Global Strategic Dialogue Series Mannheim

Accelerating the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals in Cities: Enhancing the role of the private sector

"Setting the Scene" by Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director

Tuesday, 26 March 2019, 09:05 approx.

Honourable Mayor of Mannheim and Team
Distinguished participants
Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen

A very good morning to you all!

In setting the scene for the second day of this Dialogue, please allow me to briefly suggest the following **key three points** as you engage in this day's critical discussions:

One: ***Investing to Develop True Value*** – 75% of the infrastructure in the world has yet to be built; therefore, what type of infrastructure do we want to build? If we want to achieve sustainable urbanization, we need all stakeholders to make a commitment to ensuring that we are investing to develop true value. One way we can ensure that financial returns are sustainable is to develop investment principles that prevent investments that detract from the Sustainable Development Goals. It is important that we not only think long term and be concerned about the repercussions of our actions, but we must also ask ourselves what true value are we creating? The value here is not only monetary but more so the values of the communities that we want to create in the future.

Two: ***Innovation & Disruption*** – As we rapidly urbanize, as in all periods in human history, we make progress when there is technological change. The first people to push forward are usually from the private sector. Being at the forefront of global, rapid and all-encompassing urbanization, we will need to be many times more innovative to survive the many disruptions that are coming our way. In what ways, do you think business can work together to

develop a network that can upscale sustainable urban solutions? UN-Habitat is keen to work with a global Urban Business Network that collaborates to advance strong business and public private partnership.

Three: ***People, Cities & the Economy*** – If we want to ensure that we are able to maintain healthy profit margins, we need talent to power our national economies by ensuring that the city is better planned, organised and secured. No longer should we regard rural territory as distinct from urban centres. In fact, we need to ask what lies beyond economic geography? What role can the private sector play to ensure that cities and their spatial conurbations are ecologically aligned; are spaces for chance encounters and are supported by governments that guarantee safety for capital. In turn, how can profits accrued from capital investments be distributed more equitably to ensure capitalism is made to work for us all. This can be done by: (i) developing creative industries for shared prosperity; (ii) using climate smart investment; and, (iii) using digitalization for inclusivity.

I wish you very fruitful discussions, which I look forward to listening to and engaging in as part of the audience. Thank you.