

Summary of Special Session: “Sustainable Urbanization and Green Innovation”

Date: July 2, 2014

Organizers:

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC),
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat),
International Ecological Safety Collaborative Organization (IESCO),

Topic:

Sustainable Urbanization and Green Innovation

Venue: Conference Room ECOSOC in the Conference Building, UN Headquarters, New York

Host: Anwarul K. Chowdhury, former Under-Secretary-General of UN and High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

The session was co-hosted by the International Ecological Safety Collaborative Organization, the UN Economic and Social Affairs Department, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the UN Human Settlement Program. More than 200 delegates attended the meeting and discussed the issues of promoting urban sustainable development, to deal with climate change and ecological disasters, it is important to use education and media popularization to strengthen youth cooperation.

Tegegnework Gettu, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management, said the UN was trying to bring the concept of sustainable development of ecology into daily life, e.g., to significantly reduce the printing of documents and conference papers.

As technology advances, remote translations could accelerate sustainable development of the environment.

Tariq Al-Ansari, Chief of Cabinet, Office of the UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations, emphasized that, governments and cities should shoulder more responsibilities and take substantive actions.

To deal with climate change and ecological disasters by education, the youth strength and media popularization.

Besides, they need to strengthen partnership including the relationship among governments, parliaments, political parties and international organizations, which is very meaningful for realizing sustainable development.

Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, Director, UN Habitat Youth Empowerment and Urban Safety Committee and Director, the Global Monitoring and Research Division at the UN Habitat, called for the expansion of rights and interests and social responsibilities of youths during the process of sustainable development.

He said that, the youths would be the first group affected by environment and economy in urban development. To make policies for improving their abilities, promoting their employment and expanding their social participation would accelerate urban development to the greatest extent.

Jiang Mingjun, Director-General of IESCO, President of Global Parties Climate and Ecological Alliance thanked the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Alliance of Civilizations and UN-Habitat for their support to and participation in this session.

He also said, faced with a chain of frequently occurred problems including housing shortage, transportation cramming, air pollution, water pollution, resource scarcity, urban inland inundation, food insecurity, youth unemployment, ecological refugees, etc., a well-structured, efficiently functioned and ecologically safe urban operation system should be set up.

Hence, one of the key tasks of "UN Youth Empowerment and Urban Ecological Safety Action Plan" co-launched by UN-Habitat and IESCO is to design and make a system to provide a scientific and objective evaluation tool for the target cities to identify its ecological safety condition and the tendency of ecological system.

Andrei Abramov, Chief, NGO Branch, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Department of Economic and Social Affairs pointed out in his speech that, with urbanization, the global urban population in developing countries will reach 530,000 till 2050. Asia alone would account for 63% of the population.

Different countries may face different difficulties, like population bulge, ethnic groups' diversity, economic development and so on, while all countries will face the same challenges brought by climate change.

Yara Suos, Vice Chairman, Commission for Foreign Affairs of Cambodian National Assembly, on behalf of Sok An, First Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia, Executive Chairperson of IESCO congratulated beforehand the conference a complete success.

He then pointed out that the global climate change had already seriously impacted the development of Cambodia and the survival of Cambodian people, causing immeasurable economic consequences and casualties.

Now, the Cambodia government is accelerating to map out a green development strategy to protect the country from the effects of emission of green house gases and other kinds of ecological disasters.

Dang Yongfu, Member, the Green Alliance of Chinese Academy of Sciences and Board Chairman, Naian International Group, and XueYongxin, President, the World Fellowship of Taoism and Board Chairman, Chengdu Enwei (Investment) Group Co., Ltd. also spoke respectively on the prevention and control of the side effects of herbicide, Taoism thinking and Sustainable Urbanization.