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Thematic/Country Presentation

National Urban policies in Latin America and Caribbean region

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National Urban Policies with focus on Latin America and the Caribbean
CPR 66th Regular Meeting
Executive Director's Introductory Statement

Excellences,

As you all are aware, the Habitat III Conference was the first global summit after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. The New Urban Agenda (NUA) is an action-oriented document, and in May, the Governing Council encouraged us to further develop the action framework for implementation of the New Urban Agenda. AFINUA sets out 5 strategies: national urban policies, rules and regulations, urban planning and design, financing urbanization and their implementation locally. We believe that these five combined strategies are all urgently needed to **seize the extraordinary opportunities offered by well-planned urbanization in achieving prosperity, employment and sustainability.**

The NUA includes an urgent call for national governments to lead the transformative process of urbanization, **through the establishment of national urban policies.** Sustainable and resilient urbanization must be **led by national governments** who, working closely with subnational and local governments, shall set the rules of the game. National governments are well placed to lead the establishment of the regulatory, legislative and financial frameworks, which are subsequently implemented by subnational and local authorities. Therefore, **National Urban Policies reassert the role of national governments by establishing the responsibility at each level of state institutions, including by setting up inter-ministerial, subnational and local inter-departmental coordination.**

As will be introduced today, the global relevance of National Urban Policies **as tool for sustainable urbanization** has been recognized in statements by intergovernmental regional bodies. In the LAC region, **MINURVI**, for example, stated that *countries count on a national framework on legal, institutional and financial issues enabling their guidance on the urban, territorial and social development.* The **Common African Position on Habitat III** promoted *“the adoption of integrated National Urban Policies”* towards the achievement of *“strengthened institutions and systems for promoting transformative change in human settlements.”*

You will also see that the **recognition of the role of urban policy in advancing wider social, economic and environmental goals is growing.** In answer, UN Habitat's **portfolio of work on National Urban Policies has grown**, both globally and in LAC. The forthcoming presentation will **introduce the normative tools that have been developed**, and give examples of our **in-country technical assistance at different scales**, which are **informed by these normative tools**, focusing on **the regional context of Latin America and the Caribbean.**

Excellences,

I would like to stress the **importance of National Urban Policies.** **If we do not invest in putting in place robust urban policies and planning now, the cost in the future to correct mistakes will be many times more.** National governments, with local governments and other stakeholders, must **lead and coordinate the urbanization process** to ensure our cities develop in a way that is **sustainable, equitable and productive.**

Thank you.