



STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI AT THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION
OF THE UN HABITAT GOVERNING COUNCIL

Your Excellency the President of the Governing Council

Honourable Ministers

Heads of Delegations

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honoured to represent my country Malawi, during the Twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat under the theme '**Opportunities for the Effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda**'

I bring fraternal greetings from His Excellency, Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, the President of Malawi, the warm heart of Africa.

Firstly, I wish to join my fellow colleagues in congratulating Dr. Joan Clos, the Executive Director of UN-Habitat for a well-organized conference.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

Malawi is among the fast urbanizing countries in the world with a proportion of the national population of 15.3% living in urban areas in 2008. The annual urban population growth stands at 5.3% and this is much higher than the national growth of 2.8% per year. Managing this urbanization sustainably is crucial as we implement the new Urban Agenda.

By attending the third Un Conference on Housing and sustainable urban development in Quito Ecuador, Like all Un member states, Malawi renewed and strengthened its commitment to sustainable urbanization and the development of sustainable urban and human settlements. The Government of Malawi recognizes that the New Urban Agenda has brought a new set of commitments to which it must commit.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

In ‘ensuring inclusive, sustainable and adequate housing for a better future’ the Government of Malawi has formulated policies and implemented a number of programmes which have assisted in managing rapid urbanization to attain sustainable and adequate housing for a better future through;

- Formulation and review of the National Housing Policy to improve housing service delivery;
- Implementation of the Decent and Affordable Housing Subsidy Programme (DHASP) which is targeting the rural and urban poor which has benefited over 12,000 households.
- Implementation of Slum Upgrading programmes in the major cities of Lilongwe, Blantyre, and Zomba, and recently in Mzuzu under the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme with financial and technical assistance from UN-Habitat and;
- Establishment of a Housing Ownership scheme for public servants.

On providing ‘Synergies and financing for sustainable urbanization’ The Government of Malawi has

- Established the Local Development Fund, with an urban window and a Public Land Development fund for provision of infrastructure and services for housing development, which has seen the Implementation of a Rural Growth Centres project and Secondary Centres Development programme as strategies to promote economic growth and infrastructure development in rural areas and medium sized towns;
- Established the Roads Authority and Roads Fund Authority to improve funding and delivery of road infrastructure as part of the structural and institutional reforms in the road transport sector;
- Strengthening partnerships with the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners as was evidenced by the Malawi Urban Breakfast meeting which the Government organized on 3rd October, 2016 in collaboration with the Habitat III Secretariat, UN-Habitat and UNDP. At this meeting, the Malawi Government engaged a number of public and private sector organizations in a discussion of how to finance urban development in implementing the new urban agenda.
- Recently, the Government of Malawi also engaged members of the National Habitat Committee to discuss the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to come up with strategies for resource mobilization for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

On ‘Integrated human settlements planning for sustainable urbanization’

Malawi acknowledges that Sustainable Development Goal Number 11 is key to the New Urban Agenda and in order to achieve it, policies have to be developed and reviewed. Further, evidence based planning must be instituted to prioritize the necessary reforms that will guide the implementation of its New Urban agenda, including:

- formulation of the National Urban Policy which will promote the development of well governed and sustainable cities;

- strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable urban development by establishing department responsible for urban development matters;
- initiating the process of devolving urban planning and management functions from central government to local councils;
- Strengthening the legal framework by approving the Physical Planning Act, the Land Act and other land related laws in 2016 which are key to the sustainable management of urbanization; and Formulation of a National Land Policy which proposed reforms for improving land administration, urban planning and human settlement development.
- The formulation of the National Land Use Policy which among other things provides for the whole country to be a planning area. This will help in planning for rural areas whose functions and products link with urban areas.
- Formulation of Physical Planning Manual for Local Government Authorities to guide them in delivery of physical planning services to the general public.

The New Urban Agenda for Malawi

The challenges which Malawi continues to face in managing urbanization have formed the focus for its New Urban Agenda. As a country we are prioritizing urban issues in the country's overall development agenda while recognizing the importance of rural urban linkages for the sustainable development of cities. The New Urban Agenda for Malawi is focusing on:

- Improving public transport system which pose a mobility challenge for the urban population especially the poor;
- Strengthening rural urban linkages which are crucial for the sustainable, physical and economic growth of cities;
- Building resilience of human settlements to reduce impacts of natural disasters and mitigate impacts of climate change;
- Building the human and financial capacity at all levels for urban planning and management;

- Implementing slum upgrading programmes and preventing the growth of new informal settlements in all urban areas;
- Infrastructure development and service provision for sustainable urban and human settlement development;
- Sustainable management of the growing urban population growth through provision of infrastructure and services; and
- Providing spatial urban development frameworks for all cities and urban centres to prevent sprawl and ribbon development which makes provision of basic services and infrastructure difficult and expensive.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

In conclusion,

The Government of Malawi reiterates its commitment to implementing the New Urban Agenda which provides an opportunity for achieving the sustainable development of urban and human settlements by putting forward strategies and instituting reforms in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

Malawi further strengthens its standing of implementing the New Urban agenda in line with the Common Africa Position on Habitat III, which among other things encourages member states to localize and own the Agenda so that it is informed by African realities and based on Africa's current priorities.

The Government of Malawi shall continue to endeavor strengthening its partnership with UN Habitat and other development partners and agencies which are key to the implementation of its New Urban Agenda.

Finally, the Government of Malawi commends the United Nations through the UN Habitat for its commitment towards the sustainable development of urban and human settlements.

I thank you for your attention.