

(Check against delivery)

**Statement by Noboru Sekiguchi,
Minister of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN**

**At the Informal Intergovernmental Negotiations
of the New Urban Agenda**

18 May 2016

Co-chairs,

Let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee and the co-chairs for preparing the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda. Japan is ready to engage actively and constructively in a discussion on this Agenda.

The Japanese government fully supports a people-centered approach as a core notion of human security. From this standpoint, inclusive, safe and resilient cities and human settlements are one of the fundamental necessities of human life. Without them, people cannot be protected and empowered. Inclusive and safe cities and human settlements make communities more resilient to shocks such as natural disasters. It is Japan's hope that the New Urban Agenda will comprehensively address key challenges to many of the goals of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development, especially goal 11, and other related goals.

Co-chairs,

I would like to express Japan's general view on the zero-draft, including of the process of the negotiations.

First, we need to keep in mind that the negotiations of the New Urban Agenda should be concluded in Surabaya in July, in order to have successful and fruitful discussions in Quito, Ecuador in October. Taking into account a limited time for the negotiations, we need to accelerate the process of negotiations of the New Urban Agenda.

Second, it is important that the New Urban Agenda be concise, clear and impactful one, avoiding duplication between sections, since the Agenda should be aimed at a wide audience, including local governments and municipalities. From this standpoint, Japan has an impression that the zero-draft is too long and too complicated to understand the essence of the New Urban Agenda. Japan considers that the Preamble section could be merged with the Declaration and Quito Implementation Plan section in order to avoid duplication and streamline the text. We also believe that some of the sections can be streamlined, focusing only on the most crucial and necessary points. In addition, the draft contains a number of terms unclear definitions. Therefore, Japan will likely seek clarification on such terms in due course of negotiations.

Third, we strongly support the following four pillars well incorporated in the zero draft: 'the 2030 Agenda', 'promotion of the policy of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction', 'promotion of Quality Infrastructure Investment', and 'development of national and regional strategy'. To further improve the description on four pillars, we would send some detailed comments on those to the secretariat later on.

Finally, Japan considers that the follow-up of New Urban Agenda should be a coherent, efficient and inclusive and it should contribute to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. It should build on existing platforms and processes, avoid duplication and feed into the High Level Political Forum without creating duplicative and heavy layers on top of the existing ones.

I thank you.