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Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for CSD 13

**EU Speaking points on Human Settlements for
March Conference Room 4
17.00-18.00**

Human Settlements: Expert Panel

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The EU welcomes the Secretary General's report on human settlements, the Millennium Project Task Force paper on human settlements, and the CSD12 Chair's summary on actions needed to strengthen progress towards international targets on human settlements. We believe these reports identify the main constraints and obstacles to overcome in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements, and highlight key policy areas where actions can be taken to expedite progress.

New approaches to the planning and development of human settlements are required, in order to manage rapid urbanisation. National and local authorities of developing countries need to be enabled to get acquainted with the most appropriate and cost effective urban management and planning practices. It is necessary to improve the capacity of both national and local governments in adopting cost effective urban planning and management activities, in looking comprehensively and coherently at issues such as land use, transport, housing, social and health services, construction, employment, water supply and sanitation. This can be done by implementing integrated research, pilot projects, transfer and training programmes and adequate monitoring systems, through south-south and north-south co-operation at the local level.

Access to basic services, such as water, sanitation, energy, transport, waste disposal, communication, education and health, is an essential component in achieving an adequate standard of living. Exploring opportunities for improving access to basic services, i.e., through the development of environmentally sustainable services, and through guidelines for the interaction of stakeholders, is necessary. Public-private partnerships represent a tool for meeting the needs of the urban and rural poor for housing, education, transportation and

services provided the control and monitoring by public authorities of such partnerships is guaranteed

Promoting pro-poor policies that **increase social inclusion**, especially of slum dwellers, is important both from a social and an economic point of view. Efficient social inclusion policies include both actions that promote individuals' opportunities to develop housing conditions, and also actions that develop water and sanitation systems and require inputs from the public sector.

Energy used in human settlements and transport is one of the fastest growing forms of consumption. Through integrated urban planning, the implementation of appropriate city structures, and the development of non-motorised and public transport, one can slow down the increase in energy consumption, decrease negative impacts on health, and improve the functioning of human settlements. The potential of renewable energies should be further used for a sustainable energy supply of human settlements.

Sustainable spatial planning and sustainable construction should be one of the key areas of attention in the coming years to reduce energy consumption and in general to reduce the impact on natural and human resources.

Taking further steps to **empower local authorities** can be done by promoting the role of local authorities as coordinating bodies. Reinforcing the role of local authorities implies both the decentralisation of responsibilities, and the corresponding transfer of resources. It is also important to look at other ways to financially empower local authorities (e.g. possibilities to borrow on the capital market).

Strategies for **creating and maintaining** security of tenure are central to improving the lives of slum dwellers and land use in urban areas. Therefore, prioritising the development and implementation of sound **policies on secure tenure**, and stable and transparent land markets is of key importance. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that women have equal access to secure tenure, including the right to hold legal contracts of tenure, inheritance and other acquisition of real estate. **Pro-poor land management** is needed to make the poor visible as legal citizens, to include their settlements in city planning and to develop standards and procedures for securing tenure and affordable housing and services for the poor.

The EU recalls and endorses Resolution 16 of the 19th Session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat, concerning women's roles and rights in human settlements and slum upgrading, which,

among other things, requested Governments to promote, through appropriate **constitutional, legislative and administrative measures**, the realization of: (1) women's rights and equal access to adequate housing and basic services and amenities, to ownership of property and land, including rights of inheritance, and to secure access to credit; (2) the effective participation of women in human settlements planning and development at all levels of government, and (3) gender sensitive implementation of slum upgrading programmes. (EU intervention at CSD12)

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. G. S. K." with a large flourish at the end.