



**STATEMENT BY HON. EDWIN NII LANTEY VANDERPUYE (MP), DEPUTY  
MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE  
SECOND PREPARATORY COMMITTEE MEETING FOR UNITED NATIONS  
CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
(HABITAT III) AT NAIROBI, KENYA**

**14 - 16 APRIL 2015**

**Madam Co-Chair,  
The Secretary General of Habitat III,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I extend warm felicitations from the Government and People of the Republic of Ghana. His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, the President of the Republic of Ghana is extremely excited about the processes towards the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) to be held in Ecuador in 2016 and the New Urban Agenda.

**Madam Co-Chair,**

In Ghana, preparations towards the Habitat III report adopted an exhaustive participatory approach, in line with the guidelines issued by the UN-Habitat. The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development led the process with support from Development Partners. Preparation of the report involved multi-stakeholders, which led city managers to appreciate the complexity of urban challenges that confront them. During the process, a number of issues were identified, analyzed and appropriate recommendations were made to enable



Ghana prioritize its development interventions in general and particularly within the urban framework. It is insightful to note that, preparations towards the Habitat III Conference offered Ghana the opportunity to review its development interventions since Habitat II in 1996. Indeed, the final draft of the Ghana's National Habitat III Report has been submitted. The final Report shall be submitted after Expert consultation meetings.

**Madam Co-Chair,**

The overall objective of Habitat II was to provide sustainable development with shelter for all within the very important context of human rights, which is supported by the UN Charter. Ghana has since made strides within the urban landscape towards delivering competitive, sustainable, inclusive, livable and resilient cities.

In fact, Ghana's urbanization has been rapid. The 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) of Ghana indicated that the country is about 52 per cent urbanized. To this end, Ghana is committed to the New Urban Agenda, which is expected to reflect how urbanization can contribute to two critical emerging issues: i,e, **sustainable development** and **climate change**.

**Madam Co-Chair,**

I wish at this juncture to draw your attention to a few urban challenges of Ghana, which include, but not limited to the issues of slum growth, urban mobility, environmental sanitation, urban security, and housing deficit, among others.



Ghana's commitment to the Urban Agenda and surmounting the challenges led to the development and launch of the National Urban Policy and Action Plan in 2012. The policy provides a framework for addressing some of the fundamental problems associated with urban development and management in the country. Additionally, the Housing Policy has been formulated and launched by Ghana. The policy seeks to create the enabling environment whereby the State will play a less direct role in the housing sector and encourage private sector developers, cooperative groups and other actors to partner the State in housing delivery.

Inspired by the Ghana National urban Policy, a number of urban projects such as the Ghana Urban Management Pilot Project (GUMPP) are being implemented. The project seeks to address urban infrastructure investment, spatial planning, street addressing, urban management and delivery of basic services. Through the Local Government Capacity Support Project, Cities benefit from an Urban Development Grant (UDG) for investment and service delivery. There is also the Participatory Slum Upgrading Project which seeks to improve slums within the Greater Accra Metropolitan Areas. There are several other on-going interventions towards addressing complex challenges of Urbanization in Ghana and Africa as a whole.

Furthermore, Ghana has formulated the National Spatial Development Framework, the Greater Kumasi Master Plan, the Western Regional Spatial Development Framework, Slum Upgrading and Prevention Strategy and the National Transportation Plan. It is our ardent hope that, in pursuing the New Urban Agenda, Ghana would mobilise adequate resources to implement all these policy frameworks to make our cities livable and sustainable.



**Madam Co-Chair,**

The PrepCom meetings serve as a platform to further discuss emerging urban issues with experts across the globe. It is therefore our hope that knowledge and experiences will be shared among delegates, which will enable us to chart a course in improving the conditions of our cities and towns in a sustainable manner.

It is noteworthy that the Habitat III Conference will discuss some of the goals contained in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is envisaged that the SDGs will be approved by member states of the United Nations in September, 2015. Meanwhile, the process has begun for the development of indicators to track the implementation of the SDGs by member countries. This presents a window of opportunity for us to effectively participate in the process. I wish to entreat all member nations to adequately support their institutions responsible for statistical data to actively engage in the negotiations for the development of the indicators with the United Nations Statistical Commission.

**Madam Co-Chair,**

**As a member of the Group of G77 and China, I reiterate our support for the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which includes a stand-alone Goal on human settlements; Goal 11: to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”** We believe that having a stand-alone Goal shall contribute decisively to the success of Habitat III, which will be the first global conference to take place after the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

It is therefore our hope that we shall continue to engage with multi-stakeholders, development partners and the private sector to foster an



integrated approach to the realization of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda towards improved livelihoods and transformative change in our cities and towns.

**Madam Co-Chair,**

The challenge of weak urban-rural linkage is one that deserves special attention. In less developed countries and transition economies, including Ghana, the absence of a decisive intervention for the lack of cross regenerative linkage between urban and rural areas continues to fuel uncontrolled rural-urban migration at unsustainable proportions. The decentralized model of governance currently being practiced in Ghana is an attempt at dealing with the challenges with rural-urban migration. Ghana has a number of local government enclaves created to move development to rural areas. The New Urban Agenda should therefore encourage member countries to initiate processes towards providing amenities to rural areas. This in no doubt could help in dealing with the rural-urban migration and serve as a catalyst for the mutual growth of rural and urban areas.

I am very sure the New Urban Agenda will constitute a holistic reflection of the aspirations of Member countries and the urbanizing world.

**Madam Co-Chair, Distinguished Delegates**

*On behalf of the Government of Ghana, I wish to indicate that Ghana is prepared to collaborate with partners in addressing themes such as climate change, environmental sanitation, urban mobility, housing and basic services, and slum upgrading within the framework of the New Urban Agenda. We envisage that the New Urban Agenda will also address issues of Urban Governance, Legislation, Territorial and Spatial Planning, Local Economic*



*Development and Urban Infrastructure Finance to address challenges faced by middle-income countries and their cities.*

The Government of Ghana stands ready to support UN-Habitat to prepare towards Habitat III and ensure the outcomes of the Conference galvanize the world towards a holistic approach to development and implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

**Madam Co-Chair,**

His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, as Champion of the African Urban Agenda will continue to support the organization of sub-regional and regional preparations towards the Habitat III. The President will continue to be the voice of the African Urban Agenda within the framework of the New Urban Agenda. As a country, we continue to work around the clock to engage partners working with the Government to address urban challenges in the country.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Honourable María de los Ángeles Duarte, Minister of Housing and Urban Development of Ecuador on her election as the Co-Chair of the Preparatory Committee.

I thank you for your kind attention.