

MGCY Statement
HABITAT III PrepCom 2

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak. I am speaking primarily on behalf of the Major Group for Children and Youth, the UN's official platform for the engagement of children and young people in policy processes.

We urge Member States to continue to respect the participation of stakeholders in the HABITAT III process. As we have seen in previous intergovernmental processes, including HABITAT II and the ongoing Post-2015 Development Agenda negotiations, Major Groups and other Stakeholders have been key players in ensuring that the outcomes adopted at these conferences are transformative. Now, children and youth are recognized as stakeholders, but ***there is a need to create permanent spaces for youth to participate as well as the financing to do so. The thematic and regional consultations need to take this into account, and we urge the PrepCom and Member States to include youth in a real and meaningful way.***

At the moment, the Major Group for Children and Youth is engaged in a global effort to gather the inputs of young people and feed those inputs into this process. We are hosting local consultations in collaboration with youth-led organizations in order to empower young people and engage them moving forward. We have already carried out consultations in a number of places, including a slum in Cairo, in Istanbul, in Pune in Maharashtra, India, and during the very successful Children and Youth Forum that we hosted during the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan. We will host another consultation in New York in May and will continue to coordinate young people around the world to do the same.

Here are some of the results of those consultations:

- ***Youth demand meaningful youth engagement with legally mandated, budgeted spaces in all decision-making functions related to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies related to the agenda.***
- ***Youth demand the enhancement of livability for all people of all ages and all abilities everywhere. This includes rights to affordable housing for all people irrespective of any status and income level. This includes the human right to water and sanitation.***
- ***Youth demand the recognition that skills development, access to quality education (formal, informal and non formal), and education for sustainable development and lifestyles as the means through which people will implement this new agenda.***
- ***Youth demand the reduction of the adverse per capita and absolute environmental and social impact of cities and make urbanization neutral to ecosystem degradation. Keep in mind, cities and all settlements are the battleground where we will fight climate change and other adverse effect of crossing the earth's planetary boundaries.***

- ***Youth demand that mitigation and adaptation that build environmental, physical, and psychosocial resilience be fully integrated into this agenda.***
- ***Youth demand easy accesses for all people to transportation, supported by a common ticket system among different sectors and implementing a barrier free structure with universal design.***
- ***Youth demand that planning and redevelopment take into account the healthcare needs of inhabitants. There should be a focus on prevention, access and treatment.***

We know we will have to continue to work hard to ensure young people and children, in all OUR diversity, are represented in the process going forward until and beyond 2016, and trust that we have your commitment in ensuring our full and inclusive participation. Specific mechanisms need to be established for Major Groups and other Stakeholders involvement leading up to and following HABITAT III.

Thank you very much.