

**Statement of local and regional governments on the revised Habitat III zero draft
Delivered by Emilia Saiz, New York 29 July 2016**

Excellences, Dear Colleagues, Dear Co-Facilitators, Dear Friends

Allow me to start by thanking you for providing us the opportunity to participate in these discussions. Our constituency attaches great importance to this.

Local and regional governments welcome the revised draft and see it as a positive basis from which to refine the New Urban Agenda and its implementation mechanisms. We believe however that we need to be able to go further and would like to emphasize three key components of this New Urban Agenda, necessary not only to face the new reality of an urbanizing world but also to achieve the ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda.

We will need to be daring on the renewal of the social contract; there is a clear call from the citizenship to the different spheres of governments which in our view is best captured in the notion of the right to the city.

We will need to address the great challenges of financing the new urban reality. The infrastructures we will need to ensure a territorial approach the urban rural continuum and the metropolitan areas will necessitate new forms of financing. Business as usual will not suffice.

Finally, we will need to address the renewal of governance: at local, national and international level. Missing this opportunity to involve all actors and spheres of government would be missing to have a truly transformative agenda that can support the development agenda in general.

We therefore ask you, once again to be brave and bold. To try to go beyond current national realities which might limit the future societies we would like to shape.

Our detailed comments follow here below.

We welcome the recognition of the particular role of local and subnational governments, as well as other stakeholders, in promoting sustainable urban development and implementing the New Urban Agenda (paragraph 16 and 64). We suggest adding the following text here to explain how this could be achieved by building on existing initiatives: *We commit to involving all actors through the Global Assembly of Partners and in particular the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments in global policy making process and consultations related to the urban sustainability agenda.*

We would also welcome consideration of a specific seat and active participation of local governments in the governing council of UN Habitat as implementers of the New Urban Agenda.

In terms of governance and decentralization, we welcome the fact that the call for legal frameworks that “enable local authorities to effectively implement national urban policies and empower them as policy and decision makers” has been maintained in the revised draft.

We also welcome the introduction of paragraph 67 on the International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services for all, adopted by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat in 2007.

We also welcome new language on “stronger coordination between national, sub-national, and local governments including through formal multi-level consultation mechanisms and by clearly defining the respective competences, tools and resources for each level of government” in paragraph 69.

However, we regret the loss of specific language calling for “Effective decentralization, based on the principles of subsidiarity” and the reaffirmation of the “commitment to work with local authorities and communities in an inclusive and effective manner”.

We celebrate the introduction of paragraph 135 on sub-national capacity building in the areas of data collection, analysis and dissemination, and the need for globally-comparable as well as locally-generated disaggregated data. This is a much needed response to one of the key recommendations of the Global Dialogue on Localizing the Post-2015 Agenda, co-led by the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, UNDP and UN Habitat.

We welcome the recognition of local and subnational as key contributors to local economic development.

However, on financing, we regret the loss of the target for dedicating a minimum of at least 20% of national resources to local government. However we appreciate the language on “capacity development of local authorities in financial planning and management” and supporting “access to different multilateral funds, including the Green Climate Fund, for cities”.

We warmly welcome the references to local government associations in paragraphs 126 and 131, particularly the acknowledgement of their role in “knowledge sharing, promoting peer-to-peer exchange, and strengthening the involvement of local governments associations in national consultations on development priorities”.

On the global governance architecture for the implementation and follow up of the New Urban Agenda, we welcome the acknowledgement of the role of UNACLA and would call for adequate strengthening within the UN system as a whole, and celebrate the call for ‘special status for local governments that will allow them to play a full role as active partners of national governments’ in paragraph 150.

Please count on our continued support and advice. Thank you.