



**WORLD URBAN FORUM 2018 (WUF9)
MINISTER'S REMARKS AT PREPCOM2 HABITAT III
16 April 2015 | Thursday**

Madam Co-Chairs Her Excellency Ms. Maria de los Angeles Duarte and Her Excellency Ms. Maryse Gautier, His Excellency Dr. Joan Clos, Secretary General of the Conference, Distinguished Ministers and Heads of Delegation, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, I would like to convey my deepest appreciation on behalf of the Government of Malaysia to the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN - Habitat) for giving Malaysia the opportunity to take part in PrepComm2 of Habitat III. The New Urban Agenda is especially important to Malaysia, whose 75% of her population live in urban areas.

We hope the involvement of Malaysia in this debate would bring new perspectives and experiences, as well as increase awareness, to the role of cities and human settlements, including rapid urbanization and their impact on cities, communities, economies, and climate change and towards shaping a New Urban Agenda.

Malaysia through the Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government has worked consistently to steer the direction of Malaysia's urban sector to achieve our vision and mission to create a sustainable living environment for all.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Community wellbeing through reducing the social and economic divide has been always been an utmost focus of the government. Our Gross National Income (GNI) has grown by 6.5% per annum from RM 14,529 (3954 USD) in year 2000 to RM 30,856 (8398 USD) in year 2012. In addition, mean monthly household income increased from RM 2,640 (718 USD) in year 2000 to RM 5,000 (1361 USD) in 2012. Between year 2000 and 2012, the incidence of aggregate poverty was also reduced from 7.6% to 1.7%.

We are however concerned about inclusiveness and consequently striving towards minimizing inequality in our cities. Our figures in 2009, shows that the bottom 40 % of households in the country account for only 14.3 % of total income, while the top 20% account for nearly 50%. The Gini Coefficient for urban areas in Malaysia stood at 0.417 in 2012 which was categorized under Relatively High Income Inequality. Indeed, High Income Inequality has been a challenge to us all, thus Malaysia's stance in focusing on 'People Economy'. I believe the emphasis on equality will remain in the Urban Agenda.

Governments have embarked on development planning but oftentimes challenged to bring these into reality at the implementation level. The Federal Government would need to strengthen our engagements with the local authorities and grassroots stakeholders who are spearheading the execution of these plans. Good Local Governance is key and my Ministry has introduced the ' Jawatankuasa Perwakilan Penduduk' (People's Representative Committee) nationwide to foster grassroots engagement and will continue to be strengthened in Post-2015 and constitute the New Urban Agenda to ensure swift and effective implementation of action plans.

In addition to strengthening engagements between global, national and local levels, the need for new technology and integration of database are crucial aspects. Innovative methods, new techniques and apps need to be explored to ensure effective implementation of urban initiatives while being cost-effective. Data integration is also important ensure that various users can share their knowledge to optimize the outcomes. Apps will tend to attract the young urban population to be more aware and participate in city building and seeking for urban solutions. The Youth Agenda is also significant in Malaysia and we are now planning a prototype of a youth-centric city branded as 'Youth City' to provide more affordable living for youths as well as becoming a centre of innovation, entrepreneurship and employment. This is built in a semi-urban area and will be showcase for fostering cohesion between the urban and the rural setting.

The Government of Malaysia is now in the midst of reviewing the National Urbanization Policy. The National Urbanization Policy plays a vital role in charting the way forward for the urban sectors. Components of concern would still focus on affordable housing, sustainable infrastructure, public transport and other low-carbon initiatives, liveability, urban resilience, taking cognizance of people and their culture. The 1 Malaysia concept with the slogan ‘people first, performance now’ is an epitome of a people-centric development approach.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Urban areas as the hub of economic activities require the connectedness of people. Malaysia strives to facilitate the mobility of urban communities through the expansion of our bus and rail network. The Kuala Lumpur Mass Rapid Transit is now on-going and in line with our initiative to promote low-carbon cities.

In order to strengthen Malaysia’s role in the New Urban Agenda, we wish to heighten our level of collaboration with UN – Habitat. In this regard, Malaysia is hosting the World Urban Forum or WUF9 in 2018.

The Government of Malaysia hopes that from hosting WUF9, a major and concrete legacy will be created on the way forward for sustainable urban

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communities. Before I end, I would like to extend the warmest invitation to all the delegates here to Kuala Lumpur in 2018 for WUF9.

Thank you.

Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan
Minister of Urban Well Being, Housing and Local Government, Malaysia

16 April 2015
Nairobi, Kenya

5 minutes only