

Toyota Statement on Sustainable Cities and Urbanization Outcome, 16 January 2015

Participants from 23 countries met in Toyota City, Japan, from 15 to 16 January 2015, to deliberate on the challenges and opportunities for promoting sustainable cities in all their dimensions.

The importance of sustainable cities for a prosperous future for both present and future generations is undisputed. This has been recognized by world leaders that dedicated a specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) to sustainable cities and human settlements. However, cities encompass most of the SDGs. Likewise, most of the SDGs are relevant to make cities sustainable and have close linkages with the cities agenda. The quest for sustainable development will be won or lost in cities. At the same time, many countries, in particular developing countries, face significant challenges in managing and planning urbanization processes.

Sustainable Cities in the Global Development Context post-2015

- Cities are the centres of hope for the future - of economic growth, innovation, education and culture. Making the most of the potential of cities is critical to a sustainable future post-2015, and achieving the global sustainable development goals.

- Before the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III) in Ecuador, October 2016, there will be a number of important international events relevant to the cities agenda, during the course of 2015:
 - Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Sendai, March 2015;
 - Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Addis Ababa, July 2015;
 - High-level Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, New York, September 2015; and
 - Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC, Paris, December 2015;

- It is important to connect the dots between these global processes defining the post-2015 development agenda in terms of improving resilience and disaster preparedness, financing for sustainable development, agreement on the SDGs, arriving at a post-Kyoto

framework on climate change, and with a focus on implementation – agreement on a new urban agenda at HABITAT III.

Good Governance for sustainable cities and sustainable urbanization

- Cities should be socially inclusive, economically productive, environmentally sustainable, secure, and resilient to climate change and other risks.
- Finance and transfer of knowledge to enable a sustainable city transformation remain key challenges for developing countries in particular. This is an area which deserves more attention as we move forward. Many cities continue to struggle with fragmented decision-making, competing policy objectives, limited coordination with higher tiers of government and inadequate resources.
- As cities become more significant nationally and globally, the leadership of local authorities to successfully navigate change and harness opportunity and their capacity to enable more transformative policies will be most critical.
- To genuinely enable urbanization serve as a transformational force for achieving and advancing sustainable development, an integrated approach that engages all key stakeholders which can effectively mobilize, manage and coordinate their capacities and resources, will be required. Governance models and planning tools need to recognize the increasing scope and impact of urban activities across policy areas and spatial boundaries.
- Policies must be people-centered, addressing the needs and aspirations of all peoples whether regarding access to participation in public life, opportunities for cultural expression, education, health services, employment, access to and preservation of the natural environment within and surrounding the city system.
- The management of existing and creation of new ecosystems, natural landscapes and urban greenspace is critical to meet the future multiple objectives of sustainable cities.
- Cities must have relevant systems in place that support and, interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration and supportive frameworks at all levels, global, regional, national and local.

- Cities worldwide have similar problems on tackling sustainable development challenges partially due to trans-boundary pollutions and globalization. Joint efforts by city administrations, governments, businesses, academia and the civil society at large to support sustainable development of cities are therefore needed.

The adaptive city: toward realizing sustainable cities

- Irrespective of the development level of the city, cities face challenges to which they must adapt. The adaptive city concept was seen as complimentary and added value to existing frameworks.
- The global aspirations and visions must be translated and adapted to national and local circumstances so as to achieve genuine impact. Good examples and experiences of other cities should be adapted into local circumstances and in particular emerging circumstances.
- Transformative adaptation, the key of which is to create systems that can address and respond to challenges that have not been planned or predicted, was found to be useful to city planning moving forward.
- The notion of urban citizen participation plays a critical role in bringing about adaptive cities. Human-centred strategies include through human-centred infrastructure, people-centred architecture and the role of participation and communication. Continuous engagement with all stakeholders was argued to be essential to the realization of adaptive cities.
- An adaptive city has no model to follow. Cities need to move beyond finding technical solutions to specific problems towards holistic and flexible responses to needs based more upon participation, communication, and integration.
- Adaptive cities require institutions that are able to evaluate policies and become ‘learning institutions’; develop and adopt innovative strategies; and which were focused on implementation with measurable benefits.

Technology, Innovation and the Promotion of Smart City

- Technological innovation is successful and can play an important role for sustainable cities, if made widely accessible, affordable and socially beneficiary.
- This is an area which requires supportive and enabling policy framework, close collaboration with academia, the scientific community and the private sector.
- The elements of a city consist of two areas: the city stakeholders such as residents, government, and industry; and the city infrastructure such as power, water, and transportation. The promotion and application of the ICT-based smart technologies can enable the organic connection of both the human and the material component elements in layers, making it possible for more fulfilling urban living.
- One of the compelling advantages of technology and innovation lies in the fact that the required amount of investment in the construction of ICT-based or other technology is normally smaller than the construction of physical infrastructure such as roads and railways.
- Wide use of ICT-based smart technologies have proven to be effective in promoting the transition to sustainable society through saving energy and cutting energy demand peak, reduction of CO2 emissions, upgrading the city infrastructure to smart systems, improving the urban spaces as well as expanding the ICT environment for business and improving the level of convenience for people engaging in economic activity.
- Introduction of developed technologies to societies should avoid negative implications from social inequality and other social problems. In this regard, the development of technologies intended for the disadvantaged person and efforts to boost ICT literacy are needed, in particular for the elderly and disabled.

Building Urban Resilience

- Integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and management in urban planning produces synergies that can enhance urban resilience.

- Sustained and institutional capacity development is crucial for building climate-resilient cities. Identified institutional capacity needs include but not limited to: climate sensitive and effective urban planning and governance mechanisms; proactive relief plans, early warning systems, adaptation measures; enforcement of zoning laws; need for proper risk mapping to help avoid informal settlements in risk-prone areas; Flood vulnerability assessment maps; and support districts in DRR/M planning.
- Significant knowledge gaps need to be addressed related to relationships among the complex biophysical and socio-economic dynamics that underpin urban vulnerability.
- Green infrastructure and urban green space play an important role in enhancing the overall resilience and environmental, social and economic wellbeing of cities.
- Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) has intrinsic connections with cities and there is a need to better understanding of SCP patterns: responding to basic needs, bringing a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources, over the life cycle of services and products.
- Informal settlements such as slums and squatter settlements reduce resilience of cities and heighten vulnerability of poor and marginalized groups in the informal settlements who are among the most exposed to disaster risk. Solutions include but are not limited to: addressing armed conflict and civil strife of areas, manage implications of drought and desertification; enable provision of services to rural areas; integrated structural and land-use plans at all levels to address the unplanned urban expansion and settlements, etc.
- Cities' resilience assessment and disaster preparedness desegregated at the city service level can promote more proper formulation of policy measures and identify most suitable agents to implement prioritized actions. In this regard, an analytical framework of parameters on cities' resilience consist of five dimensions (physical, social, economic, institutional, and natural), is recommended as an effective and affordable framework with which cities can improve the precise analyzing of resilience needs.
- Integrated Regional Development Planning (IRDP) is a useful integrated planning tool to promote cities resilience including wider regional-scale sustainability issues. Designed to address the needs at the local level and employs participatory planning, IRDP promotes dialogue among competent administrations in the same territory to arrive at coherent

solutions, hence integrate improving resiliency of a city, in particular where the threats from natural disasters are high.

Efficient Financing for Sustainable Cities

- Investing on sustainable cities will require not only investment on heavy infrastructure but also investments on capacity building, education and behavioural change.
- Green investment in cities offers a golden opportunity to deliver economic growth with lower rates of environmental degradation, reductions in poverty, cuts in greenhouse gases, and improved well-being. It includes investment in sustainable infrastructure and resource efficient technologies as well as transit-oriented development (TOD) that promotes urban investment along transit corridors.
- Investing in sustainable cities will require a systemic and integrated approach covering basic aspects of cities' organisation and management including, but not limited to, transport, waste management, food, eco-businesses. With such investment cities could be pivotal on showcasing a city-based 'decoupling' approach.
- Government investments should support the role of cities in national sustainable development strategies, and support infrastructures that stimulate low-carbon, resource-efficient and equitable urban development.
- A number of instruments by international and regional development banks are already in place to support and mainstream investment in sustainable infrastructure of cities. This requires more coordinated investment between different agencies at the city level and central and city level administration, and in particular the upscaling and multiplying by several factors the financial sources channelled in these investments.
- The participation of the private sector is indispensable for a successful or green investment at the city level, the demand of which is now often presents an exponentially increasing trend especially on transport and waste management.
- Innovative fiscal and regulatory instruments will be needed to materialize investments in sustainable cities including Public-Private-Partnerships, and policy instruments for

land value capturing, such as subsidies, taxation, land readjustment and transfer of development rights.

- The level of achievements on investing in new business models for sustainable cities will largely be defined by the overall nature of the economy. Moving towards more circular economic systems will support sustainable cities.
- There is still ambiguity on what constitutes a “green investment” and more work is needed to define a minimum set of criteria that would frame and characterise what is a sustainable or green investment at the city level. The UN system together with other multilateral organisations and the support of the cities and the financial sector, could facilitate the work on developing such core minimum set of criteria on investments for sustainable cities.