective urban policies. Housing and transport policies are prominent candidates for synergies integrate potential.

(Data at the metropolitan scale)

- Second, we propose to make clearer in the New Urban Agenda that good metropolitan governance stretches beyond administrative borders. Urban areas are socio-economic entities that go beyond historically defined administrative

borders. In certain fields, such as transport or spatial planning, governance structures need to reflect socio-economic realities and requirements for the future rather than historically defined administrative borders. This crucial fact would deserve to be more clearly spelled out in the New Urban Agenda.

- Data collection at the right spatial scale (i.e. functional urban areas) is crucial for evidence to inform policy makers and monitor the performance of urban areas. Data on cities, as defined by their historical administrative borders, do not provide the tool for future-oriented policy design. They do not allow for meaningful comparisons of experiences, thus limiting the benefits of international dialogue. The OECD has developed, together with the European Commission, the metropolitan database which provides internationally comparable data, based on a functional definition of cities. The OECD stands ready to support further efforts in more countries across the world to compile internationally comparable data on cities, including for dimensions of citizens well-being.

(Investment / finance)

- Third, for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, we would like to suggest to putting greater emphasis on adequate investment and financing mechanisms for cities of all sizes in infrastructure and service provision.
- In many instances, efforts to increase local revenue in the form of taxes and/or fees and charges should be enhanced.

(Monitoring / conclusion)

- Finally, we would like to underline the importance of monitoring the implementation of the NUA for each country.
- The OECD has extensive expertise with peer reviews leading to objective assessment and constructive recommendations. We are ready to support the monitoring process of the New Urban Agenda, both directly and by helping interested countries to set up peer review mechanisms. Together with focused data collection, peer reviews will strengthen the exchange of experiences and practices that work for the benefit of all participants.