Opening remarks DED

- Thanks to UNMGCY on behalf of UN-Habitat; we have opportunities we need to contribute to. The SDGs allows us to ask ourselves; what can we do differently? The voice and participation of youth could benefit all, and is a huge opportunity. Habitat III is going to be the first conference after Post 2015 and the SDGs. With youth at the center, many answers can be provided.
- Thanks as well to partners; UN-Habitat seen from afar is more of a physical structure, but taking demography into consideration, most of the youth live in cities and towns today.
- The prep.com II official deliberations are mostly about formal statements; debates take place during the side events. We have a whole week to influence the process.
- Thanks to donors who have supported us; especially the Government of Norway and Sweden. Without their support, we would not be able to do what we are doing.
- We still need to consider the key issues we can use to empower youth more in the process of urbanization. With regards to governance, youth are part and parcel of that process. When a strong governance framework is in place, engaging everybody, that is the platform that enables and empowers youth and addresses everybody’s problems. Youth are inherent of great potential, and if this can be captured at local level and brought to regional and global levels; as has been done through the Envoy on Youth.
- Planning is sometimes taken for granted; is done fragmented, however what UN-Habitat is promoting is integrated planning towards inclusive, sustainable and compact cities. In Kibera; youth have worked with local governments to reclaim the public space in the center of the slum through participatory process that creates ownership and creativity. This is the power of youth.
• All these issues have to be legislated to stand the test of time. When youth are given the right; land, city, participation, that is positive for urban development.
• Urbanization is moving much faster than capacity to plan for it; but people are attracted to cities but may not be able to find employment. What are we doing as leaders to empower youth in this area? How can we support youth to find meaningful employment? Even when jobs are available they’re not always accessible for all, especially those living in slum areas and poverty. We need to ensure overall general economic growth is benefiting all.
• The New Urban Agenda should be talking about sustainability, inclusivity and resilience, to ensure we can create a better world 20 years from now. Urbanization is something we create as human beings. We can manage, guide and foster it the way we want it.
• Consider the question the city we want or the city we need? The city we want is often sprawling; but the city we need is more compact, integrated, and safer.

Remarks from Chris Dekki

• If we could have a thematic conference on youth as part of the Habitat III process, that would be opportunity to address some of the issues raised by the DED.
• Consultations on Habitat III have been held for youth across the world, including in Cairo, Istanbul, India and in Japan. Consultations are used to engage young people and allow them a voice in the process. Even without access to the internet, we are consulting with people where they are to gather their priorities in cities.
• The outcome we want is to create strong, valid young policy actors in Habitat III and other processes, to hold governments accountable to their commitments.
• Methodology has been established and applied throughout consultations.
• The MGCY is extremely involved in the processes that take place in the UN. If we are able to represent youth in a representative way, that will add validity to our work.

MGCY speaker

• On thematic contents of Habitat III, the MGCY is considering how to integrate youth priorities into the areas of inclusive cities, migration and refugees in urban areas, safer cities, culture and heritage, urban rules and regulations, urban spatial and design, urban land and rural-urban linkages, urban governance and municipal finance, and consultations have been based on these areas.
• Ending discriminatory zoning laws, environmental regulations, and governance, we want to take about the human being at the center of planning. Entrepreneurship is great, but youth need support to be entrepreneurs; need access to loans and finance for example.
• Urban housing and basic services; making sure people do have housing, easy access to transportation and public transport,

Questions:

• Right to participate for youth; how is UN-Habitat or MGCY planning to lobby for youth rights during the Habitat III process?
• A permanent mechanism for youth participation is the ultimate goal, need to convince governments of the importance of youth engagement. We hope funding will be made available for young people to actually participate in the process; we
need to make sure that young people are present to convey their message. A lot of work have been done by the MGY and it’s a missed opportunity to not be able to have full representation here.

• **What can be done to secure funding in the future?**
• MGY is not an organization, it’s a platform without funding. MGY has in the past depended on DESA to make sure presence and representation at major meetings. The process of engaging major groups has been expanding, and ways are being explored to ensure a more predictable stream of funding to support all the ongoing processes.

• **Does MGY have plans to do consultations in other regions as well beyond those already covered?**
• We empower the youth-led organizations to do consultations themselves, we have applied for funding to do consultations in Sub-Saharan Africa through Pax Romana or AIESEC