

## **HABITAT III**

**(The Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development)**

**PrepCom3, Surabaya, 25-27 July 2016, Indonesia**

### **Statement by Turkey**

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Dear Co-Chairs, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my appreciation to the Indonesian Government and Surabaya City for hosting us in such a distinctive way and 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.

Following Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul, there is a growing recognition of the importance of sustainable urbanization in contributing to human well-being, economic development and environmental protection. Lessons learned in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda of 1996 are important in formulating the “New Urban Agenda”.

Turkey is eager to contribute even more to addressing new challenges of global sustainable development.

The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit was hosted by Turkey under the auspices of our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Istanbul on May 2016. We are happy that the Summit was successfully concluded and the number of participants exceeded all expectations. Now, we need to follow up the outcomes on the basis of the "Commitments to Action" document and take our commitments forward in close cooperation with the UN.

Turkey also hosted the High Level Comprehensive Mid-Term Review Meeting of the Istanbul Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries (MTR) in Antalya also on May this year. It was an important opportunity to reaffirm the global commitment to address the special needs of the least developed countries. Turkey's hosting of the Mid-Term Review is a reflection of its increasing contributions to finding solutions to

global problems and its active and significant role in international development cooperation.

Turkey would like to highlight some issues that need to be reflected in the “New Urban Agenda”:

“The New Urban Agenda” should respect to the priorities and consider the differences of the countries, especially their constitutional framework and national administrative structure.

Terrorism and violent extremism are increasingly impacting urban areas by destroying the sense of security in cities. Accordingly, the “New Urban Agenda” should address the rise of this new security challenges; ensuring order, safety and security.

“New Urban Agenda” should develop means of implementation to address the new social, economic and spatial environment challenges created by migratory movements. Turkey, as the biggest refugee-hosting country in the world is now host to 3 million Syrians and Iraqis. The number of Syrians in Turkey exceeds 2.7 million.

Currently, 253 thousand Syrians are accommodated in 26 temporary protection centres where food, non-food items, health and education, psychological assistance, vocational training and social facilities are provided. In addition to that, approximately 2.5 million Syrians who stay out of these centres are also under temporary protection. They benefit from free medical services and their children have the right to enrol in state schools free of charge. The By-Law allowing the access of Syrians to the labour market in Turkey entered into force on 15 January 2016. It carries the living conditions of Syrians one step forward, by providing them with the opportunity to participate in our economy.

Turkey has spent more than 12 billion dollars for the needs of the Syrians, whereas the total contribution we received from the international community has been limited to 512 million dollars.

Another issue that Turkey would like to highlight is to set up disaster-resilient settlements by transforming the existing urban areas which are vulnerable to disasters. In this respect in Turkey, 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”.

Thank you.