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Statement by

Chair of the Bureau of

**Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban
Development (APMCHUD)**

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**Hon'ble Minister of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation,
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on

**Opportunities for the effective implementation of the New
Urban Agenda**

Excellency, Dignitaries and 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 views and vision on the theme of 'Opportunities for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda' and also the three identified sub-themes.

We are grateful to UN-Habitat for its continued and consistent support for various activities of APMCHUD during its journey of a decade since its establishment in 2006 at New Delhi. During this

period, the APMCHUD has served effectively as an inter-governmental consultative mechanism in the Asia Pacific region and has facilitated cooperation and collaboration in fostering sustainable housing and urban development;

The collective vision of APMCHUD that has evolved through the Delhi Declaration in 2006, Tehran Declaration in 2008, Solo Declaration in 2010, Amman Declaration in 2012 and the Seoul Declaration in 2014, has guided us - the Asia Pacific Countries - in sharing our experiences and addressing our concerns through exchange of information in the field of housing and urban development. In the pursuit of sustainable housing and urban development in the Asia Pacific region, APMCHUD has 5 specific focus areas, broadly covering planning and management of urban and rural areas, upgrading of urban areas, delivery of basic services including mobility, sustainable housing finance including development of smart cities, and promotion of disaster resilient urban development, and these working groups are led voluntarily by member countries, which signifies its collective and collaborative efforts.

I am happy to inform that APMCHUD held its 6th session at New Delhi from 14th to 16th December, 2016 and discussed elaborately on the theme of 'Emerging Urban Forms – Policy responses and Governance Structure in the context of the New Urban Agenda', and adopted the New Delhi Declaration and Implementation Plan. A

special session was also organised which focussed exclusively on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

The 6th APMCHUD recognised the fact that the Asia Pacific region is experiencing a rapid urbanisation process, and has been conscious of the fact that urbanisation in the Asia Pacific region has had a significant positive association with improved levels of the standard of living at large, and that the positive potential of urbanisation is yet to be fully realized. It was also recognised that the rapid pace of urbanization in the recent past in the Asia Pacific region and its projected faster pace in the years to come, is likely to result in emergence of spontaneous urban forms which may become unmanageable and unsustainable. The 6th APMCHUD also reaffirmed its commitment for ensuring affordable housing for all as a component of an improved standard of living; supporting skill development, training and capacity development initiatives to empower and strengthen skills and abilities of all stakeholders; in addition to reaffirming its intent, to regularly convene to share experiences, good practices, innovative approaches and challenges in the field of housing and urban development towards ensuring sustainability, equity and inclusiveness.

It is in this context that the 6th APMCHUD held in New Delhi in December, 2016 adopted the New Delhi Declaration, which resolved to strongly reaffirm the commitments our governments made with regard to the goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Goal 11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable; and the

transformative commitments for sustainable urban development agreed to in the New Urban Agenda. The declaration also took the opportunity to strengthen its resolve for respective as well joint actions towards the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

The New Delhi Declaration adopted by the 6th Conference of APMCHUD recognised, in the light of the New Urban Agenda, the special significance and challenges of policy and governance reforms in light of the expanding cities and towns in many parts of Asia Pacific, requiring appropriate national urban policies, urban legal frameworks, integrated urban and territorial planning and design, urban financing frameworks and appropriate multi-level governance frameworks encouraging action by all stakeholders, including effective cooperation between national, sub-national and local governments.

The 6th conference reconfirmed APMCHUD's resolve for a voluntary, country-led, open, inclusive, multilevel, participatory and transparent follow-up to enable the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda, in collaboration with United Nations system and, in particular, UN-Habitat; and reiterated the commitment for APMCHUD and its Working Groups to serve as a forum and network to discuss our follow-up actions on the commitments of the New Urban Agenda and the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 6th conference, deliberating the theme of 'emerging urban forms – policy responses and governance structure in the context of the New Urban Agenda', decided to:

1. Develop policies at national, sub-national and local levels where they do not exist and review and strengthen the current policies towards integrated development of cities, towns and their peripheral areas;
2. Encourage the adoption of approaches that promote cities, towns and their peripheral areas as an urban-rural continuum and for strengthening their complementarity for mutual advantage and growth;
3. Ensure that the emerging urban forms are appropriately recognized and managed through effective governance structures so that these areas economically and spatially drive sustainable development;
4. Strengthen the sharing of information on innovative policies and successful practices relating to housing and urban development, through all possible approaches, including by regularly updating and interlinking the online information resources

In the context of the New Urban Agenda, the countries of Asia Pacific region would have a significant role to play. The issues of

improving the quality of life of citizens by provision of, as well as improved access to, services and livelihood opportunities for all sections of the population, development of appropriate planning responses and methodologies for promoting disaster resilient human settlements in the context of natural as well as climate change related disasters, placing human settlement development at the centre of developmental paradigm, etc. would all require collective, collaborative and co-operative efforts for identifying, adopting and adapting sustainable solutions among the countries of the Asia Pacific region. In this context, as an inter-governmental mechanism, the APMCHUD would play an important role in the years to come for facilitating sustainable development of human settlements in the Asia Pacific region.

The effort to conceive a collective vision for structured and successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda as part of the 6th APMCHUD at New Delhi in December 2016 is just the initial effort, and in line with the commitment by the Asia Pacific countries, efforts would continue to evolve multi-pronged methods, approaches and strategies for successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

We, the Asia Pacific community, look forward to deliberations in this 26th session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat on the theme of 'Opportunities for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda' that would also guide us in our efforts.

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 views during this 26th Session of the Governing Council.

Thank you.
