

## **Rationale for the Establishment of “World Cities Day”**

### **Origin for establishing “World Cities Day”**

On the closing day of Expo 2010 Shanghai China, the *Shanghai Declaration*, proposing to nominate 31 October of every year as “World Cities Day” was adopted at the Expo 2010 Shanghai China Summit attended by representatives from states, the United Nations agencies, exhibitors and participants. On 11 June 2012, the 151<sup>st</sup> BIE General Assembly adopted the resolution on supporting the designation of 31 October of every year as “World Cities Day”. Pursuant to the aforesaid declaration and resolution, the Chinese Government decides to propose the establishment of “World Cities Day” at the UN-Habitat Governing Council and looks forward to the support and co-sponsorship of member states.

### **Background for establishing “World Cities Day”**

“Better City, Better Life” is the theme of Expo 2010 Shanghai China, and also the common aspiration of people in many countries around the world. In a historical and global perspective, urbanization is a stage that human society must go through. The 21<sup>st</sup> century ushers in an era of cities in which developed nations are confronted with the regeneration and further development of their cities while developing countries are challenged by rapid urbanization. Sustainable urban development has therefore become one of the most important tasks for the entire world, international community must be mobilized to focus on this subject if we are to fulfill the UN *Millennium Development Goals*.

### **Purpose for establishing “World Cities Day”**

The establishment of “World Cities Day” is aimed to carry forward the legacy of Expo 2010, spur governments to focus more on opportunities and challenges in urbanization and cities’ development, promote sustainable socio-economic development, and keep improving people’s living standards. “World Cities Day” offers a more solid platform of exchanges and cooperations, and creates a better

framework conducive to in-depth discussion among all walks of life and resolution of urban problems through concerted efforts. Countries and organizations can leverage this platform to share, communicate with and learn from each other, working together for greener, more livable, convenient and harmonious cities.

### **UN-Habitat and the state of world cities**

UN-Habitat always keeps a close watch on settlements and urban development around the world, and commits itself to achieving “adequate shelter for all” and “sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world”. It has been publishing the *Global Report on Human Settlements* since 1986 and later the *State of World Cities Report*. These two report series provide an proof of the high attention nations pay to urbanization and development of cities. By recommending the establishment of “World Cities Day” in the form of a resolution adopted by the Governing Council, UN-Habitat is echoing the concerns of the international community on urbanization.

### **“World Cities Day” and “World Habitat Day”**

In December 1985, the UN designated the first Monday of October as World Habitat Day, with an aim to draw people’s attention to human habitat. However, urban issues include not only habitat, land and environment, but employment, education, health, safety and security, transport, energy and culture as well. In fact, the themes of World Habitat Day, from “Shelter is My Right” in 1986 to “Changing Cities, Building Opportunities” in 2012, reflect the trends of the times. Therefore, the establishment of “World Cities Day” represents enrichment and development of World Habitat Day.