

**Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the 2nd Bureau of the
Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on
Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD)
held on 23rd February, 2010 at Tehran**

The Chief Coordinator welcomed the Hon'ble members of the Bureau to the 5th meeting. He indicated that as per the decision in the 4th meeting held at Jakarta, the 5th meeting was to be organised in Armenia, and though the Government of Armenia had graciously offered to host the meeting, it could not be held due to scheduling related aspects. Accordingly, the Government of Iran has agreed to host this meeting. On behalf of the Bureau, he expressed gratitude to the Government of Armenia and the Government of Iran for their gesture.

The Hon'ble Chairperson HE Mr Ali Nikzad, Minister for Housing and Urban Development, Government of Islamic Republic of Iran in his welcome remarks indicated that the APMCHUD has progressed very well and the Government of Iran has extended a considerable significance to this initiative and has provided a significant momentum for the activities of APMCHUD. The Hon'ble Chairperson highlighted the various initiatives of Government of Iran in regard to facilitating housing delivery for the all the segments with particular reference to weaker sections through low interest loans, etc. His Excellency further indicated that there is a significant scope for sharing our experiences for mutual benefit. The Hon'ble Chairperson indicated that India guided the first Conference in Delhi in evolving a vision for collective effort in the housing and urban development sector among the Asia Pacific countries. The Government of Iran emphasised on focussed attention on issues through an Action Plan in the second Conference in Tehran, and hoped that Indonesia would enable taking necessary steps towards further progress.

The Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, HE Kumari Selja, appreciated the gesture on the part of the Government of Armenia for offering to host the 5th meeting, and also the Government of Iran for convening this meeting so that a longer gap is not left between successive meetings. Her Excellency highlighted the Government of India's initiatives through special programmes for facilitating increased delivery of housing, with particular reference to weaker sections, through involvement of various stake holders including the private sector. The Hon'ble Minister highlighted the reform linked and fast track programme of Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission and the Rajiv Awas Yojana which aims to provide tenurial rights to the slum population, with an overall objective of making slum free cities.

HE Mr Rehmatullah Kakar, Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Works, Government of Pakistan thanking the Government of Iran for hosting the meeting, highlighted that Pakistan has a massive housing deficit of about 8 million units, with an addition of 3 lakh every year. Towards mitigating the housing situation, the Government of Pakistan has been promoting significant public-private partnership initiatives. In spite of the negative impacts of global recession in the financial sector, emphasis is being laid on improving access to low cost loans, application of appropriate housing policies and construction practices.

The Hon'ble Vice-Minister for Housing from Indonesia HE Mr Kemal Taruc indicated that the preparations for the 3rd APMCHUD conference at Solo are in full swing, and that the city of Solo is indeed excited about the forthcoming event. Indicating that a separate presentation would be made at the later part of the meeting, hoped that the conference would enable increased cooperation among the members in the housing and urban development sector.

The UN-HABITAT Representative Dr Markandey Rai highlighted that the first conference at Delhi focussed on the vision, the second conference on evolving an action plan to achieve the vision, and proposed that the third conference in Indonesia should focus on realisation. He emphasised that collective efforts should be made to ensure participation of at least 50 member countries in the Solo event. Further, he also suggested that the APMCHUD may avail the opportunity of WUF at Rio in March 2010 to highlight the progress made towards the Solo Conference. Further, the Bureau also needs to initiate steps towards identifying the host country for the 4th Conference. Dr Markandey Rai suggested that effective participation in the Ministers Round Table and the Round Table of Parliamentarians in the Rio event would be extremely beneficial and is a good opportunity to highlight APMCHUD's initiatives.

With the above remarks, the agenda items were taken up for consideration.

Item No. 1 :

Confirmation of the Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2nd Bureau of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD)

The minutes were confirmed.

Item No. 2 :

Action taken report on the decision of the 4th Meeting of the Second Bureau held at Jakarta, Indonesia

The Bureau noted the actions taken in regard to Item No.2 - Action Taken Report on the decisions taken during the Third meeting held at Nairobi on 29th March 2009; Item No.3 - Proposed Structure of the Permanent Secretariat; and Item No.4 - Review of preparations for the organization of the Third APMCHUD Conference at Solo, Indonesia.

As part of the Item No.5 - Any other item with the permission of the Chair, on the issue relating to the location of permanent secretariat in New Delhi, as desired by the Bureau in its 4th meeting, the Chief Coordinator presented his findings on the issue. Highlighting the various decisions taken in the different Bureau meetings and the Second APMCHUD Conference at Tehran, the Chief Coordinator concluded that the issue of location of permanent secretariat at New Delhi was duly firmed up by the Bureau.

HE Mr Rehmatullah Kakar, Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Works, Government of Pakistan raised the issue of location of the Permanent Secretariat of APMCHUD at New Delhi and suggested that instead of the Bureau taking a decision in this regard, the matter should be discussed at a wider level.

HE Kumari Selja, Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, pointed out that the review of meeting documents and conclusion based thereon, as reported by the Chief Coordinator in pursuance of the directive from the Chairperson at the Jakarta meeting of Bureau in August 2009, clearly showed that there was no ambiguity about the location of the Permanent Secretariat of APMCHUD at New Delhi. The past decision of the APMCHUD Bureau to this effect was under the authorization of the APMCHUD Conference, and this decision was subsequently ratified by all APMCHUD Members in the Tehran Declaration of May 2008. The Hon'ble Minister further indicated that in the 4th Meeting of the Bureau at Jakarta, the then Hon'ble Chairperson had clarified that the issue of the location of the permanent secretariat of APMCHUD at New Delhi has been discussed in various meetings and there is no ambiguity in this regard.

The Hon'ble Chairperson HE Mr Ali Nikzad, however, decided that the subject matter of the location of Permanent Secretariat of APMCHUD at New Delhi be reserved for discussion at the 3rd APMCHUD Conference to be held in Solo (Indonesia) in June 2010.

HE Kumari Selja, Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, requested that India's position on this matter as conveyed above be placed on record.

In view of the positions taken by the members on the issue, the chairperson decided that the issue of location of permanent secretariat in Delhi be considered in Solo.

Item No. 3 :

Review of Preparations for the organization of the Third Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development at Solo, Indonesia

A detailed presentation was made by the Government of Indonesia highlighting the status of various actions taken as part of the preparations for the Solo Conference. The actions covered the programme structure, participants profile, session lead and experts participation, venue and logistic details, etc. The Govt. of Indonesia appreciated the support being extended by APMCHUD Secretariat for organizing third conference at Solo, Indonesia.

The Government of Indonesia further requested the support of the Bureau member countries and the UN-HABITAT for making the event a success. The Bureau members appreciated the efforts made so far and assured all support. The UN-HABITAT suggested that emphasis should be to enlist participation of strategic countries and efforts should be to enlist participation of at least 50 countries in the event. It was further emphasised that a sustained media strategy should be pursued to create global awareness on the Conference and the APMCHUD.

Item No. 4:

Proposal for participation in the 'World Urban Forum 5 - The Right to the City, Bridging the Urban Divide' at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (March 22-26, 2010).

In regard to the representation of APMCHUD in the Ministerial Round Table and the Parliamentarians Round Table, it was decided that the Secretariat should solicit the contributions/views from the member countries and prepare a paper to reflect the broader view in the Asia-Pacific Regional context.

Item No. 5 :

Establishment of Sub-regional Slum Upgrading Working Group as stipulated in the Action Plan for Regional Cooperation on promoting Sustainable Urban Development among Asia-Pacific countries

A detailed presentation was made by the Hon'ble Vice Minister for Housing & Urban Development, Government of Iran on the genesis and status of the Sub-regional slum upgrading working group initiative. It was proposed that in order to make this initiative broad based, the sub-regional group membership could be enlarged to all countries. In addition, it was also proposed that the Scientific Committee of the Working Group could have membership from various regions by incorporating representative countries. It was also suggested that the indicators evolved on the theme by the working group could be reviewed in the next bureau meeting. It was proposed by the Hon'ble Vice Minister that an Expert panel be formed on the theme which may facilitate in the preparation of an enriched documentation, for knowledge sharing amongst the member countries during the Solo Conference.

Based on discussions, it was decided that the member countries may name the representatives so that the experiences of the member countries are shared for the benefit of all members. It was further decided that a panel discussion in the relevant technical session in the Solo conference may be organised where in, the Working Group may present and share its experiences.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.