

**The Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)
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Statement by Turkey

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Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT and also the members of the Bureau on their efforts in the preparatory process towards the Habitat-III Conference.

From Habitat II Conference, held in İstanbul in 1996, many studies have been made in Turkey to contribute to sustainable urbanization and Habitat Agenda. As the host country of the Habitat II, Turkey gives great importance to the Habitat III Conference and its preparation process. In this regard the government of Turkey has organized a workshop in order to prepare the Habitat III National Report.

In the report, which was submitted to the Secretariat, there are two main issues that draw attention as new and emerging challenges facing Turkey in connection with the new Urban Agenda:

The first one is to set up disaster-resilient settlements by transforming the existing urban areas which are vulnerable to disasters. In this respect, legal arrangements have been put into practice and local governments are currently implementing urban transformation projects in coordination with the national government. As it is stated out in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, making cities resilient should be one of the key aspect of the New Urban Agenda.

The second issue is to promote policies and implementations for cities to be more competitive and livable, to create new and qualified work and life spaces, to access to social and physical infrastructure and to provide qualified and secure urban transportation systems.

In parallel with this approach, issues such as preserving and developing rural areas by taking urban-rural linkages into account, putting energy-efficient

policies into practice in combating climate change, increasing livability for different segments of the society, primarily disadvantaged people and supporting their participation in urban life, should be among the priorities of the New Urban Agenda.

In Turkey, the National Urban Development Strategy and Action Plan was adopted in 2010 as a conclusion of the Urbanization Council. With this document, urbanization issues and possible solutions suitable for the country were outlined. Nowadays the National Urban Strategy is being revised by taking into account the debate in the preparation process of the Habitat III Conference and New Urban Agenda.

From the experience gained, political commitment and local governments' participation should be ensured in both creation and implementation of the national urban policies. Additionally, there should also be an action plan with adequate budget allocation included in the policy document.

As Habitat III will be the first UN Conference after the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, it offers a unique opportunity to provide us a global platform to evaluate our past endeavors and develop a new urban agenda on human settlements and sustainable urban development.

Thank you