



REINVENTING URBAN PLANNING IN AFRICA
INTRODUCTORY REPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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1. The world's urban population has risen sharply since the mid-twentieth century, from 750 million in 1950 (30% of the total population) to 4 billion today. It is expected to reach 5 billion in 2030 (60% of the total population)¹. 70% of rural world will turn into 70% of urban world in a century. Demographers predict a stabilization of the world population at about 10 billion humans in 2070 with a large majority living in large and small cities, and a huge majority in the countries that we used to call "third world". If the urban transition is largely complete in Europe and (North and South) America, it is still fully taking place in Africa and Asia.

2. The world is becoming urbanized so irreversibly. Cities, whatever their size, offer citizens the opportunity to share public spaces, to exercise their rights and to find jobs. They also allow the adoption of common social values and democratic modes of governance. But cities do not offer conditions and opportunities equivalent to all social groups. The majority of the urban population is subject to multiple economic, social, cultural and environmental constraints. In many cities, social and spatial divide between the rich and the poor is an obvious factor of instability and it generates economic and social costs, not just for poor people, but also for the whole society. This is as relevant to countries of the South as to those of the North.

3. Africa is, in turn, in transition. First of all, it is undergoing a demographic transition. The continent had 228 million inhabitants in 1950 and 808 million in 2000. It counts now 1.2 billion people and is expected to reach 2.4 billion in 2050. Africa is also experiencing an economic transition with a reduction of agriculture in GDP, a monetization of economies and expansion of services. This transition is also social with an increasing gap between the rich and the poor (measured by Gini coefficients greater than 0.5), growth of the middle classes, urbanization of lifestyles. Finally, the continent is witnessing a rapid urban transition. The urban population of Africa, which now amounts to 480 million people (41% of total), will reach one billion by 2040. Its rate growth is now 3.83% per year, by far the highest in the world, but this average hides significant regional variations (1.9% for Morocco, 5.3% for Uganda).

¹ This report is using UN statistical data, the only internationally recognized ones available at atesa.un.org/unpd/wup. Data updated every two years

4. Urban growth is both the cause and consequence of the socio-economic growth. The cities represent over 75% of the continent's GDP and countries' development level is correlated with their level of urbanization. UN-Habitat Studies have shown that the most urbanized countries are also the most economically and often socially advanced². This process of urbanization is not just relevant for large cities. In fact more than half of urban Africans live in cities with less than 500,000 inhabitants. These medium-sized cities, with weak institutional and financial resources, are the most forgotten by urban policies and projects.

5. The effectiveness of cities can be measured in social, economic and environmental ways. In all these three areas, most African cities are not effective. Sustainable urban development at the benefit of present and future generations remains a distant prospect. In fact it is time to fundamentally reinvent African urbanism, to put the problems on the table, to develop ambitious solutions and apply them with determination, that is to say, by affecting all necessary human and financial resources to urban development. The rationale for this investment is clear: well-planned and well-managed cities are a powerful lever of economic growth, a factor of social harmony and environmental balance, and a condition for positive regional synergies. Return on urban investment is considerable and has been shown in all regions of the world since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Asia has well understood this in the last half-century.

6. Cities are very different from each other but they suffer, to varying degrees, of the same evils (spatial inequalities, transport congestion, air and water pollution, lack of safety, deficient public services, etc.). They can, then, learn from each other, as governments learn from each other, particularly within the United Nations.

7. The challenges of sustainable development can and must be raised, provided cities are able to fully play their leading role. But urban investment must be organized, planned and coordinated. For that, African states must adopt genuine urban policies and strategies at both national and local levels. To this date, very few countries have implemented such policies. African urbanization, largely chaotic and spontaneous, is especially marked by overnight corrective or remedial interventions. It seems that governments are constantly overwhelmed with housing, land, services, infrastructure requests and they can only fill gaps, and attend to the most hurried. But there is nothing inevitable: all countries can develop coherent and ambitious urban policies and mobilize resources for their implementation. That is what this paper intends to establish for the debates of the Forum in Rabat and through it the deliberations of Habitat III Summit of Quito and contribute to the formulation of the New Urban Agenda by International Community for the next twenty years.

8. This introductory report includes the following four parts:

- (i) Towards National Urban Policies,
- (ii) Policies of the City and Local Authorities,
- (iii) Cities and Sustainable Development,
- (iv) For an African contribution to the New Urban Agenda.

²UN-Habitat, "The State of the World's Cities 2010/2011"

A. Towards National Urban Policies

9. A National Urban Policy (NUP) is a set of decisions derived from a consultative process led by the government which includes a shared vision, principles, goals and programs of action to promote sustainable urban development. That is to say, to realize the opportunities and confront the challenges of urban growth. A NUP provides a national framework of institutional, regulatory and financial responses to the problems of urbanization. It deals with the territorial balance and city networks and offers implementation, monitoring and evaluation tools. It is divided into sectoral chapters covering infrastructures, services, land and housing.

10. A NUP may include a component called "Policy of the City" which organizes the relations between the central government and local authorities, for instance to upgrade urban areas in difficulty, reduce inequalities between territories or tackle climate change. This first part (A) of the present section suggests an outline of the national urban policies that each government should adapt to its specific context. The Policies of the Cities are the subject of the second part (B).

A1.Challenges and goals

11. The development of a National Urban Policy starts with the identification and analysis of the urban situation, distinguishing the challenges and opportunities that are associated with it. Ideally, this diagnostic phase should involve relevant ministries, local authorities and their associations, private sector and civil society representatives, urban planning professionals, academics, and other relevant partners.

12. In respect to challenges common to many African countries, those of particular interest are: territorial imbalances, the rigidity of land markets, the importance of informal settlements and slums, inadequate basic services (including water, sanitation, electricity) and infrastructure, lack of public transport, the consequences of climate change, urban violence, unorganized internal and external migration, insufficient generation of decent jobs, undersized education and health facilities, marginalization of certain social groups such as street children and the disabled, inadequate or out dated institutional and regulatory frameworks.

13. In respect to opportunities, social dynamics at work in African cities must be appreciated, as well as inventiveness and adaptability of the informal sector, the ramp-up of associations, family solidarity and the role of women, emergence of a youth eager for education and new technologies, hybridization and diversity of popular cultures, growth of the middle classes and evolvment of elites towards more consensual and transparent approaches, the lessening of ethnic tensions in the urban melting pot, competition among international support agencies.

14. These issues should be quantified as much as possible to establish an objective foundation for a national urban observatory. Once this diagnosis done and validated, it is important to build a second consensus on basic principles (fairness, equity, participation, inclusion...) and select the country's top priorities. United and structured, these can then form a vision shared by all urban stakeholders, with a time horizon to the year 2030 (deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals, see section C1) or 2036 (Habitat IV probable conference).

15. This vision of "the city we want" can and should mobilize the forces of the nation around the major goals of sustainable development and their urban declination to go towards economically productive and socially inclusive cities. This vision can be divided into social, economic, environmental, cultural, technological and territorial goals, knowing that each goal must be accompanied by a strategy and an action plan, taking into account national specificities.

16. The importance of this analysis and consensus building stage cannot be sufficiently stressed. It requires a legitimate leadership, organizational know-how, effective consultative mechanisms, an open mind and good negotiation skills. It is essential to obtain the stakeholders' trust, to motivate and empower them to become active participants in urban policy and ensure its sustainability. It can depend on the organization of Urban Forums in which actors on the urban scene exchange ideas, discuss various proposals, different scenarios, and make recommendations to the government and local authorities.

A2. The three pillars of the Urban Governance

17. By definition, a National Urban Policy is a set of decisions emanating from a consultative process led by the government. Its implementation depends not only on government but more widely on the modes of urban governance at work in the country. Good governance must be participatory, accountable and transparent. It must be based on three main pillars: a partnership institutional framework, a facilitating regulatory framework and innovative and effective financial instruments.

18. **An adequate institutional framework** is essential for the implementation of any NUP. Public institutions involved in a NUP can be very numerous. It is important that responsibilities be well established and that supervisory and coordinating bodies be clearly defined. The main institutions are generally as follows:

- The parliament;
- Ministries in charge of Urban Development, Housing and Land Affairs;
- The Ministry of Interior and Local Government;
- The Ministry of Finance;
- The Ministry for Spatial Planning;
- The sectorial ministries in charge of infrastructure, transport, health, education, environment, industry, culture, social affairs, etc.
- The provincial, metropolitan and local authorities;
- The deconcentrated services of the State;
- Public agencies of Urban Planning;
- Public real estate developers;
- Service providers (urban transport, water, electricity, waste collection, communications, etc.)

19. In view of the large number of public and para-public institutional stakeholders, it is important to establish effective processes of consultation and decision-making. One option is to create an inter-ministerial committee under the authority of the Prime Minister, with secretariat provided by the Ministry in charge of Urban Development. This Committee can prepare decisions, resolve disputes, foster actions, correct errors and manage delays. It must be accompanied by operational coordination mechanisms and can be based on similar committees at provincial and local levels.

20. Of course the institutional framework of urban governance is not limited to the governmental and public sectors. It must involve private partners, including landowners, investors, banks, developers, construction companies, private service providers, architects and consultants, control agencies, surveyors, etc. It should also provide consultative mechanisms and interfaces with organizations of civil society, residents and users associations, women and youth organizations, research centres, small businesses in the informal sector, traders etc.

21. The institutional framework must take into account the evolution of most African nations towards greater decentralization and the need to strengthen the powers and resources of local authorities. This universal evolution was the subject of International Guidelines on Decentralization, adopted in 2007 by the UN- Habitat Governing Council³ (see paragraph 62).

22. Finally, public institutions must be provided with the necessary resources to exercise their mandate. When human resources are insufficient or insufficiently qualified, which is the case in most African countries, a vast capacity building or capacity strengthening program should be established as an essential component of NUPs. Regarding financial resources, reference is made to paragraphs 27-31 below.

23. **A facilitating legislative and regulatory framework** is the second pillar of good urban governance. Too often the absence of such a framework hinders the implementation of policies. There are many cases of overabundant, obsolete, unenforceable or simply ignored urban regulations. The main regulations to be assessed and adjusted are about land use, responsibilities of stakeholders, quality of buildings, respect for the environment, human rights and protection of the vulnerable. In all areas, simple rules should be adopted, rules that are easy to understand and applicable to all, facilitating rather than being punitive.

24. Land regulations constitute the absolute core of urban governance and policies. All cities are built on land for which the occupancy and use is (or should be) regulated by the government. Tenure rights, zoning, land transactions and registration, pre-emptive and expropriation rules, regularization of informal settlements, territorial planning standards, building permits, all these elements should be subject to laws, regulations and codes ensuring both social equity, economic efficiency and quality of the urban space. It is a significant challenge that requires political wills, human resources and adequate regulations that can generate significant financial resources (see paragraphs 27-29 below). UN-Habitat has recently launched a programme on urban legislation that associates the improvement of governance and the development of new land tools.

25. The stakeholders' responsibilities, especially those concerning the different spheres of government, must be defined by law. As noted above, UN-Habitat has developed Guidelines on Decentralization that generically define the respective responsibilities of central government and local authorities. They state that "national, regional and local competencies should be differentiated by the Constitution or by legislation, in order to clarify the respective powers and to guarantee access to the resources necessary for the decentralized institutions to carry out the functions allocated to them" (Article 20). These Guidelines,

³UN-Habitat, International Guidelines on Decentralization and Strengthening of Local Authorities, resolution 21/3 of April 20th, 2007

based on the principle of subsidiarity and unanimously approved by the UN Member States, have been adapted to different national contexts.

26. But the stakeholders' responsibilities do not end at government spheres. The relationship between landowners and tenants as well as relations between local authorities and basic service providers (water, transport, etc.) are also subject to regulations in many countries. The former should encourage the expansion of the social rental sector and the latter should allow public-private partnerships benefiting both users and taxpayers.

27. Without adequate **financial instruments** it would be futile to expect anything of urban policy. Fortunately two extraordinary factors make possible the development and adoption of such instruments. The first is economic: the price of urban land is much higher than the price of rural terrains and, in market economies, it increases steadily with urban growth and densification. The second is political: the government can decide on the allocation and use of urban land and derive considerable income from it. This is somehow the miracle of urbanization that can feed itself by producing its own fuel, its own financing.

28. The main sources of land-based finance are the following:

- The annual tax on property and land and real estate occupations;
- The annual tax on office and industrial buildings;
- The betterment tax imposed on improved infrastructure beneficiaries;
- Taxes on approval of real estate programmes;
- Taxes on capital gains for land transactions;
- Taxes on exemption permits to land use plans;
- The sale and lease of public land;
- Registration fees on the transfer of land titles.

29. The addition of these multiple incomes may represent several hundred US dollars per capita and per year in some Western countries, i.e. hundreds of millions of US dollars for a city of one million inhabitants. Total land-based revenue represents more than 1% of GDP in OECD countries. Reported to the richest African countries, those in which annual GDP exceeded 100 billion US dollars, an application in this ratio would provide more than one billion US dollars of property tax revenues annually, which is a sum to consider.

30. Among other financial instruments used by a majority of countries, inter-governmental transfers must be addressed, on which many African municipalities depend, as well as business taxes and tariffs charged on marketable services (especially water, electricity and transport).

31. In financing and social redistribution, it is advisable to adopt progressive taxation modes, i.e. where the percentage of household income used to pay the tax (or tariff charge) increases as income increases. Property taxes can easily be progressive.

32. The message and the terms of the equation are clear: (i) cities automatically produce land wealth (and many other riches), (ii) Governments should make every effort to capture a significant portion of these

immense riches and (iii) allocate the income to urban development to cover investment and operating costs.

A3. Coordinate sectoral strategies

33. From the perspective of urban planner lands are the flesh of the city, and infrastructure is its backbone. Housing units are the most precious individual assets and services are essential collective assets. These four areas are the main components of urban policies and every country must set clear strategies that are coordinated between them. These sectoral strategies are to implement the National Urban Policy and contribute concretely to increase the contribution of cities to economic growth and social inclusion. They should include plans and programs of action at different levels and various time horizons. The document is not going into detail on these strategies, which should in any case be specific to each country, but presents general recommendations adaptable to specific contexts.

34. **The first strategy to be defined relates to urban land.** The African city extends and its periphery invades agriculture lands. Often this expansion is not planned, densities are low and infrastructure cannot follow. This is not a fatality. Land, as the urban development raw material, can and must be planned, regulated and managed to meet the needs of urban growth. The land policy should generally focus on the following principles:

- Prepare sufficient urban extensions by servicing land with basic infrastructure (roads, drainage, water, electricity) and by adopting variable standard according to target groups;
- Restructure (if necessary) and densify the existing formal and informal settlements, while controlling rising land prices and the "gentrification" that may result from it;
- Establish land information systems (cadaster, simplified cadaster) and land registers, relying on new information technologies;
- Review and improve the property tax system (see paragraph 28 above);
- Ensure the security of land tenure and land markets fluidity.

35. This strategy should be designed and imposed by the government and implemented by local authorities, in cooperation with (public and private) developers and residents' associations. By a drastic increase in supply, it will certainly lead to a fall in land prices and thus those of housing.

36. **The second strategy to be defined relates to infrastructure,** from the largest to the smallest. Given the level of congestion of African cities, it seems that a clear priority should be given to transport networks, as part of an overall plan covering both primary and service roads to enable a variety of transport modes. In most countries other priorities are water and electricity supply networks. Since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2001, many African cities have made undeniable progress in both areas.

37. The infrastructural strategy should generally be built around the following principles:

- Associate infrastructure planning to land-use planning (road network plans and land use plans);
- Associate physical planning with financial and budgetary planning;
- Involve service providers in infrastructure planning;
- Delegate responsibilities to appropriate (regional, metropolitan, municipal) levels, depending on the complexity of the projects and the investment value;
- Ensure proper supervision of works, notably in case of Public-Private Partnerships;
- Set up maintenance procedures from the start.

38. This strategy requires significant public investment, close coordination between the government spheres, careful phasing and continuity of interventions. African countries could draw inspiration from East Asian countries (China, Korea, and Japan) whose economic success of recent decades is closely linked to huge investments in infrastructure (roads, railways, subways, ports, airports etc.).

39. **The third strategy to be defined regards housing.** It is not just a component of urban policy because of its economic and social importance. Housing expenses represent on average 25 to 30% of the household budget and the sector is a powerful mobilizer of domestic savings. In most OECD countries the housing sector also drains huge budgetary resources, used as incentives and subsidies. Finance ministries play an important role in housing policies and strategies, regardless of any territorial dimension. However urban and housing policies must be articulated and reinforced in cities and they are necessarily connected and affected by land policies. African housing policies have long been limited to the public production of houses for civil servants. This period seems to be over. A global shelter strategy was adopted in 1988 by the United Nations and embodied in the Habitat Agenda in 1996. It already placed emphasis on enabling approaches and is currently being updated by UN-Habitat. A housing strategy should generally be based on the following principles:

- Acting on both the supply (housing production) and demand side (household needs and solvency) by well-targeted financial incentives;
- Encouraging both the construction of new housing and the restructuring and renovation of existing neighbourhoods;
- Promoting diversity in housing supply both in terms of standards and in terms of the status, including a revitalization of the private rented sector;
- Regulating and improving informal settlements and slums;
- Establishing appropriate housing finance systems, mobilizing savings and relying on bank and community sectors;
- Organizing and training construction actors, including developers and contractors;
- Facilitating the consideration of energy and environmental parameters in the design of multi-family, semi-collective and individual housing units.

40. This strategy requires an enabling institutional and regulatory framework. It will have to rely on key players in the housing sector, namely real estate developers and construction companies, not to mention investors, financial institutions and credit agencies. It will aim to provide housing that is inclusive, decent, financially accessible, tailored to lifestyles, and which can possibly evolve. It will also give priority to housing for low-income groups.

41. **The fourth strategy to be defined regards urban services.** These are numerous and varied. They were defined in 1996 in the Habitat Agenda to include the delivery of safe water, sanitation, waste management, social welfare, transport and communications facilities, energy, health and emergency services, schools, public safety, and the management of open spaces⁴. Some services require significant investment in infrastructure, others involve more operating costs and staff resources. Urban services have been the subject of International Guidelines on Access to Basic Services, adopted in 2009 by the UN-Habitat Governing Council⁵. In implementation of these directives, the basic service strategy must observe the following principles:

- Taking into account the inter-sectoral and inter-jurisdictional linkages between the services to ensure an integrated and consistent supply;
- Regularly holding four-party consultations between government, local authorities, civil society organizations and service providers to promote dialogue between stakeholders;
- Adopting quantitative and qualitative targets and standards for service delivery, particularly in sensitive areas such as water supply and sanitation, waste management, energy and transport;
- Establishing social and environmental indicators to periodically monitor and evaluate the services provided;
- Ensuring that service providers, whether public or private, comply with the terms of their contracts;
- Establishing rules for selection of service providers and a legal framework for delegation and privatization;
- Promoting pricing mechanisms for a proper cost recovery while making services affordable for everyone.

42. This multi-services strategy does not prejudice the status of service providers. These operators can be public, municipal, private or community-based. They may be local small businesses, large national companies or even transnational firms. It depends on the type of service, the size of settlements and the number of inhabitants to be served. It also depends on the country's economic policy and national strategies in areas such as education, health and safety.

A4. Territorial and environmental strategies

43. After strengthening the three pillars of urban governance and defining the four sectoral strategies, it is important for governments to spatialize or territorialize their urban policy. This means changing scales and addressing different levels of territorial development. The first step is to evaluate the network of urban centres and to strengthen synergies and intercity connections. It must particularly result in a

⁴UN-Habitat, The Habitat Agenda, paragraph84, 1996

⁵ UN-Habitat, International Guidelines on Access to Basic Services for all, resolution 22/8 of April 3^d, 2009

programming of large national and regional infrastructure. The second step is to analyze the relationship between urban and rural areas to take into account the interests and contributions of rural areas in the formulation of the urban policy. It must be accompanied by a review of environmental and climate challenges that will integrate the challenges of urban development in the country's environmental policy. Lastly, the territorial strategy should also be concerned with imbalances between regions, to pay particular attention to disadvantaged areas, accept some differences and aim to reduce others based on objective socioeconomic criteria.

44. Boosting the urban network implies to start from the whole national city network, that should be considered as a system of interactions, and then define a strategy for strengthening economic, social and environmental synergies between the cities. Economic synergies here mean division of labor between cities, specialization of some of them and complementarities between agglomerations. Economic concerns usually dominate territorial development approaches but environmental issues also deserve attention. The planning process requires to make choices, to set priorities, not only in terms of needs but also and especially in terms of potentialities. Some cities are undergoing rapid economic development, others are stagnant and there are even some that regress. Some are not very well located vis-à-vis the national territory or their immediate environment, often for historical reasons. Some places are of high emigration while others, on the contrary, attract many migrants from rural areas and sometimes from neighbouring countries. Spatial planning must take into account this complexity, relying on extensive studies, and then propose strategic options to decision makers. Contrary to popular belief, these options will not always imply to "rebalance" the country because some imbalances are inevitable, too costly to fix and sometimes beneficial at the macro-economic level.

45. The two major means of action necessary for the implementation of any regional planning scheme are financial. According to the priorities established for the selective strengthening of the national urban system, it will be first necessary to focus on the programming of basic infrastructure, including roads and railways, but also some major facilities like markets, ports, etc. Such infrastructures have, of course, a considerable impact on urban development, on the productivity and prosperity of the cities they bring together. The second challenge will be to attract public and private investments to cities that the development plan intends to promote, such as market towns or regional hubs. This certainly calls for improvement of infrastructure, for example the power grid, but also for financial and fiscal incentives by the government to encourage job creation in priority areas. If many territorial plans have been ignored, it is probably because the political will was not accompanied by sufficient financial and budgetary resources.

46. In recent decades, some African countries have engaged in the creation of new towns to limit the hypertrophy of large metropolises, redirect migration flows and sometimes relocate political institutions. This strategy, applied previously in Europe, Asia and Latin America, has experienced mixed success. Several countries have even created new Capital Cities⁶. These new towns have two advantages: they can be developed on extremely cheap land and be planned rationally. However, they require heavy public investment and only attract private investment if they are well located and properly connected to the regional and national urban system. Therefore the creation of new towns requires detailed preliminary

⁶ Lilongwe, Malawi (900.000 inhabitants) and Abuja, Nigeria (2.500.000 inhabitants) can be regarded as relatively successful, despite their informal areas. However, Yamoussoukro, Ivory Coast (280.000 inhabitants) and Dodoma, Tanzania (250.000 inhabitants) remain middle-size cities.

analyzes, beyond political justifications. A subcategory of new cities is constituted by satellite towns that are relatively close to large metropolises⁷. Given sufficient local job creation and transport infrastructure for satisfactory (home-work) commuting, these cities can, in theory, contribute to the development of polycentric cities and urban mega-regions.

47. A particular case of regional planning regards national border areas experiencing rapid economic development in some African sub-regions. In these areas, supranational strategies can attract investment, coordinate actions for adaptation to climate change facilitate integrated expansion of trans border conurbations and improve the management of shared natural resources.

48. A recurring question of land use planning is about urban-rural relations. Some politicians and media regularly argue that African cities develop at the expense of rural areas. This dualistic conception of development, dating back to the years 1960-1970, was dismantled by many researchers and UN-Habitat, and is contradicted by reality. In fact, dynamic cities encourage rural development by absorbing redundant rural labour and consuming agricultural productions. In the urban system, the market towns, in close correlation with their rural hinterland, provide inputs to agriculture and help marketing horticulture products. They need more support from public authorities.

49. In Africa and Asia, debates on the alleged urban-rural contradiction now give way to discussions on mega-regions or "urban corridors". These largely explain the economic success of countries such as Japan, Germany and China. What is it about? An urban corridor is a multipolar region conflating, in organized and synergistic way, large, medium and small towns and agricultural areas. Such corridors are developing in Africa, some in longitudinal form (the Atlantic coast of Morocco between Kenitra and El Jadida, the coastal strip from Accra, Ghana to Lagos and Ibadan, Nigeria), others rather in a star shape (Nile delta, Gauteng province in South Africa)⁸. These "rurban" regions, sometimes transboundary, appear more and more as engines of national economies. Yet again infrastructure is critical and condition the efficiency of urban corridors, including rural-urban relations and peri-urban agriculture.

50. Spatial planning must increasingly consider environmental issues, river basins, flood-risk areas, sensitive areas, as well as the impact of climate change, especially in coastal areas. Issues around water and air pollution, energy saving and renewable energy are becoming unavoidable, and their spatial dimensions are obvious. In theory, a well-designed urban development for mobility; more compact cities, systematic waste recycling are effluent treatment, are elements that play a positive role regarding the environment. Cities should not be seen as parasites with disproportionate ecological footprints; on the contrary, the concentration of urban activities can and must benefit the environment. A good density of the built environment can only be favourable to the creation of green areas and to the protection of the natural environment. Territorial and environmental policies should mutually reinforce each other and support urban policies.

⁷ Ten of these cities were established around Cairo 30 years ago. Morocco has also developed a program of satellite cities.

⁸ See UN-Habitat, *The State of African Cities*, 2008

A5. Methods and Stages

51. Each government wishing to develop a national urban policy could rely on the above considerations, adapting them to the country's context and present circumstances. However, necessary and logical steps will probably be the same in all countries. The first is based on a political will to act and mobilize stakeholders on the urban arena. It has been described in section A1. This step defines and tests the method of work, consultation and participation, which will be applied throughout the process. This method will significantly differ from country to country based on traditions, modes of governance, political context, resources and capabilities. But its common objective will be to involve a maximum of relevant governmental, economic and social partners, in the formulation and implementation of a NUP.

52. The second step is the diagnosis. It begins with a thorough analysis of the situation, problems, challenges and opportunities. This analysis is usually performed by multidisciplinary teams that carry out surveys, conduct interviews, collect qualitative and quantitative information and establish the state of the urban issue in the country from all (demographic, economic, social, environmental, institutional, etc.) angles. This inventory should cover the topics discussed in the previous sections (A2, A3, A4) and outline the priorities for the future urban policy. It is recommended to submit it to public consultations to gather opinions, mobilize stakeholders and build consensus. It should be finalized and eventually released as "white paper", or in any other means to reach a large audience.

53. The third step is the formulation of the national urban policy. This should appropriately include the policy, as well as the implementation strategies and action plans. In this phase, the government has to consider options and assess their potential financial, social and environmental impacts. It must also consider the potential risks associated with each option. Having defined the priorities for urban policy, it is important to revive the consultation and mobilization of partners, possibly to set up a national committee that will help monitor and strengthen the consensus initiated during the diagnosis phase. The text concerning urban policy must specify the terms of its monitoring, its amendment and update (ie. every five years).

54. The fourth step is the adoption of the policy. This is important because the texts when remaining in draft form and commitments which are not formalized lose their credibility. Adoption may be by parliament or government, it may take a legislative or administrative form. In any event, the national urban policy must be formalized, made public and widely publicized.

55. The fifth and longest stage is that of implementation. Responsibilities need to be confirmed, including those of different ministries and local authorities. Institutional capacities, legislative and regulatory framework and funding arrangements need to be strengthened as necessary. Sectoral and territorial strategies should be implemented in a planned and coordinated manner. Urban indicators as well as mechanisms for monitoring and adjustment of actions, involving public and private partners, professional associations and civil society, must be developed. The challenge is to implement in a participatory way an ambitious, flexible and coherent policy, which meets the peoples' needs and aspirations. Finally a NUP should be evaluated periodically, especially in terms of strategy implementation, ownership by all stakeholders, impact on urban growth, and integration with other public policies.

B. Policy of the City and local authorities

56. As mentioned above, a NUP may include a component called "Policy of the City" that organizes and contractualizes relations between central government and local authorities. We must distinguish between the policy at the national level and the various cities' policies, those of local authorities. The Policy of the City generally aims to strengthen the capacity of local authorities, to encourage them to better plan and manage their territories, to upgrade problematic urban areas, to reduce spatial disparities, to tackle climate change or to conduct operations of regional or national interest. In this second part, we will address, in turn, the National Policy of the City and the concrete policies of the local authorities, given that the actions of these two spheres of government should be complementary and an integral part of the NUP.

57. Cities always have two faces. They are the engines of economic growth and prosperity but also of places of inequality, poverty and exclusion. They are areas of culture, education and democracy but also of tension and insecurity. They are places where people find jobs but also discrimination and exploitation. They are friendly public spaces but sometimes gated ghettos closed on themselves. An urban policy must strengthen the positive dynamics and tackle urban ills, it should help remove obstacles to sustainable development in large and small communities, mobilizing municipal energies and civil society.

B1. Policy of the City

58. A Policy of the City is a part of the NUP which aims primarily at involving local authorities. It follows and extends the implementation strategies of urban policy as defined in the first part of this report and can focus on specific aspects depending on the period and local challenges encountered. Generally, such a Policy should be designed to involve different ministries, including the Ministry in charge of local authorities, the Finance ministry and those in charge of Housing and Urban Development.

59. Most government support to local authorities is financial and budgetary. It includes primarily the state contributions to municipal budgets. In Africa these recurring transfers frequently account for more than half of municipal resources and provide the largest share of municipalities' operating expenses. It is important that these central allocations are managed transparently and in partnership with national associations of local authorities, on the basis of objective criteria. Secondly, the government should encourage local taxation and increase the role of urban municipalities in mobilizing local resources. Finally, it is sometimes possible to establish a Municipal Development Fund from which municipalities can borrow to finance certain investment costs.

60. The second support is contractual. The state can indeed establish "city contracts" by which local authorities engage on specific objectives through specific support (financial, regulatory, institutional...) from central government. These incentive contracts may relate to the improvement or restructuring of slums, the fight against substandard housing, protection against floods, the construction of certain municipal facilities (markets, slaughterhouses...), the provision of public spaces etc. The concept usually involves co-financing in order to solve specific and non-recurrent problems. Morocco has demonstrated the relevance of this approach for a decade through its "slum-free city contracts" establishing shared responsibilities between the state and local governments and implementation deadlines.

61. At a time when climate change is a serious concern and a threat to many African countries, it would seem appropriate to initiate this type of contracts in the context of reducing CO₂ emissions and adaptation to climate change. A city could, for example, set an emission reduction target while the State would contribute in return to the financing or co-financing of anti-flood infrastructure. Undoubtedly, international funding would support such "win-win" agreements.

B2. Municipal policies

62. With decentralization, local authorities have greater responsibilities in many countries but sometimes have difficulties facing them because of the inadequacy of their human and financial resources. Governments have well confirmed in 2007 that "an increase of the functions allocated to local authorities should be accompanied by measures to build their capacity to exercise those functions" and that "local taxes, such as land-based taxes, should preferably be collected by local authorities themselves, provided that they have appropriate capacities and oversight mechanisms in place"⁹. But these commitments have been difficult to be kept and remain to be implemented in many African countries.

UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments), the leading global organization of local authorities, has repeatedly drawn the attention of governments to this deficiency.

63. Nevertheless, local and regional authorities play an increasingly important role in urban planning and management. This role has recently been highlighted in the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, approved in 2015 by the UN-Habitat Governing Council¹⁰. These guidelines provide a reference framework to guide the reforms of urban policies and promote a variety of planning approaches tailored to different contexts and scales. They include universal principles and recommendations aimed in particular to governments and local authorities.

64. These recommendations require governments to take the following actions:

- Developing a legal and institutional framework for urban and regional planning;
- Ensuring coherence between sectoral and territorial levels of intervention, based on of the subsidiarity principle;
- Encouraging intermunicipal cooperation frameworks and supporting the creation of metropolitan institutions;
- Submitting bills to their parliaments, stating that the plans need to be developed, approved and updated under the supervision of local authorities;
- Providing tax incentives and targeted subsidies, and strengthening the tax powers of local authorities to correct social inequalities and promote cultural diversity;
- Promoting compact cities, regulating urban sprawl and developing progressive densification strategies;
- Encouraging the development of well-structured planning organizations, which are adequately resourced and which enjoy a continuous capacity strengthening.

⁹See paragraph 21 and footnote 3 above

¹⁰ UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 25/6 of 23 April 2015

These recommendations should fuel City Policies orientations and therefore serve to support municipal policies.

65. The same guidelines require local authorities to take the following actions:

- Approving and ensuring the updating of urban and territorial plans;
- Associating urban planning to municipal management and ensuring consistency between long-term objectives and programs, and short-term activities and projects;
- Cooperating at inter-municipal level for the integrated management of urban infrastructure and services at appropriate territorial scales;
- Facilitating the effective and equitable participation of all urban stakeholders in the development and implementation of plans;
- Encouraging social diversity and mixed use of land;
- Providing quality public spaces and making them safer,
- Ensuring that informal settlements and slums are renovated and integrated into the urban fabric with minimal displacements and relocations;
- Developing safe and reliable public transport systems in order to promote energy efficient and affordable urban mobility;
- Formulating plans that include measures for adaptation to climate change and for increasing resilience, particularly in vulnerable neighbourhoods;
- Adopting low-carbon and energy efficient urban development patterns;
- Mobilizing private investment and transparent public-private partnerships.

Municipal policies must take account of national policies and be based on the national Policy of the City, but must primarily benefit citizens under their respective jurisdictions. They require to associate representative democracy and participatory democracy by involving people in the planning and monitoring of municipal actions, as in the case of participatory budgeting born in Brazil and experienced in several other countries.

66. It is important to distinguish between urban policy and strategic planning on one side from urban management, and operational planning on the other. Urban Policy and strategic planning define objectives and strategies but are not legally binding, unlike land-use plans which apply to all stakeholders. Operational urban planning refers to public, private or mixed concrete operations of development. While municipalities should associate the long and short terms, they must above all manage the city every day. This means raising taxes, balancing the municipal budget, ensuring the financing of non-marketable services, equipping informal settlements, supporting local economic development, approving construction permits etc. Avoiding being stuck in day-by-day management, in response to emergencies, and to be projected on the longer term despite political uncertainties, these are the continuing challenges faced by African local authorities.

67. Strategies and urban development plans should prioritize investment decisions and encourage interaction between districts and counties. Land use plans must contribute to the protection of sensitive areas, to the social mix and to the regulation of land markets. The plans for expansion, restructuring and urban densification should reduce the costs of transportation and other services, and aim to create

inclusive communities. Infrastructure plans, combining national, regional and local contributions should improve urban connectivity and productivity and allow to combat the effects of climate change. These are the essential components of policies that African cities are beginning to draft and for which they need the support of governments and, particularly in the case of least developed countries, international cooperation.

C. Cities and Sustainable Development

C1. Sustainable Development Goal 11

68. In September 2015, Heads of State and government, gathered at the United Nations Headquarters, unanimously adopted the resolution entitled "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"¹¹ which includes 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs), each divided into a number of targets (169 in total).

69. Paragraph 34 of this historic resolution reads as follows: "We recognize that sustainable urban development and management are crucial to the quality of life of our people. We will work with local authorities and communities to renew and plan our cities and human settlements so as to foster community cohesion and personal security and to stimulate innovation and employment. We will reduce the negative impacts of urban activities and of chemicals which are hazardous for human health and the environment, including through the environmentally sound management and safe use of chemicals, the reduction and recycling of waste and the more efficient use of water and energy. And we will work to minimize the impact of cities on the global climate system. We will also take account of population trends and projections in our national rural and urban development strategies and policies. We look forward to the upcoming United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development to be held in Quito."

70. Sustainable development Goal 11 reads: "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" Among the 10 targets listed under this goal, some seem particularly important for Africa, namely:

- 11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums;
- 11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport;
- 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries;
- 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by

¹¹ United Nations, Resolution 70/1 adopted on 25 September 2015 by the General Assembly

disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations;

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

11.a Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, periurban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning

11.b By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters.

C2. Other goals with urban implications

71. The commitments concerning cities are not limited to Goal 11. In fact, ten other sustainable development goals must have a direct impact on cities and urban policies. It is the combination of all these goals and targets with SDG 11, which will guide the sustainable urban development program to 2030, that is to say, the New Urban Agenda. States are particularly committed to:

- under SDG 1 (Eliminating No Poverty): by 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land;
- under SDG 3 (Good health and well-being): By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents, and by 2030, significantly reducing the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination;
- under SDG 5 (Gender Equality): Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life and undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property;- Under SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation): By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all and access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all ;
- under SDG7 (Affordable and clean Energy): By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services and increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix;
- under SDG9 (Resilient Infrastructure): Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all;

- under SDG10 (Reducing Inequality): By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average and facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people;
- under SDG12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse and rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption;
- under SDG13 (Climate Change): Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries and Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning;
- under SDG16 (Strong Institutions): Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels and ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

72. All these ambitious and unanimous commitments made at the highest level provide important elements to develop national urban policies and the New Urban Agenda. If they are not, strictly speaking, an action plan in themselves, they provide a solid and consensual base on which to develop national urban policies and strategies. The General Assembly has also been careful to specify that if ideal targets were defined globally, it is up to each State to set its own targets at the national level to address the global ambitions while taking account of its specific features. It also stressed the need to establish and collect national and global reference data for the progress be measured accurately.

73. It is up to governments to deepen the SDGs and adapt them to their national contexts, define a coordinated plan of action covering the 17 goals and set up monitoring mechanisms. And it is up to the ministries and institutions in charge of regional planning, urban development, housing and urban policy, in cooperation with local authorities, to "spatialize" the SDGs, that is to say, to establish national, regional and local strategies and corresponding action plans to achieve the targets mentioned in paragraphs 70 and 71 above.

C3. Urban Agenda and Climate Agenda

74. Two months after the adoption of the SDGs, the annual Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, known as COP 21, was held in Paris. Governments presented their non-binding national commitments to the year 2030 on the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and their adaptation strategies. This important conference resulted in an agreement in which both objectives are to contain the rise in average global temperature "well below 2 °C compared to pre-industrial levels" and to strengthen the adaptive capacities of countries to harmful effects of climate change.

75. The COP 21 and the Paris Agreement have mainly focused on the reduction (or mitigation) of GHG emissions and less on adaptation to climate change. This second aspect is the priority of a majority of developing countries, particularly the ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) group that emit little greenhouse gases. Article 7 of the Paris Agreement aims to strengthen their adaptability, to reduce vulnerability and build resilience. These are the main challenges facing the LDCs (Least Developed Countries), while polluting countries (particularly G20 members) should focus on reducing emissions.

This article 7 recognizes the importance of international cooperation to support national plans of adaptation in developing countries. If it does not refer to human settlements, it recommends the exchange of knowledge and best practices, and intends to examine the experiences and adaptation needs at the next COP, scheduled for November 2016 in Marrakech.

76. We know that cities are not only key actors of sustainable development but also key agents of climate change, as more than 70% of energy-related global emissions come from cities (mainly due to polluting industries, motorized transport and buildings) and the majority of victims and potential victims of climate disturbances reside in towns. African cities are contributing very little to emissions but are among the most vulnerable on the planet. To flooding affecting millions of people every year on the coasts but also into the continent, there should be added landslides and depletion of water resources which affect primarily informal settlements. Urban density constitutes both an urban asset and a source of vulnerability to different disasters and few African cities are equipped to face the negative effects of climate change.

77. The New Urban Agenda will certainly include recommendations on the role of cities facing climate change. It would be wise for COP 22 to follow-up on these recommendations by the adoption of concrete measures to support the efforts of cities in developing countries in terms of mitigation of GHG emissions and adaptation of urban infrastructure. The objectives of the Paris Agreement in terms of emissions should be accompanied by ambitious and measurable objectives in terms of adaptation and for this purpose the specificities of urban development should be taken into account. This could be one of the challenges of the Marrakesh Conference. It is therefore expected that the Forum in Rabat initiates new discussion and reflection on this possible "Urban-Climate" Agenda (or sub-agenda) and thus prepares the two major conferences in Quito and Marrakech.

D. For an African contribution to the New Urban Agenda

D1. Five African examples

78. To this day no African country has developed and implemented a comprehensive and integrated national urban policy. However, in each of the five sub-regions of the continent, one can find urban policy elements and sources of inspiration.

79. In Southern Africa, South Africa has begun to consider an urban policy in recent years. The country has 54 million inhabitants, of which 35 million is urban (65%) but rural development remains a political priority. The legacy of apartheid and segregation strongly marks the urban space. Cities are usually sparse in central areas and experiencing high densities in peripheral townships and informal settlements. So far the government has focused on two priorities: decentralization and services and housing policy. Since 2013 it attempts to define an integrated urban development framework (IUDP) that would encourage cities to formulate long-term strategies. This framework would have four objectives: (i) to ensure better access to services, (ii) to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth, (iii) to strengthen institutional capacity and participation and (iv) to define new spatial forms. This would particularly go through actions on infrastructure and transport, land governance and urban restructuring, and through a reform of urban planning. So far, this framework, which would be the starting point of the national urban policy, is not yet finalized and is subject to interdepartmental discussions.

80. In East Africa, the least urbanized sub-region of the continent, Rwanda has developed an urban policy in 2014-2015. The country has 13 million inhabitants of which 3.6 million is urban (29%) and urbanizing rapidly (+ 5.6% per year of urban growth). The political will to support this movement, despite the weak institutional capacity, is clear. This explicit urbanization policy rests on four pillars: (i) improving coordination at all levels, (ii) increasing urban densities, (iii) strengthening social and cultural inclusion and (iv) boosting economic growth. This requires adopting new tools of urban planning and management, improving water, sanitation and transport, developing and specializing secondary cities and increasing locally generated revenue. The urban policy paper submitted to the Council of Ministers in late 2015 identifies the Ministries responsible for each action and the response time schedule.

81. In Central Africa Cameroon has initiated a discussion on urban policy at a National Urban Forum held in October 2014, which brought together 700 participants. The country has 24 million inhabitants, of which 13 million is urban (55%). Despite some kind of regulatory proliferation, including master plans and land use plans as well as laws on decentralization and urban planning, the country struggles to systematically implement its orientations and still follows a project approach. The gap between regulatory urban planning and operational planning remains important and the urban strategy needs further refinement, to be better institutionally anchored and better funded.

82. In West Africa, Ghana launched a national urban policy in March 2013, accompanied by a five year action plan. The country has 27 million inhabitants, including 15 million urban (54%). Its urban policy is broken down into 12 objectives which cover all human settlements issues (including the promotion of a hierarchy of urban centres), urban development (including adaptation to climate change) and housing (including access to affordable housing). An important feature of this policy is the recognition of the informal sector, the need to improve unplanned areas and to reform land management. Through enhanced coordination of the urban policy by the Ministry in charge of local authorities, and greater resources, the government could transform his understanding of the opportunities of urbanization into structural reforms and concrete actions on the ground.

83. In North Africa, Morocco is implementing since 2004 many urban policy elements. The country has 34 million inhabitants, including 20 million urban (60%). The "Cities Without Slums" program, launched in 2004, has involved 85 cities and urban centers and 380,000 households. It has been remarkably successful in combining in situ restructuring, relocation and resettlement in the context of a partnership between the state and local authorities, having mobilized an investment of 32 billion dirhams¹². Moreover, Morocco has developed a policy of low-cost housing, rental market promotion and creation of satellite towns. The country has a National Territorial Plan (SNAT), a Communal Charter, a National Sustainable Development Strategy, planning tools at several territorial levels, but experiences difficulties in mobilizing and regulating private land supply. Public transport is subject to renewed attention under urban mobility plans (PDU). Therefore, Morocco has a very comprehensive, but relatively fragmented, legislative arsenal. It is important to ensure the convergence of public policies, that is to say, to build public-public coordination and encourage public-private partnerships to develop an integrated National Urban Policy, based on comprehensive vision of the city. Several departments are involved in this approach: the Ministry of Housing and Policy of the City, the Ministry of Urban Development and National Spatial Planning and the Ministry of Interior.

¹² 1 US dollar = 9,72 MAD

84. Given the five experiments briefly mentioned above, one can see that urban policies and policies of the city are not easy to develop. This is primarily due to the complexity of the urban set up, since developed countries, despite much greater resources, also have difficulty thinking of coherent and integrated urban systems. The challenges of the New Urban Agenda are especially significant: there is clearly a need to reinvent urbanism and urbanity, to give a new meaning to urban life, to 'living together'. Mission impossible? Maybe not if governments understand that sustainable development, and primarily economic growth, is played out primarily in cities and towns and if they show enough voluntarism. The African continent, in extensive demographic and urban mutation, should take the lead in this process of reinvention. It has everything to gain in the process.

D2. What priorities?

85. Setting priorities for the whole continent is a challenge. But it is possible to define common principles, which are based on priority areas, generic in nature, that each country, each government should adapt to its specific situation. Most of these common principles are neither original nor revolutionary; the cities indeed have a long history that should be considered in the making of the future. Core principles are found in the SDGs; they have been described, explained and justified in a number of UN-Habitat publications. They can be summarized in a few keywords: democratic governance, progressive decentralization, flexible planning, optimal densification, strengthened capacities, facilitative regulations, participation and partnerships, increased investments, disaster resilience, connectivity, mobility, inclusiveness, safety, accessibility, conviviality, diversity, identity. It is by contextualizing, prioritizing and combining these universal principles that each African country will define a long-term vision of its territory and its cities.

86. The priority areas can in turn be derived from the first two parts of this report that describes all components of urban policies. At this stage, however, governments are going to face a methodological difficulty. On the one hand, they cannot develop all strategies in parallel and simultaneously carry out all recommended actions. It will be necessary to make choices, since considering that everything is a priority means not setting any priority. On the other hand, governments must adopt an integrated and systemic approach, not a compartmentalized or purely sectoral one. To resolve this contradiction, the African Urban Agenda will need to find a middle way, without sacrificing its ambitions to the realism and fatalism which often prevailed since the Habitat II Conference of 1996. This is a tremendous challenge.

87. A pragmatic approach is to take the general recommendations presented above (paragraphs 17-50 and 59-67) and to select a minimum number of targets in each field that will have a ripple effect on the other components of that field. At the continental level, this leads to drafting an Urban Agenda which could be structured around the following ten commitments:

- (i) The institutional arrangements governing cities and other human settlements will be reviewed to ensure the convergence of public policies, decentralization and strengthening of responsibilities and resources to local authorities, inter-municipal management of cities and effective public-private-population partnerships (PPPP);

- (ii) The legislative framework of urbanization will be reformed and simplified and will focus on land regulations to boost land supply, contribute to the densification of the urban fabric, regularize informal settlements and allow the orderly growth of cities;
- (iii) The financial instruments will be subject to a radical revitalization, giving public authorities a chance to significantly increase municipal revenues (which should cover at least 50% of their budget) and to ensure transparency and fairness of inter-government transfers;
- (iv) Land strategy will become more directive, it will seek to ensure a good knowledge of the plots and transactions, to keep land prices within reasonable limits and to better meet the needs by opening new peripheral areas to urbanization;
- (v) Transport infrastructure will be considered as a priority investment at national, regional and local scales, and will promote multi-modality;
- (vi) The national housing strategy will focus on the resorption of inadequate housing and the upgrading of slums, without forgetting to support the development of the real estate and rental markets;
- (vii) Essential services (drinking water, sanitation, waste management, social services, transportation and communication systems, energy, health and emergency services, schools, public safety and public spaces) will be programmed and managed based on a multisectoral and coordinated approach, adequate contractual relationships between public authorities and service providers, taking fully into consideration their impacts on the environment and public health;
- (viii) The national urban system will be revitalized by a socio-economic and environmental strategy aiming at a prioritization of urban functions founded on the respective potential of the various cities and at contributing to the sustainable development of the national territory;
- (ix) Measures for the adaptation to climate change and for enhancing resilience to natural disasters, including protection against flooding, will result in agreements and joint actions between the state and local authorities;
- (x) The methods of urban planning and management will be completely revised, capabilities enhanced, and the participation of private and community stakeholders put into practice in a systematic way to produce inclusive and spatially integrated cities. The new urban planning will be an integrative tool for all previous themes, the base for a renewed urbanism adapted to the challenges and opportunities of our time.

The determined implementation of these commitments, that each government should incorporate and adjust according to the national context, would firstly contribute to enhance the economic efficiency and competitiveness of the continent, and secondly transform African cities into healthy, safe and fair places, where it feels good to live, work and socialize and whose inhabitants, who will have recognized rights and duties, would be proud to be both citizens and city dwellers. These elements could also enable African governments to position themselves for the preparation and adoption of the New Urban Agenda.

D3. International cooperation and partnerships

88. The reinvention of urban planning is not simply a matter to be addressed by experts, it requires a great collective effort, and therefore, national and international partnerships. UN-Habitat coordinates a World Urban Campaign that supported many non-governmental meetings around the world, and that has given rise to a certain consensus on "the city we need"¹³. City-to-city cooperation, women and youth non-governmental organizations networks, regional integration organizations, professional associations, universities, all provide practical and strategic contributions to the definition of the city of tomorrow. It is important to assess these points of view, to support the exchange of experiences and draw the necessary lessons.

89. Since 2002 UN-Habitat organizes the World Urban Forum every two years in collaboration with cities from different regions (so far Nairobi, Barcelona, Vancouver, Nanjing, Rio de Janeiro, Naples, and Medellin). These sessions involve thousands of participants, representing all stakeholders in the urban scene, ministers, activists, mayors, researchers, entrepreneurs, urban planners. Regional Urban Forums are also implemented, especially in Asia, as well as National Urban Forums that are changing the ideas and enriching the debate on urban policies. Regional Forums and regional meetings of local authorities, such as Africities, play an important role for the development of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation. They allow to develop common views and economic and cultural partnerships. It is desirable that such cooperation take more magnitude because in our globalized world, where business and migration increasingly ignore boundaries, urban issues cannot be addressed only at local or national levels, they have international implications and deserve collective and coordinated responses. The United Nations, in particular UN-Habitat as the UN focal point for cities, support African countries in the strengthening of partnerships. They expect that the Forum in Rabat will provide food for thought and action to prepare for the African urban future, and will thus constitute an important step towards Habitat III.

90. In their desire to transform our world, Heads of State and government stated in September 2015: "We recognize that sustainable urban development and management are crucial to the quality of life of our people. We will work with local authorities and communities to renew and plan our cities and human settlements so as to foster community cohesion and personal security and to stimulate innovation and employment."¹⁴ It is the responsibility of the ministers of housing and urban development to make every effort to turn this commitment into reality, if possible within the 15 years to come, and to mobilize all national and international partners to found the new town planning of the XXI century.

¹³ Following the discussions of the World Urban Campaign, "The City we need" should be socially inclusive, accessible and equitable, economically vibrant, managed and governed democratically, reinforcing territorial development, resilient, diverse and has shared values, well planned and healthy, safe, smart and innovative.

¹⁴Resolution 70/1 of the UN General Assembly, see paragraph 69 above.

This report was prepared by Mr. Daniel Biau, Consultant, under the direction of Mr. Mohammed Nabil Benabdallah, Minister of Housing and Urban Policy and Mr. AliouneBadiane, Director of Programmes, UN-Habitat