

**Statement by Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran to
the United Nations at the Fifty-first Session
of the Commission on Population and Development**
(New York, 9 April 2018)

Items 3: General debate

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau for your election as the chair and vice chairs of the Fifty-first Session of the Commission on Population and Development. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his reports to this Session.

The Islamic Republic of Iran associates itself with the statement made by Egypt on behalf of the G77 and China.

Population is the key feature of the socio-economic dynamism in cities. In 2016 an estimated 54.5 per cent of the world's population lived in urban settlements. The UN suggests that by 2030, urban areas are projected to house 60 per cent of the world's population. Urbanization, growing at such a fast pace, becomes one of the most outstanding and transformative trends of this century.

Well planned urban areas are known as the sources of economic growth and development for societies. Urban areas, face enormous sustainability challenges, in terms of infrastructure, health, education, decent work, food security and basic services. It is the case, in particular, for developing countries or the global south, where most of the world mega cities are located.

While the main responsibility lies on the national governments, from an international perspective, these challenges, as well as opportunities can be addressed through, inter alia, promoting international cooperation, strengthening capacity building, transfer of technologies, fulfillment of the commitments by developed countries including for the ODA and realization of the right to development.

Today, international migration and human mobility are inherent parts of nations' lives across the world. The existing interrelationship between these remarkable phenomena and development in urban areas, also the overall economic and social benefits and challenges arising from migration to the countries of origin, transit and destination are widely acknowledged.

The responsibility of national governments in determining and defining effective urban and national migration policies and regulations, including the requirement for entry, residence and work cannot be overemphasized. Meanwhile, we maintain the view that safe, orderly and regular migration provide a catalytic impact on maximizing the benefits of international migration and global prosperity for countries and migrants.

Mr. Chairman,

Iran attaches great importance to the issues of sustainable cities and urban policies and development planning. Along with the rapid growth of population, accelerated urbanization and concentration of urban population in metropolitan areas have become distinct features of Iran's urbanization phenomenon.

Over the past three decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran has experienced rapid socio-demographic and economic changes that impact its national development patterns, as well as on the socio-economic situation and the population structure of the country. More than 70

percent of Iran's population live in urban areas which is above the world average rate.

Within such context, the Government has developed considerable initiatives with a particular focus on empowerment of women, the youths and older persons, towards eradicating poverty, inequalities and disparities in urban areas, while recognizing the central role of the family as a priority area in achieving social development.

It is noteworthy that my country has hosted a huge population of refugees, in some period their numbers reached more than three million. Despite the high costs of the hospitality, arising from hosting such a large number of refugees, also under illegal and unfair foreign economic sanctions, the Islamic Republic of Iran has stuck to its humanitarian commitments and among other services, provided the children of undocumented refugees in Iran with the opportunity to receive education in the Iranian schools.

I would like to mention that my country will be hosting the seventh Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development planned to be held from 22 to 24 October 2018 in Tehran. The Conference will provide the opportunity to discuss and review the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in its first years of implementation in a region with the highest population density and fastest urbanization rate. The Conference will also be seen as an opportunity to strengthen South-South cooperation and exchange of experiences among the member states, and similar regional forums as well as relevant United Nations offices and regional arrangements.

To conclude, **Mr. chairman!** the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its commitment to collaborate with other member states as well as the UN system in pursuing our common development goals.

I thank you!