



## Concept note for the sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-6)

### “Sustainable Urban Development in Asia-Pacific: Towards a New Urban Agenda”

#### **Context:**

##### *The Asia-Pacific Urban Forum*

The Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF) is a multi-stakeholder forum organized periodically every 4-5 years by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) with the aim to provide a regional platform for urban actors to: (i) discuss emerging and critical urban development issues from the perspectives of different stakeholders; (ii) share experiences on good practices and approaches; and (iii) explore cooperation opportunities and links to regional and global processes and development objectives.

The first APUF was held in Bangkok in 1993, immediately preceding and feeding into the Ministerial Conference on Urbanization in Asia and the Pacific. Recognizing both the significance of its outcomes as well as the value of a multistakeholder forum on regional urban issues, the Ministerial Conference requested ESCAP to periodically organize such forums from time to time to discuss emerging and critical urban issues.

“Living in Asian Cities” was the theme of the second APUF, which was convened in 1995 to discuss the regional input to Habitat II. It highlighted the importance of good urban governance and capacity building of local governments as key prerequisites for urban poverty reduction and resulted in several projects and initiatives.

The third APUF was held in 2000, as a preparatory meeting for Istanbul+5 and dealt with the Habitat Agenda and the need for its localization. APUF-3 also resulted in the formation of the Interagency Coordination Committee on Good Urban Governance.

Following implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the fourth APUF was organised under the theme “Making MDGs work for Cities”. It was held in Hanoi in 2005 and resulted in a technical cooperation strategy in the urban sector that was presented at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Commission Session of ESCAP in 2006.

The fifth APUF was organized in 2011 under the theme of “Cities of opportunity: Partnerships for an inclusive and sustainable future”. It was co-organized with more than 30 development partners and brought together some 1,000 participants including ministers, mayors and other government officials, representatives from academia, the private sector, civil society and grassroots leaders. It provided a platform for different urban partners and players to identify, discuss and prioritize emerging and critical issues in inclusive and sustainable urban development and share their experiences on effective and innovative practices.

### *Habitat III*

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) will be convened in 2016, in line with the bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996, 2016) to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization and to focus on the implementation of a “New Urban Agenda”.

Habitat III will be the first United Nations global summit after the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and will provide a unique opportunity to discuss the important challenge of how human settlements are planned and managed, in order to fulfil their role as drivers of sustainable development. It will therefore build upon the outcomes of the post-2015 process, in which cities and their populations will be at the forefront.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia was elected as member of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III, representing Asia-Pacific, and will host a High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for Habitat III for the Asia-Pacific region in October 2015, as well as the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III (PrepCom III) in July 2016.

Resolution 70/12 adopted at the seventieth session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), held from 4 to 8 August 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand, called on ESCAP, in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and other concerned bodies and agencies, to support the Government of Indonesia in the organization of the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting and to organize the sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum preceding the high-level regional preparatory meeting in Indonesia in 2015 in order to provide substantive input to its deliberations.

### **The Sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-6)**

The sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-6) will take place on 19-21 October 2015 in Jakarta, Indonesia, back-to-back with the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to Habitat III for Asia-Pacific to be convened at the same venue by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia on 21-22 October 2015. APUF-6 will be guided by the theme “Sustainable Urban Development in Asia-Pacific: Towards a New Urban Agenda”, and will:

- Discuss persistent and emerging issues related to sustainable urban development in Asia-Pacific, and in particular priority areas that should be addressed in the Post-2015 Development Agenda;

- Provide recommendations to the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for Habitat III for Asia-Pacific in terms of priority issues for the region to be considered in the “New Urban Agenda” to be adopted at Habitat III.

The outcomes of both APUF-6 and the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for Habitat III for Asia-Pacific will feed into the Habitat III preparatory process and inform the drafting of its outcome document. The outcome of APUF-6, in the form of a Chair’s summary, would be circulated and presented at the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting to inform discussions of member States.

#### *Format and tentative programme*

As in the past, ESCAP will seek to engage a broad base of partners in the organization of APUF, inviting regional and global partners to organize parallel sessions, launch new publications and initiatives, participate with exhibition materials, or organize associated events. ESCAP has a limited core budget to bring key resource persons and speakers but will seek contributions from partners to fund the participation of urban stakeholders and government representatives from the various sub-regions of Asia-Pacific.

APUF-6 will be structured so as to provide substantive outcomes that will form an important basis for the deliberations of the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting. Both plenary and parallel sessions are expected to provide concrete recommendations that will be compiled in the Chair’s summary, to be circulated and presented at the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting.

The focus of APUF was initially discussed with regional partners and experts at the 17<sup>th</sup> Interagency Coordination Committee on Good Urban Governance (GUG) organized by ESCAP in October 2014 and at the Expert Group Meeting on Sustainable Urban Development in Asia and the Pacific: Towards a New Urban Agenda, convened by ESCAP on 2-3 December 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand.<sup>1</sup> The 18<sup>th</sup> GUG, organized on 15 May 2015 and the Expert Group Meeting on Regional perspectives for a Transformative Urban Agenda for Asia and the Pacific, organized on 9-10 July 2015, allowed discussing the tentative programme, participation and expected outcomes.

A preliminary programme for APUF-6 is presented below. The final programme will be shaped in consultation with partners and taking into account the deliberations of the preparatory Expert Group Meeting held in July.

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<sup>1</sup> Proceedings available at: <http://www.unescap.org/events/expert-group-meeting-sustainable-urban-development-asia-and-pacific-towards-new-urban-agenda>

### Tentative Programme for the sixth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-6)

Day 1 (Monday, 19 October 2015)		Day 2 (Tuesday, 20 October 2015)			Day 3 (Wednesday, 21 October 2015)		Thursday, 22 October 2015	
08:00 - 09:00	Registration	08:00 - 09:00	Registration Chair's Summary Drafting Committee		08:00-09:00	Chair's Summary Drafting Committee	High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for Habitat III	
09:00 - 10:30	Opening session: SDGs looking ahead to Habitat III - Opening addresses - Keynote speeches	09:00 - 10:30	Plenary session: Financing		09:00-10:30	Plenary session: Climate Change and Resilience		
10:30 - 11:30	Coffee break & Opening of the Exhibition	10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break		10:30-11:00	Coffee break		
11:30 - 13:00	Mayors' Roundtable: Implementing the SDGs and New Urban Agenda – the role of local governments	11:00 - 12:30	Parallel session 7	Parallel session 8	Parallel session 9	11:00-12:30		Adaption of Chair's summary
13:00 - 14:30	Lunch	12:30 - 14:00	Lunch		12:30-13:00	Closing session		
14:30 - 16:00	Parallel session 1	14:00 - 15:30	Plenary session: People-centered, urban future		13:00-14:00	Lunch		
16:00 - 16:30	Coffee break	15:30 - 16:00	Coffee break			High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for Habitat III  For participants not attending the HLM, there will be an opportunity to participate in field visits in Jakarta post-lunch.		
16:30 - 18:00	Parallel session 4	16:00 - 17:30	Parallel session 10	Parallel session 11	Parallel session 12			
18:00 - 20:00	Social event/launch publication/Indonesian event Chair's Summary Drafting Committee	18:00 - 20:00	Social event/launch publication Chair's Summary Drafting Committee					
Urban Pavilion (Exhibitions)								