



HIC - HIC comments on Habitat III Policy Papers

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Habitat International Coalition

This document by Habitat International Coalition builds on the previously submitted Comments on Habitat III Issue Papers and Comments on Habitat III Policy Paper Frameworks.

Introduction

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The United Nations General Assembly mandated that the Habitat III conference and preparatory process take into account and build upon the principles and gains of the Habitat Agenda, among other international frameworks, and reinvigorate the global commitment on housing and sustainable urban development through an action-oriented outcome document. Hence, it is understood that policy units, as part of the preparatory process for the outcome document of the Habitat III Conference, built their work upon the Habitat Agenda commitments. Unfortunately, some policy papers do not refer to the Habitat Agenda explicitly nor even implicitly (e.g., p. 3). Moreover, it is recommended to mention and take into account the international agreements to strengthen coherence with international frameworks.

Urbanization is still mainly presented as inevitable without recognition of the human choices responsible for it. The apocalyptic vision of a mechanized countryside, of depopulated rural areas without peasants and devoted to the prosperity of cities, of megacities "nurturing and embracing" all newcomers, remains unchallenged, despite the various references to urban-rural linkages. Only a balanced development (and balanced investment) for both urban and rural areas, as pledged in Habitat II, would solve this dilemma, being also an alternative to the urban future (and depopulated rural areas) that Habitat III is predicting.

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