

First I would like to thank the Honorable Mr. Trepelkov and this esteemed body for participating in this impressive dialogue today. I would also like to thank UNHabitat for inviting me to summarize today's dialog. It is my hope that these interventions will inform dialog at Rio 2012 next year. Many provocative ideas have been laid out addressing issues on land, housing, basic services and infrastructure.

Dr Clos started us off this morning by reminding us that our history as governments is reactive rather than proactive. Assistant Secretary General Thompson then emphasized that too often cities have developed in ad hoc ways -- this has meant increased urgency in the face of rapid urbanization.

Her Excellency Ana Maria Fernandez affirmed that good governance is "at the center of humanity" and noted the important work of organizations such as UN Habitat. She said that today we were "a planet of cities" and shared the inspiring accomplishments of Brazil where there has been strong work around poverty eradication. She told the audience about the creation of the Ministry of Cities in 2003 by President Lula and noted its accomplishments in slum upgrading and the transformation of Brazilian cities over the last decade.

The Honorable Taoufiq Hejira of Morocco encouraged us to "change our paradigms" and "start viewing towns as assets rather than problems". He also highlighted the strong role of residents and the participatory process by stressing the role of civil society. He concluded by noting that synergy is key.

The Honorable Peter Goetz lifted up the need for all countries to embrace an international dialogue. He urged that it is now more important than ever and offered that "it is not a question of *if* but *how and where*"! He continued by cautioning that this work must be done within context of integrated approach. He also noted that cities today produce a majority of emissions so it is necessary to address climate change together with the cities. He also stressed to the audience that all "we have the responsibility to bring urbanization into political level ...work more together than before".

Ms. Sheila Pattel echoed these comments by lamenting that "it will be difficult to solve problem of slums in next 30-40 years...regardless of what we plan and do". She asked rhetorically- "what kinds of partnerships are we going to engage in?" – And answered: "They need to be radically different and need to be inclusive...previous strategies have not been equitable and have not represented women and youth and others at bottom".

Professor Priemus encouraged developing countries to learn not only from best practices, but also from the mistakes of developing countries. He explained that "the system designed for poor, is itself poorly designed!" He added that it creates stigma for residents; reduce potential for mobility, and reduces incentives for investors. He continued by noting that the role of housing policy is underestimated in poverty eradication and opined that housing vouchers are a positive development in policy as they really reach lowest income

The Junior Minister from Norway ended the morning by observing that equality and social indicators are linked and he noted that everyone gains from equality.

The afternoon session's focus on basic services and infrastructure also offered many "take-aways". First, the Honorable Vincent Karega, Rwanda's Minister for Infrastructure recommended that cities concentrate on energy efficiency gains by increasing energy efficient urban form and buildings.

Remarks by The Honorable Mr Jayaratne from Sri Lanka resonated as he talked about the need to connect public transportation and other modes of transport to ensure that systems are safe and to enhance mobility and choice for all residents. This recognizes that ultimately, connections provide choices for residents.

Remarks from His Worship Masunda from United Cities and Local Governments built on his knowledge as Mayor of the City of Harare where integrated water resources management has been critical to the positive development of the city.

Finally, Mr. Stephane Quere of the World Business Council talked about sustainable urbanization and green growth being mutually reinforcing concepts. He emphasized that productive, inclusive cities could also be part of equation for a sustainable city.

It is obvious, given the challenges and opportunities of cities around the world, that we all have a stake in ensuring that every country can participate in this new era of sustainable economic growth. If we can embrace a greener, more sustainable future for our metropolitan areas, we can ensure that households and communities have access to unprecedented opportunities for economic and social progress.

In the United States we want every family to live in communities that are rich with opportunities. As the Honorable Peter Goetz said this morning, even in developed countries too many people live in substandard housing, or housing that is too expensive. For so many of our children in the US, life chances are determined by where you live and therefore what school you attend, the quality of the air you breathe, and the quality of your health care. This is wrong!

My agency, The US Department of Housing and Urban Development has enacted programs to make sure ALL children have access and choices. Indeed, one of Secretary Donovan's recent initiatives is called CHOICE Neighborhoods-- in recognition that we all strive for our children to thrive, not just survive.

For us in the US, a big challenge is that we have very few regional governments, while 21st century problems spill over from one local government to the next and they require regional solutions. Yet in the US we have more than 20,000 local governments working on local interests.

To address this challenge Secretary Donovan recently launched the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities which is today providing half of its funding to encourage regional solutions that increase opportunities and promote sustainable communities.

The Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities is just one example of the Obama Administration's leadership across the country to ensure that all of our investments and activities are aligned in support

of sustainability. We strongly believe that you cannot have long term viability without both.

Within months of President Obama taking office, the cabinet secretaries from 3 agencies (HUD, EPA, and Department of Transportation) agreed to a series of principles to guide the work of the agencies:

- Promoting and encouraging more transportation choices;
- Supporting equitable and affordable housing;
- Building economic competitiveness;
- Supporting and valuing existing communities and neighborhoods, and
- Coordinating policies and leveraging investments across government agencies and up and down levels of government.

Much of the work focuses on strengthening our infrastructure and transportation networks so that they provide maximum connectivity and minimum environmental degradation-integrating housing, land use, transportation and economic development. This integration is one of the hallmarks of Secretary Donovan that is focused on practical solutions to problems, even if the problem overlaps the boundaries of cabinet agencies.

In the United States, we come from the view that housing can provide a platform to achieve sustainable development. We understand that housing should be connected to all essential services, such as education, health, related to the built environment. Without this holistic and multi-faceted approach, we will not be able to create and sustain change.

In closing, I'd like to remind you that President Obama underscored the importance that the United States places on collaboration and sustainable development by announcing the first ever Policy Directive at the United Nations last fall.

I quote "...the purpose of development--and what's needed most right now--is creating the conditions where assistance is no longer needed. So we will seek partners who want to build their own capacity to provide for their people."

In light of this priority, the United States is focused on working with our partner governments. Nowhere is this more critical than in our cities where perpetually limited funds are stretched to make sorely needed investments.

To align the United States' foreign assistance objectives to this end, the US Agency for International Development recently committed to developing a new strategy that will focus on improved service delivery in an increasingly urban world. To be clear, USAID has long focused on sustainable urban development. Its loan guarantee programs helped create a private housing finance sector in countries throughout the world, from Mexico to Morocco. Water and sanitation programs have enabled local governments to improve slum conditions in India and elsewhere. Energy services have been delivered to communities in Brazil that were previously off the grid.

In partnership, we can and will seize the historic opportunity before us to pro-actively shape the forces of urbanization, creating a healthier, more inclusive future for our cities and metropolitan regions, and charting a more sustainable global future for generations to come. At HUD, we believe this future starts with the recognition that stable, affordable, and inclusive housing can achieve these broader goals, and

we look forward to working with our partners all over the world to learn what works as sustainable and comprehensive solutions for our communities.

Thank you.