The High Level Political Form on Sustainable Development
Plenary SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Speech by UN-Habitat Executive Director: Maimunah Mohd Sharif
12 July 2018

SDG 12 is intrinsically linked to cities. Indeed, planning for sustainable consumption and production is one of the guiding principles of the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito in 2016. The New Urban Agenda calls for compact, mixed-use urban form and ecosystem-based solutions to unleash the transformational potential of cities to deliver sustainable development.

However, many fast-urbanizing countries are repeating the unsustainable patterns of the last century, yielding cities beset by sprawl, privatization, segregation, linear material throughputs and high per capita rates of resource use and emissions. It is imperative that the prevailing model of urbanization change, and quickly.

In that connection, UN-Habitat is pursuing several related initiatives linking multiple scales and sectors. We are assisting cities with planning and design to prevent and retrofit sprawl. This involves co-locating places of home, work and services, reducing excess mobility and expanding and revitalizing public space.

UN-Habitat is also supporting cities on their waste management strategies and field demonstration projects. We are promoting energy efficiency through the preparation of building codes and training of youth to make solar street lights. We are building capacity for more circular urban metabolism through the re-use of nature-treated wastewater. And we are supporting cities' mobility improvements through better facilities for walking and cycling and the integration of high-quality public transport. In time these will discourage the wasteful use of fossil-fuel subsidies.

In the lead-up to 2030, UN-Habitat will continue to work with UN Environment and others to support cities in delivering impact at the scale we so urgently need, in recognition of the planetary boundaries that threaten us all.

Thank you.