

Address by
H. E. Dr. Hadi Farajvand
Ambassador
And Permanent Representative to UNEP and UN-Habitat
Islamic Republic of Iran

The 26th Session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat
8~22 May 2017, Nairobi, Kenya

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to associate myself with the statement made by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

It's a great honour for me today to address the 26th Governing Council of UN-Habitat. I would like to express my appreciation to the government of the republic of Kenya for its hospitality and hosting this important session. My delegation is confident that under your able leadership our deliberations bring about fruitful results for our future endeavours toward the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

In recent several years, the International Community intensive dialogue and deliberations resulted in adoption of a number of landmark international instruments, in particular the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030* and the New Urban Agenda. It is our obligation to spare no effort to achieve these goals and principals and to meet targets that have been stipulated in these documents.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to put on record some of our key concerns with regards to the implementation of recommendations and obligations within these documents as following:

Housing and settlement development

Today, it is undeniable that housing and settlement development are highly sophisticated problems with trans-boundary impacts. There are important and wide-ranging interactions among the housing sector and other economic sectors.

The right to adequate housing has been recognized in Articles 3, 31 and 43 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ministry of Roads and Urban Development has prepared a comprehensive plan for housing which includes action plans for different aspects of housing problem such as housing finance; urban land; building materials; housing tax system; construction industry; subsidies;

energy efficiency; housing for the low-income; social housing; and rural housing.

Urban regeneration

Urban regeneration and slum upgrading also demand special attention. In Iran, the Government has adopted two strategy documents in 2004 and 2014, respectively to tackle these problems. The documents address the need for upgrading of informal settlements and regeneration of deteriorated fabrics, as well as rehabilitation of rural settlements in the urban periphery. Together, these documents establish a flexible framework for community-based upgrading and promoting public-private partnerships in this area.

Settlement resilience

A significant challenge is the growing vulnerability of settlements. This requires an increase in durable housing stock, retrofit of rural housing, as well as promoting pro-poor settlement resilience. In this regard, the Housing Foundation, a semi-non-governmental organization, currently builds durable rural housing or retrofits existing housing stock at a rate of about 200,000 dwellings per year. The Housing Foundation has also assisted our neighbouring countries in their post-disaster reconstruction efforts.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Iran is to host Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD7) in 2018 in Tehran. This is an opportunity to discuss and review the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in its first years of implementation in a region with highest population concentration and fastest urbanization rate.

APMCHUD7 is also an opportunity to strengthen South-South cooperation and exchange of experiences among APMCHUD and similar regional forums as well as relevant United Nations offices and regional arrangements.

I invite the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development member states to extend their proactive contributions to activities of this conference, in particular, by using technological and social tools available to transfer and share knowledge among national, sub-national and local governments and relevant stakeholders, to enhance effective, efficient and transparent urban planning and management.

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Allow me to finish by expressing my sincere hope that these efforts will be instrumental in promoting consistent growth, encouraging sustainable development and creating prosperous settlements.

Thank you for your attention.