



The Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization oral statement 26th Session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat

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I am pleased to be present today at the 26th session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat on behalf of the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization.

The Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization is a New York based, not-for-profit organization formed to promote a better understanding of the role of sustainable urbanization and resilient design in the planning of our cities.

We would like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Secretary General of Habitat III, the Habitat III Secretariat and the Global Assembly of Partners for the agreed New Urban Agenda. We believe that the implementation of the New Urban Agenda will provide a framework of actions to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework.

We also would like to acknowledge the efforts and vision of UN-Habitat to bring to light the critical role of sustainable urbanization within the United Nations system, and among Member States and civil society organizations. These efforts demonstrate how well-planned and well-managed cities can respond to some of the major global challenges at present, including climate change, migration, and extreme poverty and rising inequalities.

Integrated human settlements planning for sustainable urbanization is very important for us and our constituency. With our partner the American Institute of Architects of New York, we advocate for responsible and enlightened planning and design. We believe that a cross-sectoral approach can improve the quality of life for all.

Many of the challenges that the cities face today are all interrelated: economic development and environmental stewardship; unequal economic opportunities and income distribution; extreme demographic transitions; social justice versus security; and access to basic services, efficient transport systems, public spaces, health and education. Spontaneous, unplanned and badly designed urbanization often results in the exclusion of marginalized groups and vulnerable populations. It is critical that these challenges be addressed as a system of systems, following on the principles of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the SDGs, including SDG 11. Urban issues are best solved by taking a cross-sectoral approach. Problems solved in isolation, apart from being an inefficient use of resources, may also have unintentional consequences. An integrated holistic approach across all sectors is an essential prerequisite for the cities of tomorrow.

This will require an enabling environment and enhanced international cooperation and partnerships among governments at all levels, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations System, and other actors. It will require a broader exchange of ideas and best practices on how to measure, design, finance and govern the cities to make urbanization sustainable.

As an organization of practitioners, we expect that new synergies will be built particularly among the design and building community, architects, engineers, urban planners and designers, and the private sector, enabling effective human settlements and urban development in line with the specific needs of cities and citizens. We cannot work in silos, but bring our knowledge together to support governments in the development of adequate urban policies, that will respect our planet and the dignity and equality of all human beings.

The Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization will continue to organize multi-stakeholder dialogues, forums and conferences advocating and promoting the science of cities and sustainable urbanization as key driver for change, bringing solutions for the successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda.