

Excellency Madam Executive Director,

Distinguished Delegates,

I am honoured to address, on behalf of my country, to the Second Assembly of the UN Habitat. The organization, since its founding, has answered, with increasing ability and success, to the need for supporting the development of human settlements in harmony with both the humankind's and our planet's needs and sensitivities. The human societies' urbanization continues at a very rapid pace in most parts of the world. The UN Habitat's leadership has become more needed than it was yesterday and it will become more urgent and necessary tomorrow than it is today.

I would like to state here our admiration for the work of the current administration of this organization in general and of Madam Maimunah Mohd Sharif, the Executive Director, in particular. They have beyond doubt displayed their ability to work efficiently, creatively, inclusively and harmoniously with the member states. Still, admiration for their work is not sufficient for the continuing success of the UN Habitat. It is well known that they had to cope with serious problems, including those of financial nature. We, the member states, have the collective ownership of this organization. Therefore we have an undeniable responsibility for strengthening the UN Habitat and provide it with more appropriate means.

I am glad to state that Turkiye is in close cooperation with the UN Habitat which we want to develop even further. We are ready, through the UN Habitat, share our experience and know-how with other member states and willing to benefit from theirs. We are honoured to host important UN Habitat events. We are certain that increasing the UN Habitat's presence in Turkiye will serve not only our country but our region in general.

Furthermore, we are very glad to work with the UN Habitat on the matter of the Zero Waste. As is known, the Zero Waste Initiative, has been conducted with success as a national project in Turkiye under the patronage of H.E. Emine Erdogan, First Lady of Turkiye. It became last year, through a UN General Assembly Resolution which was pioneered by Turkiye, co-sponsored by the majority of the UN member states and adopted unanimously, **a forthcoming UN Initiative**. In this initiative, the UN

Habitat, together with UNEP, has a central role. We will be happy to further our cooperation with the UN Habitat also in this direction for answering to the urgent needs of our planet better.