

Dear Mr.Chairperson,  
Honorable Mr. Juan Clos, Executive Director of UN-Habitat  
Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

First of all, on behalf of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, I would like to extend my warm congratulations to the convening of the 24<sup>th</sup> Governing Council session of the UN-HABITAT.

China is now in a period of rapid development of urbanization. It is the great challenges faced by the Chinese government as how to ease the pressure on resources and the environment, provide shelter and equal access to urban infrastructure and basic services for each family. In this regard, I would like to share with you some of our practices and experiences.

In recent years, the Chinese government has been deepening the reform in housing marketization, improving housing supply system and promoting large-scale construction of affordable housing projects in order to solve the housing problems of low-income people. We actively promote stable and healthy development of the real estate market, increase the supply of ordinary commodity housing and meet the multi-level housing demand for residents. We adhere to the principle of urban-rural integration, gradually reinforce our efforts on the reconstruction of rural dangerous housing and improve the conditions for poor-housed rural people. Through unremitting efforts, remarkable achievements have been made in China's urban and rural housing construction and development.

**First, the housing conditions in both urban and rural areas have been improved significantly.** In 2011, the per capita housing construction area was 32.7 square meters in urban areas and 36.2 square meters in rural area, 33% and 37% more than that in 2002 respectively. The quality of newly-built housing is being improved gradually in cities and towns, the functions and the infrastructural facilities of the houses are becoming better and more complete. The quality of new housing in rural areas is also improved steadily and the

housing safety has been further enhanced.

**Secondly, the housing problems of urban and rural residents are gradually solved.** From 2008 to 2012, more than 30 million houses have been constructed nationwide and 18 million houses have been completed. A multi-level affordable housing supply system has taken shape, covering different income and disadvantaged groups in cities.

**Thirdly, the regulation of the real estate market is effective.** Since 2010, in order to tackle the problems of fast-rising housing prices in cities and the speculative purchase of housing, the Chinese central government has taken tightening measures in the real estate market. Local governments at all levels have used various financial policies and necessary administrative measures to curb speculative investment demand for house buyers and encourage the residents' demand to own their homes.

**Fourthly, the quality of the living environment has been gradually improved.** The Chinese government stresses to use the tool of urban planning as a guide to promote the coordinated development between mega-cities, medium-sized cities and small townships, to coordinate the urbanization process and new countryside development, to strengthen the construction of municipal utilities and protection of historical and cultural heritage. In recent years, we have made substantial progress in urban infrastructural construction. The wastewater and solid waste treatment capacity has been greatly improved. Up to now, the wastewater treatment rate is over 75%, the rate of harmless treatment for urban solid waste is over 70%, the tap water supply rate is 96% and the rate of gas supply is 91%. All these show that the urban living environment has been increasingly upgraded.

Ladies and gentlemen, on this special occasion, I would like to draw your attention to the World Expo successfully held in Shanghai in 2010 by the Chinese government with a theme of "better city, better Life" . On the summit forum held by the International Exhibitions Bureau and the Shanghai World Expo Organizing Committee on October 31, the closing day of the Expo, Shanghai Declaration was adopted by the participating parties, which proposed the date of October 31 as the World Cities Day. The Chinese government agreed to this initiative and decided to propose the establishment

of the World Cities Day at this session of Governing Council. I hope that all the Governing Council members support this motion. The main purpose of setting up World Cities Day is to extend the concept of the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, promote governments around the world to pay more attention to the opportunities and challenges encountered in the course of urbanization and urban development. World Cities Day can help build a platform of continuous exchanges and collaborations, create conditions for all countries to have in-depth discussions and consultations on urban issues. With this platform, the vision of "Better City, Better Life" can be realized through communications between countries and between different organizations. If this motion can be agreed upon at this session, we would like to discuss with UN-Habitat the specific arrangements that follow in terms of World Cities Day .

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although remarkable achievements have been made in human settlements development in China, we still have outstanding problem of unbalanced, uncoordinated and unsustainable development. However, we will stick to our national conditions and learn experiences and best practices from other countries. The Chinese government is willing to further strengthen its cooperation and exchange with UN-HABITAT, relevant international organizations, governments from different countries and partners to jointly push forward sustainable development of the living environment all around world.

Finally, I wish the Governing Council session a great success!

Thank you!