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**Statement of H. E. Dr A.K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Bangladesh
on agenda item 20: UN-HABITAT
at the Second Committee Plenary of the General Assembly
October 28, 2013**

Thank you Mr. Chair.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement of Fiji made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report under this agenda item focusing on the implementation of the outcome of the UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the UN-Habitat. My delegation also takes due note of the report of the Governing Council of its 24th session.

Sustainable Urban Development has become one of the most pressing global challenges in the twenty-first century as more than 50 per cent of the global population now live in cities. Urbanization is increasing rapidly in the developing countries specially in Asia and Africa. As appered in the Secretary General's report, today in every 10 urban residents in the world, more than 7 are located in developing countries and by 2035, all developing regions, most notably Asia and Africa, will be more urban than rural. Undoubtedly, rapid urbanization - a significant demographic phenomenon in developing countries –will pose serious development challanges in the coming years unless it is addressed appropriately.

Mr Chair,

World leaders at the Rio+20 Conference reaffirmed that well planned and developed cities can promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable societies. In line with that, we are working to promote cities that are environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, economically productive and resilient. In this context, specific attention would need to be paid to deliverables such as improved access to adequate housing, water, sanitation, domestic energy and public transport. We also like to emphasize on sustainable urban development particularly aiming at creating economic opportunities for all, specially for youth and women. Big question is; to achieve all these we need funds or money. Who will be providing it and how?

Mr Chair,

Needless to mention that, the fight against poverty, as envisioned in the Millennium Declaration, will not succeed without a holistic approach. A comprehensive and integrated urban and rural development

strategy could facilitate the sustainable solution to the complex problem of poverty and exclusiveness. Structural flaws are to be addressed simultaneously in both city and countryside.

While impressive progress has been made in the of implementation of Declaration on Human Settlement and the Habitat Agenda, huge challenges remain in the LDCs because resource constraints. Sadly, 868 million people in developing countries or 33 per cent of the total urban population in those countries continue to live in slums. Therefore, developing countries, in particular the LDCs require special assistance from the international community not only for housing but also for capacity building, as well as technical and financial assistance to prevent slum dwelling, alternatively, to improve slum living.

In the light of the above trends and challenges, the governments of Bangladesh and Switzerland along with UN-HABITAT and other UN agencies organized a thematic consultation on population dynamics, part of 11 thematic consultations organized by the Millennium Development Goals Task Force and adopted Dhaka Declaration. I like to highlight the following recommendations of the Dhaka Declaration in the area of urbanization:

- I. Anticipate and plan for urban growth to ensure that the growing number of urban residents, including the poor, have secure access to land, housing, water, sanitation, energy and transport, as well as health, education and other essential services, by addressing the safety concerns of women, girls, children and older persons, and by ensuring more coherent and coordinated service delivery at the national level.
- II. Promote sustainable and integrated rural and urban development; strengthen urban-rural linkages; contain the spread of urban slums; and expand slum upgrading efforts through cooperative and inclusive approaches, which involve innovative partnerships and do not resort to forced evictions (without alternative arrangements).
- III. Minimize the environmental impact of cities by slowing urban sprawl, and seize the opportunities of higher population density, notably higher energy efficiency in transport and housing, as well as cheaper provision of services and infrastructure.

Mr. Chair,

In the context of the post-2015 agenda, Bangladesh would like to work with Member States and relevant stakeholders to formulate forward-looking development targets taking into account current and emerging patterns in population dynamics.

In conclusion, we urge for greater cooperation among UN-Habitat and other relevant entities for implementation of the HABITAT agenda, given its focus on poverty eradication, basic needs and critical aspects of human livelihoods. Further, UN-HABITAT and all other development partners should continue to play a major role in supporting the efforts of developing countries in the provision of shelter for all and the achievement of sustainable human settlements.

I thank you.

