



NIGERIA'S STATEMENT AT THE FIRST PREPARATORY CONFERENCE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HABITAT III) HELD AT THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK, ON 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2014

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I bring you warm greetings from the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and best wishes for a successful First session of the Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

Nigeria aligns itself with the Statement presented by Bolivia on behalf of the G-77 and China. We also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you Mr. Chair, and the co-chairs and members of your Bureau on your election to guide us in the preparations for this very important process.

Mr. Chairman,

Almost two decades ago, the Nations of the world converged in Istanbul, Turkey at the Habitat II Conference to review the challenges of urbanization and adopted the Habitat Agenda. The Conference in 1996 created awareness on the emerging urbanization challenges of the time, and articulated the core principles of the sustainable housing and urban development agenda, which have remained our guiding principle in the last 18 years. Since then, there has been no doubt, some progress and better understanding of the urbanization process, and realization of sustainable human settlements development globally have been made. However, with the rapid rate of urbanization and its varied impact



on people, policies and economies, the time has come to undertake another review to assess what outcomes have been achieved based on our common vision in 1996. with a view to consolidate them and ensure they promote the integrated development that we all desire.

In relation to that objective, we must all therefore, ensure that in 2016, we put in place a pragmatic and action-oriented New Urban Agenda that transcends the Habitat Agenda. It must be jointly elaborated, encompassing relevant sustainable development goals that addresses not only the issues of urbanization but also the concerns of human settlement in general; if it is to exert a lasting influence and assure affordable shelter for all. The New Urban Agenda must be an economic catalyst; a development enhancer; a social integrator ; an equity binder; a safety promoter but above all a community builder. These are sound principles that will guarantee safe and sustainable urbanization that would secure a prosperous future for the next generation. We owe them no less duty.

It is noteworthy that considerable effort is being put into the preparations for Habitat III, as attested to, by the inputs at this First Preparatory Session. We certainly look forward to more being done both in scope and depth at the next sessions to ensure that we have a meaningful and fruitful Conference in 2016. It is equally pleasing to note that urbanization is one of the key goals of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. It is hoped that Habitat III would come out with outcomes that would delineate and elaborate this clearly to assist member states achieve this objective in a comprehensive manner.

Accordingly, as we proceed with the preparatory process it is hoped that a holistic review of the Habitat II Agenda would be undertaken and proper assessment made to identify successes and challenges. It is equally expected that the process would in a meaningful manner address emerging urban challenges including growing levels of poverty, escalating safety and security concerns, rising inequity, increasing pollution and its adverse effects on Climate change. The preparatory process must also be inclusive and involve participation and wide ranging consultation with all Habitat Agenda partners (policy makers, development partners, Civil society, the Academia,



Parliamentarians, private sector, and other stakeholders). It is important that we build and strengthen them, and accentuate their positives to evolve an outcome document that is all embracing and reflective of the aspirations of all.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Nigeria, on its part, is making earnest strides towards the road to Habitat III. We have in place a multi-sectoral National Habitat Committee; we are forging closer ties with National Habitat Agenda Partners; and have extended financial support of US\$3.0 million for Habitat III preparatory activities in Africa. We stand ready to join others in participating actively in this preparatory process to ensure the outcomes for Habitat III are actually those of the future we want for urbanization and human settlements in the next two decades.

I thank you.