

**Statement by Nicholas You<sup>1</sup>, Chair of the GAP Media Constituency Group  
Habitat III Informal Hearings with Stakeholders  
New York 6-7 June 2016**

Madame Co-Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Stakeholder colleagues,

The Media Constituency Group is a group not previously represented as a stakeholder in major UN meetings. We are pleased to be among you today as we see our role as that of a two-way messenger.

We are, at present, made up of a dozen media houses with links to several hundred organisations. While we are expanding readership and geographic coverage we are almost exclusively represented by the electronic media. A characteristic of the electronic media is that its audience is usually quite well defined and targeted. The print media and radio and television that cater to the general public, despite our ongoing efforts, are still to be brought fully on board.

Distinguished delegates,

Herein resides our concern. We support the social, economic, environmental and governance principles of the New Urban Agenda. But if these principles are to become actionable, the New Urban Agenda has to make sense to the person on the street. It has to touch not only the minds of people, but also their hearts.

We would therefore like to see a much bolder vision – a vision that captures the imagination of people. Imagination is what motivated me to attend the Habitat I in 1972 in Vancouver. I was then a student of planning. Imagination is what led over 90 member States to contribute to the first best practices competition for Habitat II and for CNN to produce and disseminate through more than 70 television channels worldwide a three-hour special series on solutions on the occasion of Habitat II.

Distinguished delegates,

An agenda that tackles the complexities of urbanisation will need to be comprehensive. Our suggestion however is to preface this agenda with a vision statement of the cities of the future - where we would like to be in 20 years – what kind of urbanised world we would like our children to live in.

We would like to suggest that the New Urban Agenda calls for the following:

- Cities and regions that are the guarantors of quality of life of all of its inhabitants, translating the right to the city into access to affordable housing and basic services, to health and wellbeing and a sense of identity and belonging;
- That cities and regions are empowered to fulfil their role as engines of social and technological innovation, and prosperity for all, and translate the promises of a green and digital economy into decent work for all;

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- That cities and their civil society partners become drivers in attaining a sustainable and de-carbonised world - to make the circular economy a reality;
- That cities and regions and all tiers of government work across disciplines and jurisdictions and join forces in leaving nobody behind.

Distinguished delegates, fellow stakeholders,

We would like to suggest also that the New Urban Agenda include a qualitative dimension to monitoring and reporting to include real life stories of how people, cities and their partners are implementing the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals and benefiting and learning from those actions.

Thank you your kind attention.