

Position Paper for the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)

Habitat III brings two principal issues to the table, namely Strengthening Pathways for the Implementation of International Standards for Sustainable Urban Development and Financing Technology Transfer in Urban Development. Kingdom of Norway firmly believes that cooperation between countries all over the world is the key answer for both issues.

I. Strengthening Pathways for the Implementation of International Standards for Sustainable Urban Development

Kingdom of Norway is willing to carry out all necessary measures to strengthen the implementation of international standards for sustainable urban development. Having thoroughly observed the matter, Norway outlines three major problems as follow. First, increasing world population has given unprecedented pressure to sustainable urban development. It is estimated that 70% of world's population will live in urban cities by 2050. This phenomenon of urbanization is able to transform social and economic setting of nations. It cannot be overlooked that increasing population in cities worsens extreme deprivation and environmental degradation.ⁱ Cities have limitation to support livelihood of population residing in it. Second, there seems to be lack of binding international standards that include a more precise definition of a sustainable city. Consequently, city governments face hardship to make their cities more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable. The international community is yet to have inclusive and feasible international standard for sustainable urban development. Third, there is limited coordination of national, regional, and local planning as well as implementation for large-scale urban development. Complementary planning, programming, budgeting, and implementation for existing and future international standards are needed to ensure that these are aligned.ⁱⁱ

As the response, international community has conducted several actions. Goal 11 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is sustainable cities and communities. This goal specifically aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. ISO 37120 titled Sustainable Development of Communities stipulates indicators for city services and quality of life. It encompasses 17 themes and 100 indicators to help cities make analytical decision. Shanghai Manual plays similar role by providing guidelines on sustainable urban development to mayors, urban planners, and decision makers of cities.ⁱⁱⁱ Norway has actively involved in supporting sustainable urban development. Oslo provides fine example of this. Oslo was presented the European Sustainable City Award in 2003^{iv} and reached the finals of the European Green Capital Award in 2010/11.^v Oslo is an innovative city that has established the Urban Ecology Program (Bykologisk Programme) aiming to create sustainable city form utilizing frameworks developed under the European Union. Urban Ecology Programme is a priority guide for all city action. It is a 12-year framework followed in all municipal plans, programs, and budgets of the city and it analyzed as well as revised every 4 years.^{vi}

Kingdom of Norway intends to propose solutions that can be summarized in the concept named CCL. CCL stands for Cooperation, Consultation, and Local Framework. Cooperation refers to the cooperation between member states in regards to sustainable urban development. Cooperation can takes two forms, namely material assistance and good practice sharing. Material assistance encompasses financial and technology aid for enabling sustainable urban development as these are often cited as the reason why some cities have not been able to apply ISO Standard. Sharing of good practice aims to share knowledge and experience from countries that have successful track records of sustainable urban development to countries, which are yet to have sustainable urban development. Norway is willing to be the focal point of this sharing of good practice. The next element in our proposed solution is Consultation. There is a huge need for cities government all over the world to meet and discuss about the sustainable urban development strategy. UN Habitat can serve as a platform for cities government with their own unique experience to consult to each other. The meeting for cities government is also open to relevant non-governmental organization and private sectors in

order to enrich the consultation process. Consultation will make international guidelines for sustainable urban development more inclusive. Last but not the least is Local Framework. Local Framework is very much inspired by Oslo Ecology Programme. Each member state is strongly expected to create their own national, regional, and local guidelines for sustainable urban development stipulated in relevant international documents including but not limited to ISO 37120, Urban Agenda, and Shanghai Manual. It is how HABITAT III can actualize the existing standardization. Norway suggests that the Local Framework is made for certain period of time with regular review and revision. Member states then report their progress and challenges to the UN Habitat for further advice.

II. Financing Technology Transfer in Urban Development

Kingdom of Norway is certainly convinced that technology plays vital role in urban development. We observe two main problems in regards to technology transfer in urban development. First problem is technology disparity among countries. Some countries have abundant and advanced technology while the others hardly have technology they need. Technology disparity becomes challenge for countries to achieve development goals, including urban development. The problem is accentuated when it comes to developing countries. Developing countries lag behind in terms of investment in research and development activities. They have weak ability to access, diffuse, and use scientific and technical knowledge.^{vii} Second problem is financial inability of some countries to access technology. Most of the time developing countries cannot attain technology which is too expensive. In addition, they face difficulty to implement technology properly for various development agendas. There is growing need to have broad variety of sources for technology transfer considering limited public financing sources. Small and medium enterprises are other actors to be considered when it comes to technology transfer as they are vulnerable and often cannot undertake the transactions.

Some past actions on this matter are inter alia Agenda 21, United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) International Environmental Technology Center 1994, and 2010 Cancun Agreements. Chapter 34 of Agenda 21 presents a broad context of how technology should be transferred. It addresses the need for access to clean technology, especially in developing world. UNEP's International Environmental Technology Center is branch of UNEP whose function is to promote the application of environmentally sound technologies in developing countries and countries in transition.^{viii} 2010 Cancun Agreements give tangible measure on technology transfer by establishing Technology Executive Committee that will strengthen the development and deployment of new technologies.^{ix} Norway is an active player in technology transfer. Norway supports a number of projects under International Energy Agency, including the Climate Technology Initiative to provide information and transfer of environmentally sound and climate friendly energy technology. Norway has put emphasis on leveraging private investment to clean technology in developing partner countries. Norway supports investment in infrastructure and production capacity in the energy sector of developing countries and such investment is complemented by institutional and human resources to improve technology expertise.^x

As the solution to the existing problems, Kingdom of Norway would like to propose Comprehensive Cooperation Package. Comprehensive Cooperation Package contains three main branches of cooperation, namely international cooperation through pool of fund under UN Habitat; public-private cooperation; and regional as well as bilateral cooperation. Setting up pool of fund under UN Habitat can be a good way to finance technology transfer for urban development. The problem with the current funding mechanism is that there is no a single funding mechanism specifically targeted to technology transfer for urban development. Under this new funding mechanism, member state can propose to get certain amount of fund. When they do so, their fund will be divided into three phases. The fund in the second phase can only be claimed once member state has accomplished necessary progress in the first phase. This is to ensure effectiveness and transparency of assistance usage. Second branch of cooperation is public-private cooperation. Private companies and investors should be involved in this technology transfer. Government as the public authority can give incentives in form of tax break for companies and/or constructors that help cities government to actualize urban

development program. Examples of technology that can be provided by private sectors are water purification, air purification, environmental remediation, solid waste management. Lastly, UN Habitat needs to cooperate with regional organization and banks such as Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank, Development Bank of Latin America, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Inter-American Development Bank, and like-minded organizations. Bilateral agreement between member states needs to be encouraged as well.

References:

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ⁱⁱⁱ “Shanghai Manual: A Guide for Sustainable Urban Development in the 21st Century”, *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, accessed on March 24th 2016, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=633&menu=1515> ^{iv} “Sustainable City: Oslo, Norway”, *Eastern Washington University*, accessed on March 24th, http://www.ewu.edu/Documents/CBPA/NWTTAP/2011_Symposium/Presentations/MWU_Oslo_Sustainable_DickWinchell.pdf

^v Stian Berger Røslund, “Urban Ecology in Oslo”, *Climate Action United Nations Environment Programme*, accessed on March 24th, 2016, http://www.climateactionprogramme.org/climate-leader-papers/urban_ecology_in_oslo ^{vi} “Sustainable City: Oslo, Norway”, *Eastern Washington University*, accessed on March 24th, http://www.ewu.edu/Documents/CBPA/NWTTAP/2011_Symposium/Presentations/MWU_Oslo_Sustainable_DickWinchell.pdf

^{vii} “Bridging the Technology Gap Between and Within Nations”, *Report of Secretary General Economic and Social Council*, accessed on March 24th 2016, http://unctad.org/en/Docs/ecn162006d2_en.pdf ^{viii} “Our Mandate”, *United Nations Environmental Programme*, accessed on March 25th 2016, <http://www.unep.org/ietc/>

^{ix} “Financial, technology, and capacity-building support”, *United Nations Framework on Climate Change Conference*, accessed on March 25th 2016, <http://cancun.unfccc.int/financial-technology-and-capacity-building-support/increased-cooperation-on-technology-for-both-mitigation-and-adaptation/#c304> ^x “Activities Related to Technology Transfer”, *United Nations Framework on Climate Change Conference*, accessed on March 25th 2016, https://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_natcom/submitted_natcom/application/pdf/technology_transfer_nor.pdf