

THE SOLO DECLARATION

THE THIRD ASIA PACIFIC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (APMCHUD)

We, the Asia-Pacific Ministers responsible for housing and urban development, meet in Solo, Indonesia, on 22 – 24 June 2010, to address the challenges of housing and urbanization in Asia and the Pacific:

Express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for the excellent arrangements of the Third Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD) and our appreciation to the people of the Republic of Indonesia for their warm hospitality,

Announce the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD) in New Delhi and express our appreciation for its efforts towards the progress made in implementing the Delhi Declaration and Tehran Declaration, and to UN-HABITAT for its continued support to the Conference and its works in the region,

Express our sincere gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the Second APMCHUD, and for its serious and perseverant chairmanship in the APMCHUD bureau,

Recognize the importance of the Delhi Declaration and Tehran Declaration,

Also recognize the importance of the Pacific Urban Agenda as adopted at the South Pacific Forum Countries in 2007,

Express concerns on the impacts of economic crisis and climate change towards the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with the possibility of significantly harming MDGs commitment indicators in some countries, and the need for additional efforts,

Express concern about the significant humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, in which poses extraordinary challenges associated with the rehabilitation of destroyed housing, property and infrastructure, in addition to the continued deterioration in the human settlements and the housing conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, and the need to enable rapid recovery and reconstruction alongside humanitarian interventions, including concerted efforts for the smooth flow of building materials in accordance with guidelines agreed upon by all parties,

Recognize the important role of local stakeholders, including the poor and vulnerable groups with due attention to the needs of women and children in achieving sustainable urbanization, including addressing the challenges posed by climate change and the economic crisis; and the need to increase stakeholder capacity to support the process of sustainable urbanization,

Realize the challenges of cities and human settlements in sustainable development and the growing need for urban-led development, which includes comprehensive strategies for rural-urban linkages and focus on local potentials and community aspirations, as well as promoting energy efficient development through the diversification of energy resources, including the peaceful use of nuclear energy towards sustainable urban development,

Take note the importance to strengthen cooperation between member countries in developing disaster prevention mechanism as well as emergency, reconstruction and recovery of areas damaged by disasters and extreme climate-change related events,

Recognize that cities around the Asia-Pacific region rely on the knowledge of their citizens, their institutions and their firms and enterprises to support sustainable development and there is already a wealth of development experience and knowledge, of which needs to be captured, share and disseminated more effectively for the benefit of our partners in development.

Cognizant of the current challenges and opportunities in the region:

1. *Acknowledge* the need to develop policies and strategies to empower communities for sustainable urbanization;
2. *Agree* to develop database and information systems; knowledge, innovation and learning networks between cities and countries in order to provide and serve local needs to support sustainable urbanization;
3. *Agree to promote* the utilization of the capacity of the Regional Centre for Knowledge and Learning Network for Community Empowerment in Housing and Urban Development at existing centres in Indonesia and encourage other countries to take similar initiatives in order to strengthen APMCHUD's role as hub for knowledge in sustainable urbanization.
4. *Agree* to increase and accelerate capacity of stakeholders for integrated, participatory and inclusive planning by developing cooperation on tools and instruments for planning and governance to achieve sustainable urbanization;
5. *Agree* to strengthen poverty alleviation programmes in the urban system, especially facilitating access of the poor to the basic infrastructure provision, social and economic resources, through community empowerment and improved security of tenure;
6. *Invite* Governments to promote indicators on sustainable development for water supply and sanitation, housing, urban services, suitable with the local conditions; and urge governments to create an enabling environment through policies and actions to achieve sustainable urbanization;
7. *Urge* the Asia Pacific Community to minimize wars and conflicts in the region and make cities peaceful and liveable places for future generations;
8. *Recommend* to incorporate the impacts of climate change in spatial planning at the macro and micro levels;
9. *Take note* on the outcome of the Fifth World Urban Forum and call upon the next World Urban Forum to promote sustainable and harmonious urbanization, with an emphasis to cope with the negative impact of economic crisis and climate change;

10. *Agree* to analyze various policies adopted by planners to address the challenges of housing and urbanization which could lead to possible regional cooperation mechanism;
11. *Adopt* the Solo Implementation Plan resulting from the five Working Groups as attached;
12. *Agree* on the continuation of the activities of the five Working Groups, the Secretariat of which to be hosted by volunteer member countries. The five working group comprise of as follows:
 - WG1 Urban and Rural Planning and Management
 - WG2 Upgrading of Slum and Informal Settlements
 - WG3 Delivery of MDGs for Water and Sanitation
 - WG4 Financing Sustainable Housing
 - WG5 Urban Development with a focus on Natural Disasters
13. *Endorse* the composition of the 3rd Bureau of APMCHUD with its members being Ministers representing:
 - a. Republic of Indonesia
 - b. Islamic Republic of Iran
 - c. Republic of the Fiji Islands
 - d. Republic of India
 - e. Republic of Iraq
 - f. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
 - g. Republic of Korea
 - h. Islamic Republic of Pakistan
14. *Request* the current chair of APMCHUD to ensure the implementation of this declaration in collaboration with other members of the Bureau, the APMCHUD Secretariat and the UN-Habitat Secretariat and look forward to receiving regular updates.
15. *Welcome* the offer by the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to host the 4th Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development in 2012.

Adopted in Solo on 24 June, 2010.

THE THIRD ASIA PACIFIC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (APMCHUD)

Solo, Central Java, Indonesia, June 22-24, 2010

ANNEX SOLO IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Introduction

In order to implement the Solo Declaration, Ministers of Housing and Urban Development of the Asia Pacific region have agreed to take a number of concrete actions in each of the five areas addressed by the working groups. Some of these actions are precisely defined while others remain to be further elaborated. Individual governments have committed themselves to join particular actions and inform the APMCHUD Secretariat accordingly within the year 2010.

Ministers of Asia Pacific will cooperate as follows:

1. Community Participation in Planning and Governance

Community participation is differently understood and practices in the different countries of the region with varying degree of results. There has not been enough information exchange and networking on community participation experiences in the region.

Actions

Governments will strengthen community participation in planning and governance by:

- Passing relevant policies and legislation for ensuring community participation in Housing and Urban Development projects at local and national levels that will benefit all parties concerned, particularly the communities.
- Setting up regional management information centers to develop networking activities including establishing cooperation with relevant networks, conducting training, and follow-up actions in the Asia Pacific region.
- Identifying and publishing best practices and lessons learned on community participation.
- Undertaking impact assessment of community participation and identification of the benefits at all levels periodically.
- Establishing inter regional and cities awards on community participation among Asia Pacific countries on housing and urban development projects.

2. Participatory Urban Slum Upgrading

Despite fruitful initiatives undertaken in the region, Asia Pacific accounts for 60% of the world's urban slum dwellers. There is an urgent need in the region to scale-up creative and sustainable solutions. The slum dwellers should be recognized and empowered as major actors of improving their housing and living conditions, and governments should take a facilitating role. Ministers will share experiences, lessons and innovation in City to City cooperation for further replication and adoption in each context.

Actions

- Government will analyze and disseminate a wide range of slum upgrading innovative options including on tenure security, strengthening the financial networks for slum upgrading programmes and formalizing people-based approach as part of the planning process.
- Ministries will initiate the formulation, adoption and implementation of Slum Upgrading Policies to be further mainstreamed in the national development policy. The APMCHUD Secretariat will monitor progress in collaboration with UN-Habitat (ROAP).
- The delegations of India, Indonesia and Thailand have shown interest to receive study tours on participatory slum upgrading programmes. APMCHUD Secretariat will facilitate the visits and report the results in the next APMCHUD meeting.
- Indonesia will expand its Research Institute for Human Settlements into a regional center on community empowerment in slum upgrading.

3. Working Group on Delivery of MDGs for Water and Sanitation

In Asia drinking water supply is progressing well, however there is a felt need for increasing water efficiency gains through various means of water demand management practices, desalination and reuse and recycling of wastewater treatment. Most countries in Asia are not on track to meet the sanitation MDG target. Access to safe sanitation is significantly lower than access to clean water. Therefore there is urgent need for community-based approaches to speed up the process for sustainable sanitation. Several actions have been proposed to meet this challenge. Very limited wastewater is treated resulting in contamination of water resources, hence there is an urgent need for focusing on wastewater treatment.

Actions

Governments will:

- Establish a centre of excellence on Water and Wastewater for Asia and the Pacific for knowledge sharing and technology transfer at national and regional levels. The centre will be established in two years (The Islamic Republic of Iran has offered to host the centre and UN-Habitat will lend possible support). The centre will be linked to a network of national and sub regional centres of excellence for both water and wastewater. The centre will organize one international workshop and two regional training programmes in two years and two international workshops and four regional training programmes in five years.
- Conduct exchange visits for studying successful community-based sanitation, water and wastewater solutions and implement pilot demonstration projects in three Asia countries in two years and six countries in five years (Indonesia has offered to facilitate study visits and UN-Habitat under Water for Asia Cities programme will support such visits for knowledge sharing and best practices).

- Increase investment flows into the sanitation, water and wastewater sector from national budget, national and international financing institutions, domestic and international NGOs, private sector by end of two years in three countries and by end of five years in six countries (UN-Habitat's Water for Asian Cities Programme will facilitate sector investment in interested countries in Asia).

4. Financing Sustainable Housing and Urban Development

Asian countries are experiencing rapid growth of urban population that has put great challenges on cities and countries to provide adequate housing and urban infrastructure for all. The challenges of providing adequate and sustainable housing and urban infrastructure finance concentrate in low and middle income groups. The current housing and urban infrastructure finance systems do not adequately address the financing issues for low and middle income groups. There is a need to recognize different approaches to address the housing needs of different groups, including empowering people and communities for sustainable housing and urban infrastructure.

Actions

- Governments will enable formal financial institutions to lend to low-income people and informal sector. This will include to:
 - Review and reform current regulations which hinder lending to low income people and the informal sector;
 - Initiate pro-poor financing instruments including guarantee, insurance and compulsory savings for housing schemes by national governments and financial institutions;
 - Establish national pilot liquidity facilities to support low-income housing lending programmes.
- Governments will strengthen the housing information systems to develop a holistic approach to housing finance. This will include to:
 - Establish a knowledge clearing housing on housing finance issues, utilizing existing institutions such as Asia Pacific Housing Finance Network, Asia Pacific Housing Research Network and Asian Real Estate Society.
 - Promote integrated housing finance policies by national governments, considering the linkages between informal and formal housing finance, between micro-finance and macro-finance, and between housing and economic development.

5. The Role of Communities in Addressing Climate Change

Given that the whole of Asia Pacific is witnessing rapid urbanization, increasing frequency of climate extreme events and sea level rise and related threats, APMCHUD needs to formulate a common Asia Pacific urban adaptation vision and policy agenda for governments and urban communities based on: more rationale land-use planning, more robust infrastructure, flexible livelihood strategies, smarter and greener urban services that are equally accessible to all. To optimize communities' role in achieving

the above, cities/local governments must involve experts, professionals, and community skilled practitioners and not work in isolation in order to take appropriate actions.

Actions

Governments intend to:

- Organize a training programme to mainstream climate change interventions at the local level. It will:
 - Bring together experts, professionals, research institutes, private actors and community stakeholders to discuss and exchange information and resources for climate change adaptation/mitigation at the local level.
 - Produce guidelines for addressing climate change at the local level.
 - Improve current local risk management/measures in response to climate vulnerability and enhance community participation in hazard mapping including climate hazards.
- Hold a policy seminar with existing regional networks and initiatives on climate change to share experience and knowledge. This will aim at:
 - Operationalizing a regional platform through more effective multilateral cooperation and resource mobilization.
 - Creating partnerships among cities, encouraging awareness and prioritizing climate change interventions, exchanging best practices and documenting lessons learned and sharing them.
 - Strengthening local action plans into the national policies in harmony with regional interest to address the climate change impacts.
- Identify an institution to serve as a focal point for the exchange of information and experiences on climate change best practices and lessons learnt in the region.