

## **Consultations on the New Urban Agenda 18 - 20 May, NY**

### **General comments on the Zero Draft**

#### **Statement by Norway**

I would like to thank the Habitat III Bureau and the secretariat for having provided us with a solid zero draft of the New Urban Agenda.

First of all, we appreciate that the zero draft is action oriented, with implementation as the main focus. This is key, and must be preserved and possibly even strengthened.

We further appreciate the language on “leaving no one behind” and inclusive cities. We think there is a very clear message here, with proposed actions that may contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda, in particular eradicating poverty as well as ensuring urban equity.

Norway has repeatedly said that we believe the New Urban Agenda should take the SDGs and targets that are relevant for urbanization to the next level – and provide advice and recommendations on how to operationalize them. We find that the draft does this only to a certain degree. We think the New Urban Agenda should be more centered on the SDGs and the targets. It should recommend concrete steps for implementation of all of the targets of SDG 11, as well as some of the other targets that are clearly relevant for urbanization.

As we have consistently stated, health and the environment are key issues defining the New Urban Agenda. While health and environment issues are mentioned in the draft, they should in our view figure much more prominently throughout the text. The New Urban Agenda should include a strong commitment to protecting health and the environment, including climate change. We will revert to this later when discussing the vision of the Quito Declaration.

Another topic that we think deserves stronger focus is refugees and humanitarian efforts. Migration and displacement are of today’s main challenges, and the New Urban Agenda should contain recommendations and commitments in this regard.

We appreciate that youth is now included among vulnerable groups, which was something we asked for in our comments to the Policy papers. However, with all the challenges we are facing today, we think that stronger youth

participation is among the answers, along with women's participation. This should be made clearer in the New Urban Agenda.

Finally, regarding **follow up and review**, we agree that this is an important part of the New Urban agenda. However, we wonder whether it may be premature to decide now on who should be responsible for the international response, as we also need to take into account other ongoing processes, like the discussion on the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the UN Development system. Maybe it could be an option to deal with this issue in a separate resolution, the same way as it was done 20 years ago?

I thank you, President.