

4th Draft
Ministers' Joint Declaration
for
the 9th Ministers' Forum on Infrastructure Development
in the Asia-Pacific Region

We, the Ministers or Heads of Delegations coming from member countries and regions in Asia and the Pacific Region, have participated in the Ninth Ministers' Forum on Infrastructure Development in the Asia-Pacific Region on the theme of “**Sustainable Urbanisation**” held in Hong Kong on 15-16 December 2011.

In recognition of the challenges to sustainable development at the local, national and global levels posed by rapid and continuous urban expansion as a consequence of economic advancement and industrialisation, we have reached a common understanding on the following issues through sharing of our knowledge and experience:

1. Land Use and Town Planning

D Rapid and continual urban expansion, particularly in countries and regions where land and other resources are relatively limited, has created substantial demands on urban infrastructure such as housing, transportation, water supply, sewerage and power supply.

D Rational and optimal use of land by means of prudent town planning strategies, taking into account the threat of disasters, is necessary to address these pressing needs, which would otherwise bring about adverse environmental, economic, social and political consequences.

2. Climate Change

D The challenges of rapid and continuous urban expansion are amplified by severe problems already faced by the world, in particular, the increasingly noticeable effects of climate change.

D In order to ensure a sustainable process of urbanization, governments have the responsibility to identify effective mitigation measures to reduce further human impact and to find ways to adapt to climate change that has already occurred or is anticipated to occur in the near future.

3. Public Safety

D Natural disasters in densely developed areas often result in significant loss of life, damage to property and the environment, as well as great economic loss. This is likely to be exacerbated by the predicted increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather conditions brought about by climate change and natural disasters.

D Building safety is another concern, particularly for aging buildings in the densely built urban environment. Buildings that are unable to withstand the impact of the hazard or are in disrepair or unsanitary conditions are potential hazards to the public.

D It is governments' responsibility, in partnership, with relevant organisations concerned to formulate preventive measures to enhance protection of public safety.

4. Quality Living

D Polluted air, noise, dirty water and solid waste continue to cause serious pollution problems in densely populated cities and such problems have been spreading to the suburban areas.

D We should aim to create a quality living environment in the process of urbanisation. Measures should be taken to maintain a clean, green and healthy city setting, to conserve the natural environment and to preserve our heritage and culture during this process.

The development of compact, green neighbourhood, green transportation, sustainable and liveable cities should be emphasized.

In recognition of the above, we hereby declare that we will pursue a more systematic approach in the following aspects to make urbanisation sustainable:

1. We will adopt effective land use and as well as urban and rural planning strategies to promote integrated infrastructure development so as to meet the growing needs of rapidly developing cities, and rural areas covering housing, transportation, water supply, solid waste management, sewerage, power supply, and other infrastructures.

2. We will strive to address climate change and to mitigate global warming through formulation of appropriate infrastructure development strategies in respect of emission reduction, environmental-friendly transportation, energy efficiency improvement, renewable energy introduction, water conservation and recycling, green buildings, etc.

3. We will enhance public safety by adopting efficient and effective prevention strategies to tackle the problems brought by natural disasters, including landslides and flooding, as well as city and building safety. We will consider the impact of new infrastructure development on the likelihood of natural disasters. We will cooperate to overcome the vulnerability of cities to disasters, remembering that they could seriously affect urban or industrial functions that result in a global impact through a supply chain. We will enhance city and building safety through raising design, construction and maintenance standards to acceptable safety levels.

4. We will strive to improve the quality of urban life by implementing strategies for pollution control, clean water supply, harbour beautification and waste management, etc. We will also enhance the living environment of densely populated cities through greening, urban renewal and building rehabilitation, and preserve the local culture through heritage conservation.

We call for sharing of experience and cooperation among member countries and regions with a view to enhancing knowledge so as to identify and advocate strategies that can ensure sustainable urbanisation.

Finally, we, the Ministers or Heads of Delegations attending the Ninth Ministers' Forum on Infrastructure Development in the Asia-Pacific Region, would like to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in hosting the Forum.

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