

Habitat III informal hearings with stakeholders
Panel 6 – Follow Up and review
(New Urban Agenda, zero draft paragraphs (para 164-175).
Tuesday June 7, 2016

Statement delivered by Ms. Maruxa Cardama, Executive Coordinator and Founder of Communitas – affiliated to the Professionals constituent group of the General Assembly of the Partners (GAP)

Distinguished delegates, colleagues, friends,

I would like to thank the UN Member States, the Habitat III Bureau and the Habitat III Secretariat for the commitment to engage Major Groups and Other Stakeholders in the elaboration and deliberations of the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Also, allow me please to **thank the General Assembly of the Partners – the GAP - for the opportunity to speak** in this session. It is an honour for me to speak as an affiliate to the Professionals Constituent Group of the GAP.

It is important to take one step back to **warmly celebrate the inclusion in the zero draft of a chapter dedicated to the critical tasks of Follow Up & Review (FU&R)** and its characterization in Paragraphs 164 and 165 as a **continuous process at all levels; that is inclusive, participatory and transparent.**

From the professionals constituency we know that a robust system of FU&R of any policy framework is one of the *sine qua non* **elements for its implementation** - particularly when a policy framework aspires to trigger a **paradigm shift** as the NUA is doing. In this context, we call on all stakeholders of this process to put careful thought in **co-constructing a comprehensive and robust FU&R system for the NUA capable of:**

- **Conferring legitimacy to the NUA in the long-run:** Helping governments to stay loyal to their commitment to **accountability.**
- **Maximising the potential of sustainable urban development as a driver for human development.**
- **Fostering ownership** of the Agenda by engaging **all right holders and duty bearers** in its implementation.
- **Allowing for flexibility and adaptability** to absorb the challenges and capitalize on the emerging opportunities that are unknown to us today and achieve a FU&R system **capable of capturing innovation, both technical and social.**

From the perspective of the professionals constituency, we see **four interconnected spheres of action in such comprehensive and robust FU&R system.** A good part of the key elements of these spheres of action are in the zero draft NUA. Our concern is that, at moments, the spheres of action get blurred and overlap each other in the current text.

First sphere: Periodic progress reports on NUA implementation – In order to generate ownership of the Agenda and scale up solutions, we are referring here to a complementary set of progress reports:

1. **National reports** resulting from the **collaboration between national, subnational and local governments** and including **strong multi-stakeholders consultations.**

2. **Reports by UN Habitat;** and
3. Last but not least, **independent reports by Major Groups and Other Stakeholders.**

The current **zero draft is not sufficiently capturing the complementary nature** of these different types of reports.

We are calling for **reports that do not get forgotten in the bookshelves** of governmental or non-governmental buildings but that generate dialogue and exchange of solutions. In this context, the **periodicity and multi-stakeholder nature of the World Urban Forum offers significant potential** for this complementary set of progress reports. We invite UN Member States to **reflect on how the next draft of the NUA can maximise the use of that important venue** the WUF is.

We are also calling for **qualitative reporting** that tells **the story of how the implementation of NUA is impacting the lives of people and their communities.** To this regard, the **World Urban Campaign** and the practices of its special initiative **the General Assembly of the Partners** offer **extraordinary opportunities for the empowerment and engagement of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders not only in the partnerships for the NUA but also in its FU&R.**

Second sphere – A comprehensive UN institutional framework: A UN system-wide support for the FU&R of the NUA, including the centrality of a strong UN Habitat in Nairobi.

We **strongly welcome paragraph 167** of the zero draft and its clarion call in favour of the **central leading position, as well as coordination role of UN Habitat.**

What is missing in the current draft, is a clear mandate on how the UN system-wide will support the FU&R of the NUA; in continuity with the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement and the Sendai Framework.

Some possible ideas to in this line:

1. The **Habitat II** Outcome Document in its **Paragraph 219 reflected the ECOSOC oversight** in accordance with its role under the UN Charter.
2. The NUA should also recognize that the **UN Chief Executives Board, under the coordination of the UN Secretary General** can be a fundamental venue for the effective coordination of the implementation and the FU&R of the NUA across the UN system.
3. **Thanks to** the inclusion of **SDG11** in the 2030 Agenda, we now understand better than ever the inextricable **intersection between sustainable urban development and the other challenges and opportunities of humankind in the 21st century**, such as poverty and inequality, employment, prosperity and productivity, education and health, food, water and energy, climate and ecosystems. It is therefore fundamental that **FU&R of the NUA does not end up cornered as a matter of interest only to the devoted practitioners.**

One can imagine a **regular report co-led by UN Habitat and other relevant UN entities assessing how the implementation of the NUA is accelerating** the implementation of the **SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework.** Such

report could naturally **find its way in the FU&R cycles of the 2030 Agenda via the UN High Level Political Forum.**

Third sphere - A robust policy-science interface mechanism. The professionals constituency perceives an **urgent need to improve the institutional mechanisms for "science-policy interface."** The need for a **sustained, well informed and active dialogue between scientists and policy makers cannot be sufficiently stressed.**

In this line, I would like to **highlight the importance of paragraph 171** of the zero draft **for its recognition of the need to generate and broaden the evidence base on the urban dimension of the broader sustainable development agenda.**

Building on the current text, it will be important to **further elaborate the ideas on paragraph 171 in order to:**

- 1. Enable an independent and specific multi-disciplinary policy-science panel.** We fully value the independent scientific evidence for the FU&R of Agenda 2030 but **the specificity and uniqueness of the urban dimension of this panel must be protected.**
Equally, the **scientific genesis of the works of such panel must be protected. Multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder are not interchangeable words.** Scientific genesis is compatible with later multi-stakeholder dialogue about the scientific findings.
- 2. Provide a clear and strong mandate for such policy-science mechanism to be crafted.**
- 3. Give careful thought to the intersections between this new multi-disciplinary policy science panel and existing landmark reports** such as the **State of the World Cities Report** by UN Habitat, **and the Global Sustainable Development Report** linked to Agenda 2030.

Fourth Sphere - A system of metrics and indicators capable of providing a granular picture of what happens at the local level.

The zero draft contains in Paragraph 166 a **call for a review that provides for "complementarity to the relevant Sustainable Development Goals indicators."** This is a **good start but falls short in clarifying important aspects.**

We hope that the next draft will:

- 1. Decide on whether a specific system of metrics and indicators for the NUA building upon and complementing the SDG11 indicators will be elaborated; and if so provide a clear mandate for their elaboration.** Careful thought should be given to **what type of coordination role could the UN Statistical Commission offer.**
- 2. Enable all levels of government to capitalise on the already existing City Prosperity Index elaborated by UN Habitat.**
- 3. Call on national statistical offices to contribute to the territorial disaggregation of data via the use of geospatial tools in complement to the traditional household surveys; as well as via close collaboration with the subnational governments.**
- 4. Unequivocally call for open and public data.**

Many thanks for your attention. I look forward to engaging in the interactive discussions.