

**Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bureau of the  
Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban  
Development (APMCHUD)**

**Date: April 16, 2015 (6.30 PM to 8.30 PM)  
Venue: Conference Room No 7, UN-Habitat Premises, Nairobi**

The List of Participants is enclosed.

At the outset, the Chief Coordinator Mr. Sanjeev Kumar welcomed the Hon'ble members and distinguished members of the delegations and the representatives of UN Habitat. The Chief Coordinator indicated that indications have been received that Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Independent State of Samoa are not able to participate in the meeting due to extreme exigencies, and have conveyed their best wishes for the success of the meeting. The Chief Coordinator conveyed his special thanks to UN-HABITAT for facilitating conduct of this meeting by providing the venue and related arrangements.

**H.E Mr. Kwon Dae-chul, Hon'ble Deputy Vice Minister and Director General for Land Policy, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MoLIT), Republic of Korea** welcomed the Hon'ble members of the Bureau and all the delegates to the 1st meeting of the 5th Bureau of APMCHUD. He indicated that H.E Dr. Yoo IL-Ho, Hon'ble Minister of MoLIT could not attend this meeting due to extreme exigencies in the National Assembly and conveyed His Excellency's best wishes, for the successful conduct of the event. H.E Mr. Kwon Dae-chul opined that this meeting is important since it is held in conjunction with the 25th Governing Council of UN-Habitat and Preparation Committee for Habitat III. He conveyed his appreciation and thanks to the UN-Habitat and the Secretariat of APMCHUD for facilitating this meeting through appropriate coordination.

H.E Mr. Kwon Dae-chul, indicated that Republic of Korea has achieved rapid economic growth after the Korean War from 80 dollars of GDP per capita in the 1960s to 25,000 dollars in 2010. In the course of such a remarkable economic development, housing and urban environment for people have also significantly changed. Poor housing conditions without minimum equipment have improved to quality and decent housing. The lack of housing has also been largely addressed as seen in 103% of high housing supply rate as of 2013. The city landscape with insufficient social infrastructure has evolved into a place where comfortable transport network, various cultural facilities and safe environment for children and women are ensured. While recalling the significant strides achieved in the housing sector, the

Hon'ble Dy. Vice Minister felt that Republic of Korea have still a way to go through learning from other countries and identifying any need for further improvement. Although the absolute volume of housing becomes higher, the housing cost for low-income family still remains the problem to be solved. On top of that, drastic urbanization has also brought many challenges to us including overcrowded large cities and the subsequent problems relating to transport, environment and safety. The Hon'ble Dy. Vice Minister highlighted that information on experiences of Asia Pacific countries, sharing policies and exchanging information in the housing and urban development, would help in this regard.

**H.E Dr Mohammad Saeid Izadi, Hon'ble Deputy Minister & Managing Director, Urban Development and Revitalization organisation, Islamic Republic of Iran** thanked the Chair for this opportunity and also Un-HABITAT for facilitating this meeting. The Hon'ble Dy. Minister indicated that to be sustainable, development has to address the whole continuum of human settlements, both urban and rural. Since the right to adequate housing has been recognised in Article 3, 31 and 43 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran, housing and urban and rural development were always a major concern in Five-year Development Plans since 1989. In line with the requirement of the Fourth Five-year Development Plan, the Parliament adopted the Law for management and Support of Housing Production and Supply in 2008, which established a comprehensive framework to provide adequate housing for all income groups in both urban and rural areas. The Hon'ble Minister further indicated that in 2004, the cabinet adopted the National Document on Strategies for Enabling and regularizing Informal Settlements, according to which Task Forces were established at national and local level to encourage community -based slum upgrading. Based on lessons learnt in implementation of this document, the cabinet adopted the National Strategy Document on Revitalising, Upgrading, renovating and Enabling Deteriorated and Underutilised Urban Fabrics in 2014. This document equally addresses deteriorated fabrics, informal settlements as well as rural settlements in the urban periphery and strives to create a flexible framework for regeneration, upgrading, and renovation. The main framework for informal slum upgrading will remain in effect in conjunction with this new document.

Elaborating further the Hon'ble Dy. Minister opined that due to its extensive interaction with other economic sectors, housing sector requires a holistic approach which emphasizes recognition of citizen rights, good urban governance and collaborative networking. Such an approach has to provide for community-based modalities to enhance equitable access to housing finance. It is also essential for all development programmes to foster cultural identity in housing provision, rather than imposing life styles alien to the local value systems.

Highlighting that housing and settlement development are complex problems with trans-boundary impacts that demand joint efforts at regional level, and in this context

the five thematic working groups under APMCHUD reflect the common challenges of this region, he elaborated the efforts in Iran on housing and urban sprawl planning. A key challenge in this region is uncontrolled urbanisation and urban sprawl which demands effective planning for harmonious development of the whole continuum of settlements from small rural settlements to large metropolitan agglomerations. In Islamic Republic of Iran, Housing Foundation, a semi-non-governmental organization, currently builds about 200,000 rural dwellings per annum. In the area of housing finance, a recent initiative of the government is to establish Land and Building Funds to attract and channel small savings towards housing provision. Another initiative is developing the secondary mortgage market. Pursuant to agreements made in the recent APMCHUD, the Ministry of Roads and Urban development of Iran's and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of Republic of Korea are jointly organizing a series of workshops on diverse aspects of housing finance. The Hon'ble Dy. Minister felt that such bilateral and multilateral efforts should be further encouraged as effective means for exchange of experiences between APMCHUD member countries.

H.E Dr Mohammad Saeid Izadi, Hon'ble Deputy Minister & Managing Director, Urban Development and Revitalization organisation, Islamic Republic of Iran further indicated that another significant challenge in the Asia pacific Region is the growing vulnerability of settlements, and this requires an increase in durable housing stock, retrofit of rural housing, and urban regeneration, as well as promoting pro-poor urban resilience. The Islamic republic of Iran has volunteered to document best practices under the Working Group V led by the Republic of Indonesia, and accordingly requested the APMCHUD member States to contribute to this exercise. Due to the substantial growth rate of slums in Asian countries, urban regeneration and slum upgrading is another challenge, which requires special attention in this region. In line with the Seoul Implementation Plan, the Regional Slum Upgrading Working group is organizing an expert Meeting to further discuss the stipulations of this Plan, and accordingly, the Hon'ble Dy. Minister invited all the APMCHUD member States to participate in this Expert meeting which would be held in Tehran during October 2015.

**H.E Mr. V. Krishnamoorthy, High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in Kenya** outlined various initiatives of the Sri Lanka in the housing and urban development sector. H.E Mr. V. Krishnamoorthy indicated that the government is committed to develop sustainable human settlements, and the same is spearheaded by accelerated programme to reach 50,000 homeless families with affordable shelter, both in urban and rural areas. The National Housing Development Authority of the Ministry of Housing and Samurdi (Poverty Alleviation) focuses mainly on rural poor and the recently established Urban Settlement Development Authority of the Ministry of construction focuses on the urban poor. Outlining various infrastructure development initiatives, it was explained that Satellite cities of Colombo located in transport nodal points as well as townships along Colombo outer circular

expressways have been planned and developed with the required facilities and services. A continuous water supply, reliable waste water management services, and underground sewerage system are also being established.

**Dr. Ms. Lana Winayanti, Assistant Deputy for Housing Finance Evaluation, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Republic of Indonesia** thanked the Chair for the opportunity and assured continued commitment to APMCHUD. Highlighting various initiatives taken by Republic of Indonesia in the recent past, she specially underlined the ones pertaining to the Regional Center for Community Empowerment in Housing and Urban Development (RCCEHUD), which was launched in 2010 to support APMCHUD's role as knowledge hub in housing and urban development; chairing the Working Group on Urban Development with a focus on natural and climate change disasters; participating in Working Group activities such as the Slum Upgrading Workshop in Tehran and the working group discussions in Seoul during APMCHUD V; hosting the study visit on slum upgrading in Solo and Yogyakarta in 2013, organizing a side event at the World Urban Forum 7 in Medellin, Columbia to share Indonesia's experiences and best practices in slum upgrading, and organizing an expert meeting for Asia Pacific countries on the preparation of national reports for Habitat III, November 25-26, 2014 in Jakarta and Bogor.

It was further indicated that the Government of Indonesia will continue its active role in housing and urban development by hosting several important global events that would include the RCCEHUD holding an international seminar on Partnerships for Sustainable Housing and Urban Development in Surabaya, on 15-16 October 2015; the Asia Pacific Urban Forum (APUF) to be held in cooperation with UN-ESCAP in Jakarta, 19-21 October 2015; the High-level Asia Pacific Regional Meeting for the Preparation of Habitat III to be held in Jakarta, 22-23 October 2015; and the Third Prepcom Meeting of Habitat III to be held in Jakarta, July 2016.

Dr Ms. Lana Winayanti, took this opportunity to invite all member countries to attend these meetings and actively participate in discussing the views, perspectives and substantive inputs of the Asia Pacific region for the New Urban Agenda that will be the outcome of Habitat III in Quito. She expressed hope that APMCHUD can play a major role in the process.

Dr Ms. Lana Winayanti expressed appreciation to the Government of India for its continuous support to the APMCHUD secretariat, the UN-Habitat for facilitating this meeting, and the Government of Korea for chairing this meeting while also requesting Korea to lead the roadmap for APMCHUD to become the knowledge hub in housing and urban development in the Asia Pacific region.

**H.E. Mr. Istabraq Ibraheem Al-Shouk, Hon'ble Senior Deputy Minister of Construction & Housing, Republic of Iraq** thanked UN-Habitat for facilitating the meeting and the Secretariat for the coordination in this regard. The **Hon'ble Senior Deputy Minister indicated that** addressing the housing requirement of all the people, with particular emphasis to displaced families has become one of the primary focus areas of the Government. Thanking the lead countries of various working groups for taking up a number of activities, he indicated that Iraq looks forward to continued intense collaboration and cooperation in the field of housing and reconstruction by sharing experiences and experiments among the countries of the Region.

As **Dr (Ms.) Nandita Chatterjee, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, India** could not join the meeting in view of pre-occupation with the Bureau of 25<sup>th</sup> Governing Council of UN-Habitat, the address of India was read by **Mr. K.S.Mathews, Counsellor, High Commission of India in Kenya**. Conveying thanks to the Chair for this opportunity to share the initial views, the address also thanked UN-HABITAT for the facilitatory support for holding this meeting in UN-HABITAT premises. Congratulating Republic of Korea for the wonderful manner in which the 5th Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development was organized, it was highlighted that the conference indeed offered an excellent opportunity to share among member countries the perspectives on the theme of 'equal opportunity for Sustainable development'.

Expressing satisfaction on the systematic progress of APMCHUD and its evolution as a vibrant collaborative mechanism in the field of housing and urban development of APMCHUD, since its inception in December 2006 in New Delhi, it was indicated that the Delhi Declaration outlining a framework for sustainable urbanization in Asia Pacific Region and the subsequent pronouncements of the Tehran Declaration in 2008, the Solo Declaration in 2010, the Amman declaration in 2012 and the recent Seoul declaration in 2014 have all together helped us in evolving a collective vision to move ahead.

The address further highlighted that as the Lead country of the Working Group on 'Urban and Rural Planning and Management', India had organized a meeting of this working group in New Delhi on 16-17th August, 2012, which was participated by representatives and experts from 18 countries. The focus was on inclusive planning and practices, urban-rural continuum, land issues for comprehensive human settlement planning, and also on tools, technologies and capacity building for urban and rural planning and management. Outlining various initiatives of India, the address further elaborated that in line with the commitment by India to host a study tour of best practices and major projects in the field of housing and urban development for the APMCHUD member countries, a study tour was organized for the Asia Pacific member country delegations during 5-9<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. A total of 13 delegates from Asia Pacific

countries participated in the study tour covering projects of slum improvement, social housing, sanitation, basic infrastructure facilities and new town development initiatives. It was further assured that India would be happy to share its experiments and experiences in promoting sustainable development of human settlements with the countries of the region.

It was further informed to the Bureau that recently the Government of India has decided to contribute US\$ 50,000 as one time initial contribution and annual contribution of US\$ 10,000 for strengthening of APMCHUD Secretariat, as per the Amman Declaration, 2012. The address also thanked the member Nations of the Asia Pacific region for approving the proposal of India to host the 6th Conference of APMCHUD in New Delhi in 2016, and solicited cooperation and guidance from the member Nations towards holding the event.

**Mr. Yoshinobu Fukasawa, Director, UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific – Fukuoka** thanked APMCHUD for the invitation to participate in the Bureau meeting and expressed that UN-Habitat is indeed happy on the progress of the collaborative effort of Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban development in evolving a collective vision for sustainable urbanization in the Asia Pacific region. Thanking the Secretariat for the coordination undertaken with UN-Habitat for holding this meeting, he indicated that UN-Habitat would be happy to extend all possible cooperation and facilitation for the activities of the APMCHUD.

With the above initial remarks, the agenda items were taken up in sequence.

Item No. 1 : **Confirmation of the Minutes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> Bureau of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD) held at Male, Maldives on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2014**

The Chief Coordinator indicated that the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 4th Bureau of APMCHUD was held at Male, Maldives on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2014, and a copy of the minutes of the meeting was circulated to the Hon'ble Members of the Bureau and was posted on the website of APMCHUD as well ([www.apmchud.com](http://www.apmchud.com)). In addition, a copy of the Minutes has been incorporated in the agenda as well.

The Bureau confirmed the Minutes.

**Item No. 2 : Action Taken subsequent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> Bureau held on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2014 at Male, Maldives - Report by the Chief Coordinator**

A report on the actions taken on the decisions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> Bureau held on 4<sup>th</sup> August, 2014 was presented by the Chief Coordinator. It was indicated that there were two decisions on which actions were to be taken relating to 'resource base for APMCHUD' and on 'Lead countries for the working group on basic services, and actions have been completed on the same. The Bureau noted the status as indicated in the agenda. The Bureau also conveyed its gratitude to People's Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and the Republic of Maldives for taking the lead role in respect of the Working Group 3 on Basic Services.

**Item No. 3 : Release and Presentation of the Proceedings of the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of APMCHUD held on 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 at Seoul, Republic of Korea - by the host country**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD) was held at Seoul, Republic of Korea during 3-5 November, 2015. On behalf of the host country - The Republic of Korea, Mr Kim Dong Hyun, Deputy Director, Ministry of land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT) presented a report and released the copy of Conference proceedings.

Mr. Kim Dong Hyun indicated that the Conference was attended by about 350 delegates from 29 member Nations and representatives from various International Organizations. Under the overall theme of 'Equal Opportunity for Sustainable Development', the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD extensively deliberated and shared experiences on sustainable housing and urban development for human settlements in the Asia Pacific Region. The report presented to the Hon'ble members was taken on record.

Mr Kim Dong Hyun expressed that the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of APMCHUD was a success because of the cooperation extended by all the Member countries and conveyed the gratitude of the Republic of Korea.

**Item No. 4 : Statement by the Chairperson of APMCHUD at the 25<sup>th</sup> Governing Council Meeting of UN-Habitat during April 17-23, 2015**

The Chief Coordinator indicated that the 25<sup>th</sup> Governing Council meeting of the UN-Habitat is happening here at Nairobi starting from tomorrow. The identified main focal theme is “UN-Habitat’s Contribution to the Post-2015 Development Agenda in order to Promote Sustainable Urban Development and Human Settlements” with sub-theme on “Enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages across the Continuum of Human Settlements to Harness the Transformative Power of Urbanization for Sustainable Development”. On behalf of the APMCHUD, the Hon’ble Chairperson would make a statement highlighting APMCHUD’s initiatives and share its vision on enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages across the continuum of Human Settlements to harness the Transformative Power of Urbanization for Sustainable Development. The Chief Coordinator requested the Hon’ble members to provide comments if any on the draft prepared and enclosed with the agenda.

Thanking the Secretariat for preparing the draft, H.E Dr Mohammed Saeid Izadi, Hon’ble Deputy Minister & Managing Director of Urban Development & Revitalization Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran indicated that certain modifications/additions are proposed in the draft. Further, Dr. Ms. Lana Winayanti, Assistant Deputy for Housing Finance Evaluation, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Republic of Indonesia also proposed certain additions/modifications in the draft.

After deliberations, it was decided that a sub-group comprising representatives of Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Indonesia and Republic of Korea facilitated by the Secretariat of APMCHUD may finalize the document which may be taken as approved by the Bureau.

(The sub-group finalized the statement which was made by the Chair country – Republic of Korea on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 during the 25<sup>th</sup> Governing Council of UN-HABITAT and the Statement is annexed).

**Item No. 5 : Information about the already approved agenda item relating to Organizational Issues - Resource base for APMCHUD – Status**

The Chief Coordinator requested the Hon’ble members to recall the decision of the 4th APMCHUD held at Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 10th December,

2012 as part of the Amman Declaration that resolved to *'Agree in principle to contribute a sum of US\$10,000 per member state annually to the budget of APMCHUD. However, member states are encouraged to contribute higher amounts. For those countries who agree may start contributing to the budget of APMCHUD. However, this resolution will be discussed further in the next APMCHUD conference in the Republic of Korea in 2014'* and also the resolve of the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD at Seoul, Republic of Korea during 3-5 November, 2014 *'to reiterate commitment to APMCHUD to strengthen the APMCHUD Secretariat, while encouraging member nations to contribute in line with the Amman Declaration.'*

In this regard, the Chief Coordinator submitted the information to the Bureau that the Secretariat has not received any contribution so far. The Chief Coordinator further added that the indication given by the Republic of India on the decision to contribute a one-time amount of USD 50,000 and annual contribution of USD 10,000 for APMCHUD, is gratefully noted.

**Item No. 6 : Presentation by the Chair country of 5<sup>th</sup>APMCHUD - Republic of Korea on proposed activity plan for the 5<sup>th</sup>APMCHUD period**

The Chair of 5<sup>th</sup>APMCHUD - Republic of Korea made a presentation on proposed activity plan for the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD period. Mr. Son Young-hoon, Manager at the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD Organizing Committee at Korea Land and Housing Corporation made a presentation on proposed activity plan for the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD period. The presentation included activities such as holding of Bureau meetings, support for Habitat-III preparations, etc. Mr. Son indicated that continued support for working groups by each Lead country is essential to the success of the APMCHUD. By keeping close attention to the development of each working groups, the subsequent bureau meetings of the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD will be more meaningful in terms of realizing Seoul Declaration and Seoul Implementation plan. This presentation was taken on record.

During deliberations, it was indicated by the Islamic Republic of Iran that a meeting of the working group on slum upgrading aspects is proposed to be held around October 2015 and suggested that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bureau meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bureau could be held in conjunction with the same. Similarly, the Republic of Indonesia indicated that the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bureau could be held in Indonesia

subsequently, in conjunction with other events scheduled in regard to Prepcom-3. The Bureau appreciated the offers and decided that the Secretariat may interact with Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Indonesia in this regard and firm up the dates as per their convenience.

The Republic of Korea indicated that the activities proposed are indicative and the Lead countries of Working Groups may like to inform any activity proposed as part of their Working Group to the Secretariat, which would be incorporated in the activity Plan for the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD period.

**Item No. 7 : Any other item with the permission of the Chair.**

H.E Ms. Aminath Athifa, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Housing and Infrastructure, Republic of Maldives indicated that a mechanism need to be worked out by which on specific themes, position papers could be formulated by the APMCHUD that could be presented during occasions such as UN-HABITAT meetings. The suggestion was appreciated and it was decided that the secretariat may interact with the Hon'ble Minister to firm up the suggestion further.

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

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**1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bureau of the  
Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban  
Development (APMCHUD)**

**Date: April 16, 2015 (6.30 PM to 8.30 PM)  
Venue: Conference Room No 7, UN-Habitat Premises, Nairobi**

**Members of delegations and distinguished Participants**

**Heads of the Delegations**

**Republic of Korea**

H.E Mr. Kwon Dae-chul, - In Chair  
Deputy Vice Minister and  
Director General for Land Policy,  
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MoLIT)

**Islamic Republic of Iran**

H.E Dr Mohammad Saeid Izadi,  
Deputy Minister &  
Managing Director, Urban Development and Revitalization organization

**Republic of Iraq**

H.E. Mr. Istabraq Iberaheem Al-Shouk,  
Senior Deputy Minister of Construction & Housing

**Republic of Maldives**

H.E Ms Aminath Athifa, Hon'ble Minister of State,  
Ministry of Housing and Infrastructure

**Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

H.E Mr. V. Krishnamoorthy  
High Commissioner, Sri Lanka High Commission, Nairobi

**Republic of Indonesia**

Dr. Lana Winayanti, MCP  
Assistant Deputy for Housing Finance Evaluation  
Ministry of Public Works and Housing

**Republic of India**

Mr. K.S. Mathews,  
Counsellor, High Commission of India in Kenya.

**UN-Habitat**

Mr. Yoshinobu Fukasawa  
Director, UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific - Fukuoka

**APMCHUD Secretariat**

Mr. Sanjeev Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty  
Alleviation & Chief Coordinator, APMCHUD

## **Members of delegations and distinguished Participants**

### **Republic of Korea**

Mr. Kim Sung-ho, Director, dispatched to UN-Habitat  
Mr. Sim Jae-moon, Deputy Director, Urban Policy, MoLIT  
Mr. Yang Seoun-gil, Assistant Director, Urban Policy, MoLIT  
Mr. Chung Soo-ho, Deputy Director, Land Policy, MoLIT  
Mr. Park Jung-kwon, Assistant Director, Housing Policy, MoLIT  
Mr. Son, Young-Hoon, Manager, International Business Office, LH

### **Republic of Indonesia**

Mr. Yoshi Iskandar  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Indonesia to UNEP and UN-Habitat, Nairobi

### **Islamic Republic of Iran**

Mr. Majid Rousta, Member of Board,  
Urban Development & Revitalization Organization (UDRO)  
Mr. Farzin Fardenesh  
Consultant, Urban Development & Revitalization Organization (UDRO)  
Mr. Sadegh Sadeghpour, Expert, International Affairs Office,  
Ministry of Roads and Urban Development

### **Republic of Iraq**

Ms. Huda Jaafar,  
Researcher, State Commission of Housing/SCOH

### **Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

Mr. S.L. Palansuriya  
Chairman, National Housing Development Authority  
Mrs. D. Nasndanie Samarawickrama  
Director, Ministry of Housing & Samurdhi  
Mr. Jeganathan Kandiah  
District Manager, National Housing Development Authority  
Mr. P.M.N. Mahesh Premathilake  
Second Secretary and DPR to UN-Habitat, Sri Lanka High Commission, Nairobi  
Mr. J.W. Krishantha  
Attache (Research & Documentation), Sri Lanka High Commission, Nairobi

### **UN-Habitat**

Mr. Bruno Dercon  
Senior Human Settlements Officer  
UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific – Fukuoka

### **APMCHUD Secretariat**

Dr P. Jayapal, Sr. Executive Director  
Housing & Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO), New Delhi  
Mrs. Kamlesh Padmanathan,  
Dy. General Manager, HUDCO, New Delhi

25<sup>th</sup> Governing Council Meeting of UN-Habitat  
Statement by the Hon'ble Chairperson of APMCHUD  
April 17-23, 2015

**APMCHUD's Position on  
Enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages across the Continuum of Human Settlements  
to Harness the Transformative Power of Urbanization for Sustainable  
Development**

Excellency, Dignitaries and the Delegates,

On behalf of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD), I would like to thank the UN-HABITAT for this opportunity to share our position on the theme of "Enhancing Urban-Rural Linkages across the Continuum of Human Settlements to Harness the Transformative Power of Urbanization for Sustainable Development".

The Asia Pacific Region is rapidly developing into an economic power with a significant urbanization rate. However, the fruits of its development are not shared equally by all the strata of the society. Inequality in access to available infrastructure and basic services, unabated proliferation and rapid formation of slums and squatter settlements in the cities and towns, and continuous uncontrolled migration from rural areas to cities in hope of a better economic status and improved standard of living are all challenges which developing nations in Asia Pacific region are faced with.

It is in clear appreciation of these emerging trends that Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development has been focusing on comprehensive approaches and strategies for sustainable development of human settlements irrespective of scale. APMCHUD recognizes the need for strategic and integrated planning, capacity building as well as regional cooperation through knowledge sharing, networking and monitoring for promotion of balanced and sustainable urbanization.

Furthermore, APMCHUD member States recommend that increasing urban sprawl as well as the socio-economic needs of the region's cities call for an urgent need to enhance the planning function through a rapidly responsive intervention at all levels and taking into account the growth in fringe areas, peri-urban areas and rural-urban continuum to deploy it as an effective instrument of urban governance. To this end, governments should strive to improve living conditions in rural areas and make rural centres more attractive to reduce population pressure on large cities and to promote well-functioning rural-urban linkages. Since the problems of big metropolitan centres becomes the main concern in policy-making and provision of infrastructure and services, APMCHUD member states recommend that secondary towns and peri-urban areas should receive adequate time, attention and resources. APMCHUD member states further emphasize that it is necessary to link diverse policies of different sectors in national and local planning – from big metropolitan centres to towns and peri-urban areas.

AMCHUD member countries recognize the linkages and the interdependencies between rural and urban areas and the importance of balanced territorial development strategies to promote synergies between towns, cities and their rural hinterlands. They have therefore resolved to promote integrated and sustainable rural and urban development to address the problems of urbanization.

Towards promoting sustainable human settlements development, APMCHUD member countries have identified five main themes for special consideration by respective Working Groups by voluntary lead countries. These respectively include: Urban and Rural Planning and Management led by Republic of India, Slum Upgrading by Islamic Republic of Iran, Basic Services by People's Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and Republic of Maldives, Housing Finance by Republic of Korea, and Urban Development with a focus on Natural and Climate Change related Disasters by the Republic of Indonesia.

In its recent conference in Seoul, November 2014, APMCHUD member States recognized the need for and importance of enhancing Urban-Rural linkages across the continuum of human settlements to harness the transformative power of urbanization for sustainable development. We are confident that through this joint and collaborative mechanism, we, countries of Asia Pacific Region would adopt appropriate region-specific methodologies and measures for achieving this objective.

Accordingly, I would like to draw the attention of the distinguished delegates to the following recommendations:

- All settlements should be made socially inclusive, economically productive, environmentally sustainable, secure and resilient to climate change and other risks;
- Participatory, accountable and effective governance has to be developed to support rapid and equitable urban-rural linkages;
- Basic services have to be provided for more productive, cleaner, healthier and liveable human settlements.
- Inclusive planning and practices should be mainstreamed at all levels and promote sustainable livelihoods;
- Community support systems with community participation have to be established in all settlements;
- Policies should be developed for promoting equal opportunities in creating inclusive human settlements without discrimination;
- The potentials of ICT should be vigorously exploited to share knowledge and experiences, raise awareness and stimulate community participation;
- Clean, accessible, affordable and efficient energy generation and use should be promoted in both urban and rural areas;
- Diverse financing systems, including microfinance and pro-poor financial tools should be developed or enhanced to respond the particular needs of urban and rural population;
- The capacity of local authorities should be enhanced to effectively manage the impact of disasters on urban-rural livelihood.

To close, I want to emphasize that the Resolution 24/8 adopted in the previous Governing Council '*Requests* the Executive Director to extend his support to United Nations Human Settlements Programme regional and thematic offices to support regional forums...' APMCHUD member countries thank UN-Habitat for extending their assistance and expect such assistance will further continue for organizing Expert Meetings and encouraging 'the exploration of the opportunities for strengthening South-South cooperation and the exchange of experiences. In particular, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Prepcom meeting Habitat 3 is to be held in Jakarta Indonesia in July 2016. Appreciating the efforts of the host country, I would like to invite all countries to attend and contribute to this meeting.

On behalf of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development, I once again thank the UN-HABITAT for this opportunity to share our position during this 25th Session of the Governing Council.

Thank you.

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