I am delighted that this year we are celebrating “World Habitat Day” in Naples. I am convinced that, because of its history, culture, art and environmental heritage, our city is a particularly suitable venue for such a prestigious meeting concerning the role and future of cities as “magnets of hope”. As has been the case in many other cities, Naples has also undertaken important urban renewal projects and initiatives. Through the “sirena project” in the building sector, this work has made the historic buildings in the city centre and outskirts safe and beautiful once more.

In the wake of the globalisation process, the debate on the future of cities has moved into the international arena. I believe that, as local administrators, we must turn to the Vancouver Declaration for guidance in our work. Approved during the first United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, the “Vancouver Declaration laid the foundations for the work of UN-Habitat” and is inspired by the principles of equality, social justice, solidarity and human dignity. All of us, administrators and citizens alike, must embrace these principles in our daily work. Only by living up to these principles can cities be developed in a way that serves the interests of the urban poor and its inhabitants. It is true that the city of Naples has been “reconsidered” as a “magnet of hope”.

Mayor of Naples
Rosa Iervolino Russo

In endorsing the Millennium Development Goal to provide “adequate shelter and basic services” for all, leaders around the world have committed themselves to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. Reaching this goal means tackling some of the world’s most critical social, economic and environmental challenges.

United Nations Secretary General (2006)

The United Nations has designated the first Monday of October each year as World Habitat Day to recall on the state of human settlements, especially the living conditions of the urban poor and their basic right to adequate shelter.

Under Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN-Habitat (2006)

Anna K. Tibaijuka

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**Punta Braccio**

**Naples**

**Piazza del Castello**

**Venezia**
The potential for creatively constructing the city of the twenty-first century stems from the ability to combine the urban spirit with tangible signs of hope in order improve the liveability of cities by educational and training processes. Civic economics, and new governance with top-quality democratic participation in urban decision-making are the keys to the future of cities.

Deteriorating suburbs are mushrooming around the world, and they represent an indicator of the urbanization of poverty. Cooperation in development thus emerges as an instrument for reducing poverty and the flow of migrants. The greatest migration in its history of people into towns and cities (foreigners, immigrants and so on). In turn, this reflects the fact that, throughout history, Naples has also been the point of encounter and cultural exchange between North and South, and this identity lies in its traditional culture of welcoming others from the Mediterranean, which in its perspective created a base for founding the United Nations, and is the Magnets of Hope. We need to find examples of excellence that can be copied and spread around the world. The theme "Cities Magnets of Hope", chosen by the United Nations, is to remind all of us that the world is witnessing the greatest migration in its history of people into towns and cities (foreigners, immigrants and so on). In turn, this reflects the fact that, throughout history, Naples has also been the point of encounter and cultural exchange between North and South, and this identity lies in its traditional culture of welcoming others from the Mediterranean, which in its perspective created a base for founding the United Nations, and is the Magnets of Hope. We need to find examples of excellence that can be copied and spread around the world.

Cities, Magnets of Hope