

COUNTRY STATEMENT BY THE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF  
PAKISTAN AT THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF  
UN-HABITAT 11-15 APRIL 2011 IN NAIROBI KENYA.

Mr. President,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, may I also congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the Chair of the Twenty Third Session of the Governing Council of the UN-Habitat. I am confident that, with your immense wealth of experience, you will be able to steer the deliberations of this Session to a successful conclusion. We assure you full support of Pakistan delegation.

As this is the first Governing Council meeting of Executive Director Joan Clos, I would also like to once again congratulate him on his appointment as the Head of United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Pakistan delegation also associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished delegate of Brazil on behalf of Group of 77 and China.

Mr. President,

The current Governing Council is being held as the world faces immense challenge of sustainable urban development. The solution may lie in building upon earlier recommendations including those from the Habitat Agenda, the Millennium Development Goals, and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. In order to deliver its mandate, the UN-HABITAT has to focus on system wide coherence, devote more resources to country activities aligned with MTSIP focus areas and contribute to post-disaster and post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction. Pakistan supports convening of third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development. In its future activities in the area of human settlements financing, UN-HABITAT needs to focus on normative approach while ensuring geographical and regional balance.

We encourage UN-HABITAT, subject to consensus among member states, to formulate a new global housing strategy. We also wish UN-HABITAT to support implementation of regional, sub-regional, national and local risk reduction and early warning programming including production of guidelines and training programmes, collection and dissemination of best practices. Pakistan also wishes that the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT may provide technical assistance to member states on imminent natural disasters.

Mr. President

Pakistan with unique ecosystems and a population of 170 million is faced with challenges of urbanization and climate change. By 2030, half the population in Pakistan is expected to be urban. A high growth rate plus shift in employment and production towards manufacturing and services is increasing urban proportion at an annual growth rate of 3.5 per cent. This shift is prominent in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh where around 83 per cent of the urban population lives. Moreover, the growth of informal economy and the natural disasters – such as the earthquake of October 2005 and last year's unprecedented floods have further compounded these challenges.

While urban centres have become vibrant instruments for economic, social and human development, they have also become a locus of increasing poverty and deprivation. Thus, the Dialogue on the special theme is timely. The report prepared by the Secretariat on the theme of "Sustainable urban development through expanding equitable access to land, housing, basic services and infrastructure" will help generate useful discussions on the subject.

Mr. President

Pakistan has been a strong partner of the UN-HABITAT and has strived to strengthen its mandate and role. Last year's floods in Pakistan have been described as the biggest natural disaster ever recorded in terms of the number of people affected. Over 20 million people were affected by the floods, while damage estimates to the housing was in the range of 1.8 million affected households. Coping with such a scale of destruction was beyond any developing country's capacity. While, the Government of Pakistan mobilized all resources at its disposal

to provide relief and rescue to the victims of the flood, the international community, civil societies, UN family and NGOs around the world stood by us and extended relief and rescue assistance generously, saving thousands of lives. In this connection, the role played by UN-Habitat is praise worthy. UN-Habitat with the support of donors and other development partners is undertaking a number of projects ranging from the implementation of the inter-cluster Survival Strategy through WASH activities to the rehabilitation of Community Infrastructure and Facilities in the flood affected areas and thus contributing towards alleviating the suffering of victims.

We support and look forward to continued fruitful collaboration with UN-HABITAT in future. Pakistan remains committed to implementation of its international obligations to attain sustainable development goals.

I thank you Mr. President.