



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT BY
MR BORG TSIEN THAM
COUNSELLOR,
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE TO THE
UNITED NATIONS
ON AGENDA ITEM 21,
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT II) AND
STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME (UN-HABITAT),
SECOND COMMITTEE,
ON 1 NOVEMBER 2012**

Mr Chairman,

1 We align ourselves with the statement by Algeria on behalf of the G77 and China and the statement by Indonesia on behalf of ASEAN on this agenda item.

2 Urbanisation is a key trend of the future. It is estimated that by 2050, 7 out of 10 people will be living in urban areas. Cities are the engines of global economic growth. Cities will be where our future global challenges lie and where they can also be met.

3 As a small city state with a population of over 5 million living packed into a land area of only 704km² or 250 square miles, Singapore is at the forefront of this trend. In spite of a high population density, Singapore has managed to ensure a high quality of life and a sustainable environment for our people. We have benefitted from learning from best practices of other cities and adapting to our local context. As such, we believe that while each city is unique, depending on its own context and characteristics, all cities face common urbanisation challenges.

4 It is in this context that Singapore worked with Sweden to form the Group of Friends (GoF) for Sustainable Cities last November. The GoF comprises 29 countries, spanning all the major regions.¹ It has two key objectives. The first objective is to actively contribute to the discussions on sustainable cities, which is a critical component of the sustainable development agenda, in the lead-up to Rio+20 Summit. The second objective is to provide a platform for dialogue and discussion on this important and cross-cutting topic in the longer-term and post-Rio+20.

5 Against this backdrop, we feel that member states need to be focused in their efforts in this UN General Assembly session to decide on the modalities of convening the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and sustainable urban development (HABITAT III) in 2016. This is of vital importance as the convening of HABITAT III would ensure that there will be progress made in reinvigorating our commitment to sustainable urbanisation that would build on the Habitat agenda, the Declaration on Cities and other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, and other relevant internationally agreed goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Rio+20 Outcomes.

Mr Chairman,

6 Singapore stands committed to moving the process forward for HABITAT III to be convened. At the same time, we would continue to work with Sweden, through the Group of Friend of Sustainable Cities, to contribute to the discussions on sustainable cities by organising meetings and high events on the topic, and to be of some help to governments in following up on the various commitments relating to sustainable urbanisation.

7 I thank you.

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¹ Members are: Australia, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, France, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Poland, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, UAE and United Kingdom.