

Statement from the Papua New Guinea delegation

Madam Chair,

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the PrepCom Secretariat for organizing this conference. I would also like to thank city of Surabaya, people and Government of Indonesia for your warm and kind hospitality.

I am from Papua New Guinea and it is in the Pacific. PNG people and the Pacific, we call ourselves Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Pacific Ocean. All these talk of accelerated urbanization and impact on our environment and on our climate patterns has created much panic, apprehension and anger among the SIDS of the Pacific.

Why panic, apprehension and anger? We contribute less on effect of climate change and contribute more to the reduction of greenhouse impact. Yet we are facing the brunt of the impact of accelerated urbanization. If we had a choice, we would prefer that urbanization be brought to a halt and let people go back to living off their environment in harmony with nature.

But we all know that this is asking for the impossible. We of the SIDs of the Pacific are very appreciative that the world has now come to its senses to focus on the greatest threat humanity faces- the threat of extinction due to poorly managed and unsustainable urbanisation. Pacific Islands may disappear under the sea-when that time comes, the question we should ask is whether or not we have betrayed our planet and our own humanity with it. This is about the future of humanity.

Only if we view accelerated, careless and unmanaged urbanisation in the light of the threat we face, we can never take sustainable urbanisation seriously.

Habitat III provides the opportunity for all of mankind to come to terms of the simple fact that we (all of humanity) share this planet as our home. We would like to consider unmanaged and unsustainable urbanisation as being synonymous with the demise of an extinction of the human race and the planet earth as we know. So, if this is how serious urbanization is, we can stop urbanization but yet this is not an option. The way forward is that we need political commitment that is alert to these facts and adopt passionate approaches towards contributing to the world effort through the New Urban Agenda that Habitat III is going to endorse. Countries and regions like APEC need to up their resolve to implement with sincerity and greater aggression through policy, program and projects inclusive and sustainable urbanisation.

Madam Chair, thank you for giving us this opportunity to contribute these few remarks.

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Head of Delegation