

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



MINISTRY OF INFRASTRUCTURE

RWANDA'S STATEMENT TO THE UN HABITAT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UN HEADQUARTERS - Nairobi, 28 May 2019

- **Excellency President of the UN-Habitat Assembly; Congratulations**
- **The Executive Director of UN-Habitat and Under Secretary-General of the UN;**
- **Honorable Ministers here present;**
- **Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen.**

1. I bring you warm greetings from the Government and People of the Republic of Rwanda, and especially my President His Excellency Paul Kagame. I join other speakers in expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the Government and People of the Republic of Kenya and the UN Habitat for hosting this event and the very warm hospitality accorded us.
2. I also want to commend the Executive Director of UN-Habitat and the UN-Habitat team for successfully guiding us to this very important historical event towards implementing the New Urban Agenda.
3. In view of the challenges of urbanization and housing especially in developing countries, it is absolutely necessary for us to support UN-Habitat in resource mobilization for this important challenge at stake as our cities continue to grow. My Government is committed to support and work closely with UN-Habitat in this area in order to achieve SDG goal 11.

Excellencies; Distinguished Delegates;

4. As my President once said, urbanization is irreversible and inevitable but has to be guided in order to have an impact. In Rwanda, over the past two decades, the urban population has grown from a mere 4.6% to 18.4%; a very rapid rise in

the space of 25 years. We have resolved however, to take the positive side of urbanization as an engine of socio-economic development and sustainable human settlement. Rwanda has an ambitious objective of accelerating the urbanization to reach 35% urban population by 2024.

5. In addressing the challenges posed by urbanization, the Government of Rwanda acknowledges the need for effective management of urban growth in a coordinated manner that will ensure socio-economic development. This will ultimately lead to reduction in poverty and improve quality of life for all and deliver livable, safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities, towns and villages.

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6. Inspired by our National Urbanisation Policy and the recently released report on Rwanda's Future Drivers of Growth to achieve the High Income Country status by 2050, urbanisation emerges as one of the 6 drivers of growth. In view of this, the review of all City Master Plans to ensure that they are citizen-centred and aligned to National Development Goals are under way. In addition, we are finalising the establishment of a Spatial Development Framework as an implementing tool to guide investments in socio-economic infrastructure.
7. This is reflected in the MoU that we just signed with the Executive Director of UN-Habitat.
8. Furthermore, a number of both Government- and Donor-funded urban projects such as the Rwanda Urban Development Project (RUDP) funded by the World Bank are being implemented. The projects seek to address gaps in urban infrastructure investment, urban management and delivery of basic services.
9. The Government of Rwanda is committed to address the affordable housing gap in cities, a challenge that most African cities are still grappling with. Through the recently established Rwanda Affordable Housing Fund, it is hoped that the impending housing deficit will be settled. In addition, strategies towards facilitating community and private sector driven city-wide informal settlement upgrading through a dedicated budget funding mechanism are being piloted, implemented and emerging to be successful.

Excellencies; Distinguished Delegates;

10. In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the commitment of the Government of Rwanda under the able leadership of His Excellency Paul KAGAME, to advocate for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. We stand ready and we will continue to support and collaborate with UN-Habitat to ensure the outcome of the Assembly stimulates the world towards a holistic approach to sustainable urban development.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Hon. Claver GATETE
Minister of Infrastructure