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# **China Country Report**

**Prepared for the United Nations Conference on  
Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)**

**Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development**

**People's Republic of China**

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## Introduction

Among the declarations pervading the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that we have come to the “urban age” because in 2008, for the first time in human history, more than half of the world’s population lives in cities. At the critical juncture of jointly addressing challenges and building a better future, the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in October, 2016 at Quito, Ecuador, is aiming at a new historic blueprint – the New Urban Agenda. This conference, as another important global event following the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), will become a new start for future-proof housing and sustainable urban development in all countries.

In order to promote and support Habitat III, the Chinese government has organized relevant departments to prepare the *Habitat III Country Report*. This report summarizes the efforts and successes of human settlements in China over the past 20 years, analyzes the challenges and problems ahead, and specifies the objectives, strategies and actions for the next stage.

This report is jointly prepared by relevant government departments, NGOs, academic and research organizations in accordance with the requirements of UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 24/14.

## 1. Review of Urban and Rural Settlements Development in China over the Past 20 Years

In the past 20 years, the world has witnessed the sustained and rapid economic growth in China, significant improvement of living standards of urban and rural residents and comprehensive progress of social undertakings. The Chinese government has committed to the principle of “putting people first” and the approach of all-round, balanced and sustainable development. The Chinese people are striving to realize the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In the past 20 years, in accordance with the objectives and action plans specified in the *Habitat II Country Report*, the Chinese government has formulated and implemented a series of policies, regulations, development strategies and programs to promote sustainable development of human settlements, constructed urban and rural housing on a large scale, optimized urban and rural infrastructure, improved ecological environment, preserved historical and cultural heritage, and strived to build distinctive, beautiful,

harmonious, culture-rich and people-friendly human settlements in an intensive and efficient way. In particular, at the Central Urban Work Conference in December 2015, it was proposed that China should embark on a path of urban development with Chinese characteristics for realizing orderly construction, appropriate development and efficient operation of cities, and to work hard to build harmonious, livable, vibrant cities each having distinctive characteristics, so as to enable people to enjoy still better life. The conference is of milestone significance in the history of urban development in China.

## **1.1 Urban and Rural Housing Development**

### **1.1.1 Achievements of Urban and Rural Housing Development in China over the Past 20 Years**

In its report for Habitat II in 1996, the Chinese government put forward the goals of urban and rural housing development: by 2000, every urban household will have one housing unit, 70% of the families will have units complete with basic facilities, and the per capita living space will reach 9 square meters (per capita usable space will reach 12 square meters). There will be additional upgrading in the functions of rural housing. The construction quality of both urban and rural housing and their capacity to resist natural disasters will register new improvement.

By 2015, every urban household will have one housing unit with basically complete functions and better living conditions, with per capita usable floor area reaching 26.5 square meters (per capita floor area of 35.27 square meters)– basically more than one room for one person. Rural housing will be equipped with basic facilities and enjoy better environment. The efforts to improve the shanty houses in poor regions will be basically completed. There will be a substantial upgrading in the quality of urban and rural housing and their capacity to resist natural disasters.

Over the past 20 years, sustainable and rapid economic growth in China has laid a substantial material foundation for housing construction. Further, all-round reform has improved the housing system and given greater impetus to housing development. Thus, outstanding achievements have been made in urban and rural housing development.

**(1) With continued and large-scale housing construction in urban and rural areas, the completed housing space each year has been increasing.** The completed housing space in urban and rural areas increased from 1.22 billion square meters in 1996 to 1.8 billion square meters in 2015, up 2.1% on average each year. To be specific, the completed housing floor space in urban areas increased from 395 million square meters in 1996 to 1 billion square meters in 2015, up 5.0% on average each year.

**(2) The overall housing level of urban and rural residents has been raised dramatically.** [The per capita floor space for urban residents increased from 24.5 square meters in 2002 to over 33 square meters in 2015.](#) With the support of The National Medium- and Long-term Program for Science and Technology Development, national science and technology supporting plans concerning green buildings and human settlements have been carried out. These plans have greatly improved the functions and quality of newly [constructed houses](#), with better supporting facilities inside and outside these houses, and improved environment. As 80% of urban families possess their own housing, it constitutes a major part of their assets. [The per capita floor space for rural residents increased from 21.7 square meters in 1996 to over 37 square meters in 2015.](#) The construction quality and safety performance of new housing in rural areas have been improved steadily, and the proportion of better-quality housing, such as brick-timber and brick-concrete structures has increased greatly.

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**(3) Housing conditions for a large number of disadvantaged people have been improved.** From 2011 to 2015, China constructed more than 40 million housing units, including government-subsidized housing units and total 21.91 million housing units were rebuilt in shantytowns. These housing units solve effectively the urban housing problems of low- and medium-income households, newly-employed workers and rural migrant workers, and greatly improve the housing conditions of the residents living in shantytowns.

#### 1.1.2 Policies and Actions for Development of Urban and Rural Housing

**(1) Deepening the urban housing system reform to meet the needs of economic system reform and housing development.** Since the end of 1998, China's urban housing distribution system has been significantly changed. The distribution of public housing in kind - the State and work units providing residential buildings for workers and charging little rent - has been replaced by distribution in currency. Housing provident fund system and housing subsidies system have been established and implemented.

The urban housing supply system has been gradually adjusted in accordance with the principle of commercialization and socialization. The affordable housing constituted the main part of the system from 1998 to 2003; the general commodity houses constituted the main part of the system after 2003, and efforts have been intensified to provide government-subsidized housing since 2007.

Correspondingly, the major suppliers of housing have been changed from the State and work units to real estate developers. The fund-raising for housing construction changed from relying mainly on the State to mainly by the market. And housing

consumption changed from renting public housing to purchasing or renting housing through the market while the governments provide basic housing security.

**(2) Strengthening market regulation and guidance, and promoting the development of commodity housing market.** Urban housing system reform has laid the foundation for market distribution of resources. Over the past 20 years, in addition to adhering to the basic orientation of marketization, cultivating and developing real estate market, the Chinese government has strengthened regulation and guidance to keep the stable and sound development of the real estate market, striving to satisfy more people's multi-level housing demand by means of market.

The Chinese government has actively promoted the construction of commodity housing and improved the system of developing, marketing and managing commodity housing. It has fully mobilized the enthusiasm of enterprises and urban residents in housing construction, thus forming a diversified housing investment system. The right to use the land for constructing commodity housing would be assigned publicly through a system of tendering, auction and listing. In developing commodity housing projects, developers must abide by relevant standards and regulations in terms of design and construction. In accordance with a series of laws and regulations, strict measures are adopted with regard to the conditions and procedures of selling commodity housing, efforts are made to improve the transfer and management of commodity housing and to regulate the housing rental market and real estate mortgages. Real estate agency services are encouraged and the system of registering and issuing the certificates of ownership of housing implemented to facilitating the convenience and safety of transaction. Efforts are made to constantly develop and regulate property service system to create safe and comfortable living environment.

To further promote the healthy development of the market, the Chinese government, proceeding from the actual conditions of market segmentation, adheres to classified regulation and control and adopting different measures in different cities, and stresses the rights and responsibilities of local governments as the main body to exercise regulation and control. Efforts are made to strengthen the market monitoring and analysis, exercise the classified land supply and management, improve and implement the differentiated taxation and credit policies concerning real estate, support the rational housing consumption of residents, and stabilize the market expectation through different approaches.

**(3) Fully promoting and improving housing security system.** In 1998, the Chinese government proposed the principle of "lowest-income families rent low-rent housing provided by the government or work units, and low- and medium-income families

purchase affordable housing". In 2003, the government demanded that a low-rent housing system be established and improved to meet the basic housing needs of lowest-income families. Since 2007, China has fully launched the housing security work, accelerated the establishment and improvement of the policy system for solving the housing issues of urban low-income families through multi-channels with an emphasis on low-rent housing system. Since 2008, China has launched the social housing project on a large scale, speeding up the housing security work and launching and improving a series of supporting policies. Since 2010, China has accelerated the construction of government-subsidized housing projects with an emphasis on public renting houses. It was proposed in the Outline of the 12th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development that the low-rental housing system would be implemented for urban low-income families having housing difficulties, the public-rental housing system would be implemented for families having below-average income and housing difficulties, and the system integrating renting houses and purchasing commodity housing would be implemented for families having medium-to-high income. Since 2013, China has stepped up its efforts to rebuild the housing units in shantytowns, and promoted the parallel operation of low-rent housing system and public rental housing system.

The targets of housing security system include urban medium- and low-income households with housing problems, newly-employed workers without residence and migrant workers with stable employment in cities. The methods of housing security come in the form of granting rental subsidies and providing government-subsidized houses.

As for the working mechanisms, provincial governments have general responsibility and municipal and county governments are responsible for implementation. The central government is mainly responsible for formulating fiscal, tax, credit and land policies and providing financial aid, while local governments are responsible for formulating construction plans and organizing implementation. The construction of social housing is operated according to market mechanism.

**(4) Implementing reconstruction of shantytowns on a large scale.** China's shantytowns include those found in cities, State-owned industry and mining (containing coal mines), forest districts and reclamation areas. The main characteristics of shantytowns are potential safety hazards, high density, poor construction quality, insufficient functions and supporting facilities. The majority residents of shantytowns are low-income families and migrant workers. In 2004, Liaoning Province became the first to launch the reconstruction of shantytowns in China. Since 2008, the reconstruction of shantytowns has been carried out in full scale throughout the country.

The reconstruction of shantytowns is led by the government, operated by the market

and participated by the residents. The government provides support in financial investment, construction land, tax and credit. For example, using the financial tool of pledged supplementary lending (PSL), the People's Bank of China has provided funding to China Development Bank and Agricultural Development Bank of China to support the reconstruction of shantytowns. In light of the situation on the market, it has lowered interest rate on PSL capital on several occasions to direct the lowering of interest rate on loans used for the reconstruction of shantytowns. It has given guidance to China Development Bank in issuing bonds that give support to loan assets for the reconstruction of shantytowns, and the money thus raised is used exclusively for that purpose. The central government helps local governments implement such preferential policies as financial subsidies, tax reduction and exemption, and the allocation of certain amount of funds from the net income of land transfer. The shantytown reconstruction projects are allowed to include certain percentage of commercial service facilities and commodity housing so as to attract the involvement of private investors in the reconstruction of shantytowns. In terms of resettlement, two forms of arrangements, physical resettlement and monetary compensation could be selected by the residents according to their own wishes.

**(5) Optimizing the land supply system of housing construction.** For the land to be used for constructing commercial housing, the right to use the land is acquired by the developers through marketization methods, such as, tendering, auction and listing. For the land to be used for constructing government-subsidized houses, the right to use the land is acquired through allocation.

China has intensified the classified management of land supply. Effective supply of the land for constructing ordinary commercial housing and government-subsidized houses should be appropriately increased in cities where there is severe imbalance between demand and supply of residential houses or the prices grow excessively rapidly; while the supply of the land for constructing residential houses should be reduced or even suspended in cities where the housing supply is excessively huge or the scale of housing under construction is excessively large. Efforts should be made to improve the methods of supplying the land for building residential houses, to explore diversified means of land supply and to reduce the number of abortive tenders, so as to avoid land being acquired at exorbitantly high prices.

**(6) Accelerating the establishment and development of housing financial system.** China began to reform its urban housing system in the 1980s. Through the development of more than 30 years, a housing financial system has taken shape with commercial banks as the mainstay, housing provident fund as supplement and the wide

involvement of other financial institutions. In order to raise housing construction funds and increase urban workers' capital accumulation for supporting their housing consumption, the Chinese government issued the Regulations on the Administration of Housing Provident Fund in 1999, which were revised in 2002 to further standardize the rules for the management of housing provident fund, playing an important role in solving the housing problems of urban employees. At present, the second revision to Regulations on the Administration of Housing Provident Fund is being expedited, as required by the government decision to "create an open and standard housing provident fund system, and improve the regulations on the withdrawal, use and supervision of the fund". Some cities have experimented with the setting up of housing saving banks. In 2014, China Development Bank set up a specialized institution to support the reconstruction of shantytowns and construction of urban infrastructure and other relevant projects.

The development and improvement of housing financial system has broadened the channels of funding for housing construction and consumption. In terms of commodity housing development, such financing methods as bank loans, trust funds, fund raising in the capital market and securitization have flourished, effectively guaranteeing funding for real estate development enterprises. In terms of social housing construction, the State has strengthened financial support, effectively promoting the large-scale construction of social housing projects. In terms of housing consumption, the business of personal housing provident fund loan and that of personal housing loan of commercial bank are developing rapidly, the housing credit scale is expanding rapidly, pilot programs in securities of personal housing loan and housing provident fund loan have been pushed ahead steadily, vigorously supporting the housing consumption of residents.

**(7) Enhancing the modernization level of housing industry and improving housing quality and functionality.** In 1996, the Chinese government issued the Outline on the Pilot of Housing Industry Modernization. In 1999, the government issued the Circular on Several Opinions Concerning Promoting Modernization of Housing Industry and Improving Housing Quality, which marks a new development stage of the housing industry process. After that, supported documents, such as, the Management Measures on Performance Confirmation of Commodity Residential Housing (1999) and the Assessment Methods and Index System of Housing Performance (2005) were successively issued, thus leading to the trial implementation of housing performance designation system and the certification system of housing components throughout the country.

Since 2005, China has started to set up comprehensive pilot cities (districts) for

housing industry modernization, proposed to construct national housing industrialization bases, and recognized the new mode of housing industrialization development which is promoted by pilot cities and industrialization bases. Meanwhile, local governments have issued guiding principles and relevant policies on facilitating the housing construction to accelerate the housing industrialization and the development of full decoration housing. A group of enterprises engaging in real estate development as well as the research, design and production of housing and its components, accessories and materials have come into being successively, thus constituting the foremost force of housing industrialization. With nearly 20 years' efforts, China has initially established the housing structure system, housing components system and technology guarantee system meeting the requirements of housing industrialization.

**(8) Strengthening the guidance and management of rural housing construction and conducting renovation of dilapidated buildings in countryside.**

China has strengthened policy training for rural housing construction and management personnel; it has provided technical instructions for constructors; it has prepared architectural drawings of rural housing; and it has popularized related technology of rural housing construction. Giving full consideration to earthquake fortification, it has provided the anti-seismic supportive structures, such as ring beams and structural columns, and developed low-cost and highly practical complete set of energy-efficient and anti-seismic technologies that are suited to villages and townships in different climate zones and different structural systems, thus improving the seismic performance of rural housing. It has adopted various measures like supporting construction materials, applicable components, spreading new housing structural system to rural areas to promote energy conservation of rural housing.

The renovation of rural dilapidated buildings has been continuously promoted. In 2008, the Chinese central government supported Guizhou Province to launch the pilot renovation of rural dilapidated buildings. Since 2009, the pilot region has been gradually expanded to include other areas and eventually realized coverage of all rural areas in 2012. The subsidies for renovation of dilapidated buildings per household have gradually increased from 5,000 yuan to 7,500 yuan. From 2008 to 2015, the Chinese central government accumulatively appropriated 155.672 billion yuan in subsidies to help 19.974 million poor households in rural areas renovate their dilapidated housing. The central government successively issued policies and technical specifications, such as the Technical Guidelines for Rural Dilapidated Buildings Identification (for Trial Implementation), the Energy-saving Technical Guidelines for Rural Buildings in Severely Cold and Cold Regions (for Trial Implementation) and the Basic Requirements of Seismic Safety for Rural Dilapidated Buildings Renovation (for Trial Implementation) to guide the

local governments to strengthen the quality, safety, seismic performance and building energy saving of rural housing while renovating the rural dilapidated buildings, improving the quality, safety and comfort of rural housing.

## **1.2 Sustainable Development of Urban and Rural Settlements**

### **1.2.1 Urban-Rural Population and Urbanization**

In 1996, Chinese government set up the goal of urbanization development and proposed, "By 2000, China's urban population will reach about 450 million, and an urbanization level of 35%. By 2010, the figures will respectively be 630 million and about 45%."

In the past 20 years, China has quickened the pace of urbanization and obtained remarkable achievements. In 2000, there was 459 million of urban population and the urbanization rate was 36.2%. In 2010, there was 670 million of urban population and the urbanization rate was 49.9%. Both the urban population and urbanization rate surpassed the goal set in 1996. By the end of 2015, the urban population increased to 770 million, and the urbanization rate rose to 56.1%. The number of cities increased to 656, and the number of designated towns increased to 20,515. Urban infrastructure and public services have improved markedly. Per capita housing floor area and park area have increased significantly. The rapid development of urbanization has helped to attract a large number of rural laborers, increase the allocation efficiency of urban and rural production factors, promote the sustained and rapid development of the economy, result in the profound change of social structures, and comprehensively improve the living standard of urban and rural residents.

**(1) Developing the strategy of urbanization development.** Based on the factors such as stages of economic development, levels of social development and carrying capacity of resources and environment, the Chinese government has formulated the strategy of urbanization, thus vigorously promoting the sound development of urbanization. In 2002, China explicitly proposed to "persist in the coordinated development of large, medium-sized and small cities and towns along the path to urbanization with Chinese characteristics." In 2007, China proposed that, "taking a path of urbanization with Chinese characteristics, we will promote balanced development of large, medium-sized and small cities and towns on the principle of balancing urban and rural development, ensuring rational distribution, saving land, providing a full range of functions and getting larger cities to help smaller ones." In 2014, the National New Urbanization Plan (2014–2020) was issued, which points out that China should keep to

the new-type Chinese-style path of urbanization characterized by putting people first, synchronizing industrialization, the advancement of IT application, urbanization and agricultural modernization, optimizing layout, ecological progress and passing on the fine traditions of culture. The Plan further indicates the direction of the sound development of urbanization.

**(2) Facilitating the development of city clusters and promoting the coordinated development of large, medium-sized, and small cities and towns.** Guided by the policy, city cluster is the main type of urbanization development, and the three city clusters of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta are the main platform leading the rapid growth of the economy and participating in the international cooperation and competition. The functions of central cities have been improved and upgraded, and their capacity to affect and lead regional development has been strengthened constantly. At the same time, the government has strived to create a more comfortable environment for the development of medium-sized and small cities and towns, and the development of new towns in the outer circles, where the functions and population of the central cities are transferred and the stress on downtown areas of megacities can be eased.

**(3) Promoting the transformation of rural migrant population into urban residents.** The main feature of Chinese urbanization at the current stage is the large number of rural population entering into cities and towns. By 2013, statistics show that more than 200 million of urban residents came from the countryside. Chinese government has strived to accelerate the coordinated development of large, medium-sized, and small cities and towns and guide the rational flow and distribution of population on the one hand, and orderly promote the transformation of rural migrant population into urban residents on the other hand. It is envisaged that those rural workers who have stayed in cities for long, are good at finding jobs and can adapt to the industrial upgrading and market competition environment should be first considered to become urban residents in order to change agricultural migrants and other permanent residents into urban residents gradually. It is also designed to accelerate the full coverage of urban basic public services for permanent residents and introducing a series of policies and measures, with the emphasis on employment, children's education and housing, to ensure that the rural population in urban areas can be employed, receive job training, sign labor contracts, be covered by social security system, get full salary, safeguard their legal rights, improve their housing conditions, have their children receive education, enjoy and participate in cultural activities and make their development goals clear. In addition, measures have been adopted to care for the migrant population and improve the development capability of migrant families so as to facilitate the social

integration of migrant rural population in urban areas and to promote the sound and harmonious development of cities and towns.

### **1.2.2 Urban Construction and Development**

In the past 20 years, Chinese urban construction has made great achievements. The urban infrastructure, such as water supply, electricity, road, gas, and information network has improved significantly, per capita park area increased greatly, and the level of public services such as education, medical care, culture and sports, and social security have enhanced markedly. According to statistics, by the end of 2015, the capability of urban water supply reached 297 million cubic meters per day and the coverage rate of drinking water reached 98.1%; the capacity of natural gas supply reached about 104.08 billion cubic meters and the coverage rate of fuel gas reached 95.3%; the capacity of centralized sewage treatment was 140 million cubic meters per day and the rate of sewage treatment was 91.9%; the capacity of harmless treatment of domestic waste was 577,000 tons per day and the rate of harmless treatment was 94.1%; the total length of urban road was 365,000 kilometers and urban road surface area per capita was 15.6 square meters; the green space in built-up areas reached 2.105 million hectares, the ratio of green space being 36.4%, and the per capita green land area in parks reaching 13.35 square meters. The urban facilities for flood control and waterlogging have been upgraded and improved.

**(1) Scientifically laying out the construction land and enhancing the level of urban planning.** The Chinese government attaches great importance to urban planning and land use planning, actively guiding the rational use of land. The government has established the legal status of urban plans and master plans on land use and strengthened the authority and seriousness of plans. The urban planning has been gradually transformed from dealing with city expansion to limit urban growth boundary and optimizing space structure. The government has also scientifically established the urban function and form, strengthened the regulation of urban spatial development and utilization, and reasonably set up the standard requirements such as the floor area ratio, green space ratio and ground permeability rate of land development and utilization in various function zones. The master plans on land use tightened land use control by putting in place the strictest institutions on farmland protection and economical use of land, which not only ensured that sufficient land was provided for the development of cities, but also helped enhance the economical use of land in cities. The urban-rural planning supervisor system and the inspection system for national land use have been set up to ensure the effective enforcement of relevant laws and regulations.

**(2) Strengthening the construction of urban infrastructure and improving the**

**level of urban governance.** China has made great efforts and done a lot of work on urban construction and management. With the construction of facilities for flood control and disaster reduction, construction of urban utility tunnel and sponge cities, treatment of black and odorous waters in cities and other key works as the focus, efforts are made to change the development concept and the way of urban construction, with the purpose of making the urban construction and management more sustainable. The government has guaranteed the fund supply of infrastructural construction through continuously increasing investment and reforming investment and financing system; guided the construction of urban public utilities and disaster reduction system, through preparing special plans for urban drinking water safety, flood control, drainage and prevention of waterlogging, the renovation and construction of urban water supply facilities, construction and development of urban sewage and domestic waste treatment facilities, urban gas supply and urban landscaping development; the government standardizes the development of municipal infrastructure through formulating the regulations on urban drainage and sewage treatment, improving the regulations on administration of urban roads, regulations of urban parks and technical guidelines on urban drinking water source safety assessment; the government also works hard to promote the scientific and technological progress and enhance the level of urban management and service by popularizing the digital city management technology and applying information technology.

**(3) Protecting human settlements and constructing eco-friendly residential areas.** China has continuously strengthened the environmental construction to promote the development of ecological, energy-saving and environmental friendly settlements. Local governments at all levels have strived to establish national ecological garden cities, and actively promoted the ecological restoration. They have implemented the public transportation priority strategy and the policy of promotion the sustained development of urban traffic. They have also launched actions on green building development, guided the urban and rural construction with green, circular and low carbon principles, strictly implemented the mandatory standard of building energy saving, promoted the energy saving renovation of existing buildings, urban heating system, and public buildings. Efforts have been made to build “sponge cities”, and to explore an appropriate mode suited to the conditions of Chinese water resources, water ecology, water environment and water security. During the post-disaster reconstruction after Wenchuan, Yushu and Lushan earthquakes, local governments have strived to build new ecological towns that are more secure, comfortable, vigorous and sustainable through integrating with the natural environment, optimizing infrastructure and enhancing the disaster-resistance ability.

**(4) Protecting the historical heritage, culture and tradition.** China explores the urban cultural resources, intensifies cultural inheritance and innovation, and builds the city into a charming humanistic place with profound historical heritage and obvious features of our time. Since 1982, the Chinese government has published list of historical and cultural cities, towns and villages. By the end of 2015, China announced the names of 128 national level historical and cultural cities, 252 towns, and 276 villages. China has increased funding for the protection of historical and cultural cities, towns and villages as well as historical and cultural city blocks, carried out the pilot work of historical buildings protection and reuse, strengthened the preparation, implementation and record management of protection plans. It has established the supervision information system, utilized the remote sensing and information technology, leveraged the role of planning inspectors, strengthened the supervision and inspection, so as to inherit and develop the fine cultural traditions, promote the development of distinctive local culture and preserves the urban images.

### **1.2.3 Rural Construction and Development**

From 1996 to 2015, the number of designated towns increased from 18,200 to 20,500; the number of townships reduced from 27,100 to 11,300; the number of administrative villages reduced from 747,000 to 580,000. Meanwhile, the capability of population agglomeration of towns has kept improving. The average population size of designated towns increased from over 6,000 in 1996 to about 10,000 in 2015, with the average annual growth rate of nearly 3%.

**(1) Infrastructure has been improved step by step.** In 2015, the coverage rate of drinking water in designated towns reached 83.8%, the coverage rate of fuel gas being 48.7%, green space ratio being 16.6%, and road surface area per capita being 12.8 square meters. The transportation has been more convenient. According to the Statistical Bulletin on the Development of Transportation Industry (2015), 99.87% of administrative villages are connected to highways, and 94.45% of them have access to paved roads. The nationally planned task of ensuring drinking water safety in rural areas has been basically completed. According to relevant statistics, by the end of 2015, the rate of rural population having access to central water supply was 82%. All rural population now has access to power supply. Health centers, culture stations, primary and secondary schools, supermarkets and public transport are found in all the villages and towns across the nation, meeting people's basic needs of daily life.

**(2) Improving the living and ecological environment.** Through village renovation, comprehensive renovation of rural human settlements and the special treatment of solid wastes, the pilot demonstration projects of treating domestic sewage in one hundred

rural counties were implemented to promote the sewage treatment and toilet renovation. The environment of 250,000 villages has been improved. The popularization rate of rural sanitary latrines was 78.43% by the end of 2015. The figure was only 7.5% in the first national environment and sanitation survey of the countryside in 1993.

**(3) Protecting and developing traditional villages.** Since 2012, the Chinese government has launched the project of traditional village protection and issued relevant policies and technical specifications to direct local governments to strengthen the protection of traditional villages. The whole nation has identified 11,490 traditional villages, with 80% formed before Qing Dynasty, which possess 25,000 traditional buildings and 3,174 representative intangible cultural heritages above provincial level, containing the typical forms of settlements for 51 ethnic groups. By 2015, total 2,555 traditional villages with important protection value on the list of Chinese traditional villages. The Chinese central government made an investment of 11.4 billion yuan into protecting and developing traditional villages. And local governments also provided their support with personnel, physical and financial resources. The support from the governments to the restoration of the historical environment factors of traditional villages, public environmental and hygienic facilities improvement, construction of disaster prevention and reduction facilities has ensured the appropriate protection, inheritance and development of traditional villages in an era of rapid development of modern civilization.

## **1.3 Legal Development and International Cooperation in the Urban and Rural Settlements**

### **1.3.1 Legal Development of Urban and Rural Settlements**

The Chinese government pays special attention to legal construction to promote the sustained development of urban and rural settlements and protect the participating right of urban and rural residents in this process.

**(1) Promulgating Urban-Rural Planning Law.** In 2007, China promulgated the Urban-Rural Planning Law of the People's Republic of China. It is an important law which standardizes the urban-rural planning and construction, stipulates the principles of urban-rural integration, reasonable layout, land saving, concentrated growth and planning before constructing. It reflects the requirements of improving ecological environment, enhancing the conservation and comprehensive utilization of resources and energy, protecting natural and cultural heritage, maintaining local and ethnic features and traditions; constructing a national urban-rural planning system containing

urban system planning, city planning, town planning, township planning and village planning; setting up the system of “one written proposal and two permits” - a written proposal of location for construction project planning, a permit for construction land use and a planning permit on construction project; establishing the mechanism of public participation in planning preparation and implementation.

**(2) Amending the Land Administration Law.** In order to adapt to new conditions and requirements, the existing Land Administration Law of the People's Republic of China has been amended three times. The managing system focused on the protection of cultivated land has been ensured. The basic State policy of "cherish and rationally use land resources, solidly protect cultivated land" has been written into the law, Through the strengthened regulation of the land use master plan, measures are adopted to balance land occupation and compensation and delimit protection zones of basic farm land to strengthen the protection of cultivated land. In addition, a series of measures have been publicized to improve land requisition, strengthen the management of urban-rural land for construction purpose to protect the legal rights of land owners and users, and promote the rational use of urban-rural land as well as sustainable social-economic development.

**(3) Amending the Urban Real Estate Administration Law.** The Urban Real Estate Administration Law of the People's Republic of China (revised in 2007) stipulates that only “for public interests” can the state expropriate any entity or individual's house built on state-owned land. It also stipulates that “the state shall give relocation compensations according to law and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the entity or individual. If an individual's residential house is to be expropriated, the State shall guarantee the housing conditions of the individual.” On January 21, 2011, Regulations on the Expropriation of Houses on State-owned Land and Compensation have been promulgated and put into effect. The Regulations define the scope of public interests, state clearly that the people's governments at the municipal and county levels undertake the works on expropriation of building and compensation, that the expropriation procedures should be open and transparent with public involvement. According to the Regulations, mandatory expropriation initiated by administrative organs was replaced by an application to the people's court for mandatory expropriation. These regulations and stipulations play an important role in regulating the expropriation of buildings on state-owned land and compensation and guaranteeing the legitimate rights and interests of the people whose properties are expropriated.

Moreover, the Property Law of the People's Republic of China was officially issued and implemented in 2007. This law explicitly stipulates that the property rights of the

State, collectives, individuals or any other right holder shall be protected by law and shall not be infringed by any organizations or individuals.

### **1.3.2 International Cooperation in the Development of Urban and Rural Settlements**

Since Habitat II, the Chinese government has paid more attention to and effectively strengthened the international cooperation and communication in the urban and rural human settlements.

**(1) Promoting the establishment of World Cities Day.** The 41th World Expo, which was held in Shanghai in 2010, presented in a comprehensive way and interpreted in an in-depth way the theme of “Better City, Better Life”. At the closing ceremony, the United States, the Bureau of International Exhibitions and the Organizing Committee of the Shanghai World Expo jointly published the Shanghai Declaration, proposing to set October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year as the World Cities Day. On December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the 68<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly adopted the resolution and decided to make October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year as the World Cities Day, starting from 2014. The establishment of World Cities Day has accelerated the cooperation of different countries to meet the opportunities and challenges of the urbanization process and promoted the cause of urban sustainable development and global sustainable development.

**(2) Winning Habitat Scroll of Honor Award and Dubai International Award for Best Practices.** The Chinese government has attached great importance to Habitat Scroll of Honor Award and Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment established by UN-Habitat. In April 2000, Ministry of Construction of the People's Republic of China established China Habitat Award, then choosing the best of the winning projects each year to recommend to United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (currently United Nations Human Settlements Program, UN-Habitat) and apply for Habitat Scroll of Honor Award and Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment. From 1990 to 2014, China won 22 times of Habitat Scroll of Honor Award and Habitat Scroll of Honor Special Citation. From 1996 to 2012, 124 projects from China won Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment, Good Practices Award and Promising Practices Award, among which, 7 projects won the top ten awards. China's significant achievements in human settlements have won widespread praise and affirmation from the international community.

**(3) Hosting World Urban Forum 4.** In November 2008, the 4th session of the World Urban Forum co-hosted by Chinese Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and UN-Habitat and undertaken by Jiangsu Province and Nanjing

municipal government opened in Nanjing, China. The forum, with the theme of "harmonious urbanization", attracted 7,800 government officials, scholars and relevant people from the United Nations and 175 countries and regions. On this forum, Nanjing city was awarded Habitat Scroll of Honor Special Citation because of its successful control and development of Qinhuai River which flows through the downtown. The forum was highly praised by the then Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

**(4) Carrying out regional communication and technical cooperation.** On June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1996, Chinese former Vice Premier Zou Jiahua made a speech at the High Level Segment of the Habitat II, expressing the willingness of strengthening communication and cooperation with other countries in the field of human settlements. MOHURD and UN-Habitat have jointly published the *Human Settlements* magazine for a long time. MOHURD has also translated and published a series of publications of UN-Habitat, increasing Chinese people's understanding of UN-Habitat and the world human settlements campaign. Since 2010, the China Science Center of International Eurasian Academy of Sciences, China Association of Mayors, Urban Planning Society of China and UN-Habitat has cooperated to compile *The State of China's Cities* and have published three volumes. In 2012, the China-Europe Exchange Platform for Water Resources was established, which put "ensure water resources in the process of urbanization" as the main field of key research and collaboration. Many high-level dialogues have been held, where responsible departments for water resources in both China and Europe had policy talks and exchange of ideas. Recent years have seen increasingly broader and deeper-going interaction and cooperation between China and UN-Habitat, for example, in 2010, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and Jiangyin city of China signed the memorandum of "Low-carbon Economy and Sustainable Urban Development Project - Jiangyin Development Zone Practice" to respond to climate change under the framework of sustainable urban development through building energy saving, water resources and natural ecological protection and new energy utilization, etc. From 2012 to 2013, UN-Habitat, Kunshan city of China and some African cities cooperated for the first time to give professional training on urban-rural planning, construction and management to more than 30 officials from six cities of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal in three batches.

**(5) Providing financial support to UN-Habitat.** For years China has made annual donations to UN-Habitat. The donations have been increasing year by year over the past few years, and in 2015 the sums totaled \$500,000 and RMB 500,000 yuan. The Chinese governments have provided direct or indirect financial support to events held by UN-Habitat. These include hosting UN-Habitat's international conferences in China, editing, translating, publishing and distributing UN-Habitat publications, a \$1 million

donation by Shanghai for the events of World Cities Day, training sessions, etc., giving strong support to UN-Habitat work.

## **2. Basic Propositions of the Chinese Government on the Development of Human Settlements**

The sustainable development of human settlements is an eternal theme, which is related to having a better life. In today's world, urbanization has developed significantly and the world is facing various challenges such as urban poverty, insufficient facilities, expanding slum areas, rising unemployment rate, unsustainable consumption and production modes, etc. It is shown by statistics that 30% of the world population is living in slum areas and informal housing, and the figure is higher in some developing countries. Solving the problem of human settlements development and building a secure, inclusive and sustainable urban and rural environment requires joint efforts of countries throughout the world. China has made great progress in urbanization and human settlements improvement, so its experiences can provide beneficial reference for the development of human settlements. The Chinese government believes that the sustainable development of human settlements is the coordinated development of the economy, society, culture, environment, science and technology, governance, security and planning. The specific propositions include:

### **2.1 Sustainable human settlements development should be based on economic development**

Many issues related to the development of human settlements, such as poverty, disaster, sanitation, security and green settlement, need to be addressed with the backing of economic strength. For most of the developing countries, economic growth remains the first priority. Only a strong economy can provide material conditions for the development of human settlements. Economic development should pursue inclusive growth, encourage the co-existence of multiple economic forms and create diversified job opportunities. Efforts should also be made to emphasize coordinated development among various regions, promote overall planning for urban and rural development, encourage rich people to help the poor, gradually eliminate poverty, and comprehensively improve the level of human settlements.

### **2.2 The fruits of development should be shared by all the people with people-centered approach**

The overarching goal of efforts related to human settlement development is to

improve the working and living environment of all people, especially poor people in urban and rural areas. This kind of improvement is an equal right, which requires equal access to public and infrastructure services. It will contribute to gradual realization of residents' right of free migration and free choice of where to live, and the safeguarding of residents' right of participation. The government shall formulate appropriate policies and offer help and support to solve the settlement-related problems for the vulnerable groups such as the poor, the aged and the disabled.

### **2.3 Cultures should be inherited and developed, differences should be respected and diversity should be promoted**

People in different regions have created diversified cultures, offering spiritual foundation for the development of their settlements. Based on the protection of natural and cultural heritage, sustainable development of settlements shall strengthen culture inheritance and innovation and encourage development with local features to enrich settlement cultures.

### **2.4 The concept of ecological development should be upheld to facilitate harmonious development between human beings and the environment**

Sustainable ecology is the guarantee of sustainable development. Ecological development is the long-term strategy concerning the soundness of human settlements and the well-being of mankind. In the course of promoting human settlements development, we should pursue green, circular and low-carbon development, implement the strategy of energy conservation and emission reduction, and facilitate ecological protection and restoration to build a resource-conserving and environmentally friendly society.

### **2.5 Construction and development of human settlements should be supported and boosted by scientific and technological progress**

Science and technology have been playing a more and more important role in the development of human settlements. The progress in science and technology provides more rapid and convenient conditions for promoting the intensive use of urban space, enhancing urban functions, and improving living quality and human settlement environment. New technology is used to construct green, low-carbon and intelligent cities, and big data and network technology are used as a means to strengthen public services and urban security.

### **2.6 Social governance should be innovated and cooperation among relevant parties should be facilitated**

The innovation of social governance structure is the new requirement of human settlements development, among which, government leading is the key point, social collaboration is the supporting force and public participation is the foundation. Government should play a central role because the government has always had important responsibilities in the process of social governance. Meanwhile, civil organizations shall be fostered and developed, all relevant parties of the society be encouraged and supported to participate in the settlement building, and residents self-governance and service function of urban and rural communities be strengthened.

#### **2.7 The security of urban and rural settlements should be enhanced continuously**

Security is the basic need of settlement development. Faced with frequent natural disasters, the government shall strengthen the facility construction and capacity-building in disaster prevention and reduction, optimize emergency management system and disaster monitoring and early warning system, and raise the disaster-proof standards for urban buildings. At the same time, the government should strengthen the mechanism of comprehensive management of public security, and improve the preparedness for unexpected incidents and emergency response system.

#### **2.8 The sustainable human settlements development should be guided by urban-rural planning**

The development of human settlements will not be possible without the efforts made by government departments and legislative bodies to formulate and implement plans and action programs aiming at boosting the sustainable development of human settlements. The future development of settlements shall integrate the concept of putting-people first, respecting nature, inheriting historical features and green and low-carbon development in the whole process of urban-rural planning. The government shall enhance the regulatory role of planning to forestall runaway development of settlements, and make integrated plans for the coordinated development of downtown areas, suburbs and surrounding countryside.

### **3. Action Plans for the Development of Urban and Rural Settlements in China**

Urbanization and urban and rural construction in China have been a great success over the past 20 years. Our next move is to promote further development of urban and rural settlements in China in accordance with the guiding principles of the Central Urban Work Conference, the requirements made in the Suggestions of the Party Central

Committee and the State Council on How to Further Strengthen Management on Urban Planning and Construction, and also in accordance with the objectives and plans laid down in the Outline Program of the 13th Five-Year Plan and the National New Urbanization Plan (2014–2020) and also integrating with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### **3.1 Urbanization and Urban-Rural Planning**

China's urbanization is still within the period of rapid development and will enter into the stage of transformation emphasizing quality enhancement. Yet it is faced with risks and challenges which cannot be ignored. From the domestic aspect, there are outstanding problems such as unbalanced development of industrialization, IT application, urbanization and agricultural modernization, unstable agricultural foundation, excessive regional disparity between urban and rural areas, unreasonable industrial mix, reduced surplus rural labor, growing aging population, unsolved issues related to left-behind children, women and elderly people in rural areas, serious bottleneck constraint of environment and resources, and the increasingly obvious contradiction of the internal dual structure in the city. The model relying on cheap labor force supply, inefficient consumption of resources such as land and unequal basic public services which lower the cost of rapid growth of urbanization can hardly continue. From the international aspect, the global supply and demand structure has undergone profound changes. The contradiction between enormous production capability and limited market space has been more prominent and the competition in international market has been more intense. China is faced with great challenges of industry transformation and upgrading and absorbing the serious excess capacity. As the contradiction between global resources supply and demand and the contest for carbon emission rights become more and more tense and China's energy resources and ecological environment is faced with unprecedented international pressure, the traditional development mode of industrialization-driven urbanization featuring high input, high consumption and high emission can no longer be sustainable.

#### **3.1.1 Urbanization**

- **Goals**

The level and quality of urbanization will be steadily improved. By 2020, the urbanization rate of permanent population will reach about 60%, and the urbanization rate of registered population will reach about 45%. Urbanization pattern will be optimized. The urbanization strategy pattern of “two horizontal axes and three vertical axes” will be

basically formed. The mode of urban development will be more sound and rational. The intensive and compact development mode with higher density, mixed functions and public traffic-orientation will become the dominant mode. The urban construction land per capita will be strictly restricted to 100 square meters or less. Life in cities will be harmonious and comfortable. The basic urban public services will steadily cover all the permanent population. Infrastructure facilities and public service facilities will be improved further and the ecological environment will also be improved markedly. The natural landscape and cultural features will be effectively protected. The urban management will be shaped by considerations about people's needs and the full use of information technologies. Management and control systems and mechanisms of urbanization will continue to improve. The institutional barriers that hinder the sound development of urbanization will be basically removed.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Transform the rural population who has migrated to the cities into urban residents in an orderly manner.** China will improve the system that helps rural migrant population to register as permanent urban residents. The system will be differentiated, favoring the rural migrant population who satisfy the necessary conditions. China will make efforts to ensure the right to education of children of migrant workers, to improve the public service system for employment and entrepreneurship, to expand social security coverage, to improve the basic medical and healthcare services, to take advantage of more resources in guaranteeing housing for the rural migrant population, and to facilitate the process of entitling rural migrant population to have access to basic urban public services. A cost-sharing mechanism will be established; responsibilities of local governments at all levels will be defined properly; a mechanism will be improved for the participation of rural migrant population in social affairs; and a mechanism will be established and improved to help accelerate the process of transforming rural migrant population to urban residents.

**(2) Optimize the layout and pattern of urbanization.** The urbanization strategy arrangement of “two horizontal axes and three vertical axes” aiming at coordinated development among large, medium-sized and small cities will be conducted, with the land bridge corridors and Yangtze River as two horizontal axes, the coastal area, Beijing-Guangzhou and Beijing-Harbin Railways and Baotou-Kunming transportation corridors as three vertical axes, urban agglomerations on the axes and node cities as foundation and other urbanization areas as important components. City clusters in eastern China will be upgraded and optimized and city clusters in central and western China will be fostered and developed. A mechanism will be established to promote the coordination

and development of all types of city clusters, and a comprehensive transportation network will be strengthened to support the city clusters.

**(3) Improve the sustainable urban development capacities.** The measures include: making available and optimizing the conditions for industrial development and expansion of employment, optimizing the urban industrial structure, improving urban innovation ability, creating a favorable environment for employment and entrepreneurship, optimizing urban spatial structure and management pattern, upgrading and improving the functions of urban central areas, strictly regulating the construction of new towns and new districts, improving the environment of the boundary areas between cities and the countryside, raising the level of basic public services in cities, giving priority to the development of public transport, strengthening the construction of municipal infrastructure, improving the basic public service system, raising the level of urban planning and construction, searching for new concepts in urban planning, improving planning procedures, exercising stricter regulation on planning, tightening control on the quality of buildings, promoting the construction of new-type cities, expediting the development of green cities and smart cities while paying attention to cultural progress, strengthening and making innovations in urban governance, improving the urban governance structure, strengthening self-governance and service functions of communities, making innovations on comprehensive management of public security, and improving the disaster prevention, reduction and relief systems.

**(4) Promote the integrated development of urban and rural areas.** The measures include: promoting the development of an urban-rural integrated factor market, and the integration of planning, infrastructure and public service, improving the systems and mechanisms for urban-rural integration, ensuring food security and the effective supply of major agricultural products, raising the level of modern agriculture, improving the circulation network of agricultural products, expediting agricultural modernization, raising the level of planning and management of townships, towns and villages, strengthening the construction of infrastructure and service network in the countryside, accelerating the development of social programs to build socialist new countryside.

**(5) Reform and improve the institutions of urbanization development.** The measures include: advancing the institutional reforms on such important fields and key links as population management, land management, fiscal, taxation and financial systems, urban housing, administration and ecological environment, fostering innovation on land management system, accelerating the reforms on fiscal and taxation systems and investment and financing systems, establishing the housing system which combines the role of the market with government support, and improving the institutions for

urbanization highlighting green, circular and low-carbon development.

### 3.1.2 Urban-Rural Planning

- **Goals**

China will improve the scientific soundness, authority, seriousness and continuity of urban-rural planning, optimize the management systems and mechanisms, intensify the supervision, and enable it to play a full role in regulating and guiding urban construction and development in the light of the requirement of new-type urbanization.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Innovate planning concept.** During the whole process of planning, China will adhere to the concept of putting-people first, respecting nature, carrying forward historical traditions and green and low-carbon development, scientifically define urban functions and forms, intensify the control of urban space development and utilization, develop integrated plan for urban spatial function layout, and encourage appropriate mixed the functions for urban land use.

**(2) Optimize the spatial structures and enhance land use efficiency.** The measures include: strictly carrying out the national standard for the land use and per capita construction land use index, increasing the population density, forming reasonable urban spatial structures to promote the synchronous development of economic, urban and rural and environmental development according to the general requirement of promoting intensive and efficient production space, adequate and livable living space and picturesque ecological space.

**(3) Improve planning procedure.** The working procedures of preliminary research, planning formulation, communication and coordination, expert deliberation, public participation, examination and approval, implementation management and assessment and revision will be optimized. The urban planning commission system will be introduced in an all-round way, with the aim to improve the soundness and democratic level of planning work. Work relating urban planning will be made known to the public. The integration of different plans such as economic and social development plans, urban and rural plans and land use plans in areas where necessary conditions are satisfied will be promoted.

**(4) Intensify planning control.** The measures include: adhering to and consistently implementing the principle of “one planning with one blueprint”; implementing and strengthening overall process control and regulation of the planning to ensure that the development and construction are based on plans, improving the national urban-rural

planning inspector system, strictly implementing planning implementation accountability system to intensify the responsibility investigation and punishment on the illegal behavior of government departments, developers and individuals, formulating the examination index system of urban planning and construction, and employing information technologies to strengthen the technical support to urban planning control.

## **3.2 Development of Urban and Rural Housing**

China is in the stage of rapid urbanization. In the near future, the newly increased housing demand triggered by the urban population increase, the housing improvement demand created by the upgrading of resident consumption structure and the passive housing demand brought by the urban renewal will remain significantly large. Meanwhile, such problems as unbalanced development between different regions, irregular market order and inadequate security system still exist in the housing field. The construction mode and consumption idea also need to be changed. Great efforts shall be made to improve the housing security and supply system and increase effective housing supply.

### **3.2.1 Development of Urban Housing**

- **Goals**

The Chinese government will continue to improve the housing system which combines market allocation and government security and promote the development of housing supply and demand pattern with overall balance in total stock, reasonable mix and a suitable matching between housing price and consumption ability to effectively meet the rational housing demand of urban permanent residents. In light of the changes in the housing demand, the Chinese government will maintain rational scale of investment and construction of urban housing, increase the number of residential houses in urban areas, increase the per capita floor space, improve the functions of housing, and create a better living environment. By 2020, the rebuilding of housing units in the existing shantytowns, and the renovation of slums and dilapidated housing will have been basically completed. The newly urban housing will have rational layout, complete facilities, distinctive characteristics, sound functions of keeping the houses warm, heat proof and sound proof, and architectural structure that is quakeproof, fireproof, and energy efficient.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Improve the housing supply system.** Efforts will be made to build a housing

supply system in which the government is mainly responsible for providing basic guarantee, the market is mainly used to satisfy the demands at various levels, optimize the structure of supply and demand, steadily improve the level of housing, so as to ensure that all the people enjoy the right to housing.

**(2) Improve the housing system which encourages both renting and purchasing houses.** Mainly proceeding from satisfying the new urban dwellers' demand of housing, efforts shall be made to deepen the reform of the housing system by encouraging both renting and purchasing houses. Help will be given to residents who cannot afford to buy their own houses, in particular non-household registered residents, to rent a living place. Monetary subsidies will be granted to families in financial difficulties that meet certain conditions. Efforts will be made to allow the non-household registered people to be eligible to live in public rental housing, and to provide subsidies for them.

**(3) Promote the healthy development of real estate market.** Efforts will be made to optimize the structure of housing supply to promote the balance between market demand and supply and to ensure the steady operation of the real estate market. More land shall be made available for building housing in areas where the supply falls short of the demand. Measures will be taken step by step to cut housing inventory in areas where there is a large inventory of housing, to stimulate demand and to increase the proportion of people who receive monetary compensation after their houses in the shantytowns are renovated by the government. The housing rental market shall be developed to encourage both individuals and institutional investors to purchase commodity housing stock so as to increase the supply of housing for renting. The development of enterprises specializing in residential houses rental shall be encouraged. The acquisition and reorganization of real estate enterprises are encourage for increasing the industrial concentration; and the pilot project of real estate investment trusts shall be carried out. New types of real estate business including tourist, aged people, and cultural real estate projects will be developed. The modernization of housing industry shall be accelerated to raise the overall housing quality.

**(4) Raise the housing guarantee level.** Residence permit holders shall be included in the urban housing guarantee network. An overall plan shall be worked out regarding government subsidized houses, rebuilding of housing units in shantytowns and construction of supporting facilities in an effort to ensure quality of construction and make residents' daily life and travel easier. The supporting policies concerning investment, credit, land, tax and administrative fees shall be improved. The policy of providing both physical subsidy and monetary subsidy for public rental housing shall be implemented, and the granting of rental subsidy shall be increased gradually. The management

mechanism of investment, operation, access and exit from government subsidized houses shall be improved.

**(5) Improve the housing provident fund system.** China will improve the policy of depositing, withdrawal, using the housing provident fund system, improve supervision and management system, intensify public supervision, improve the transparency of the management and operation, and establish an open and well-regulated system to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of depositors, with the purpose of better supporting the depositors to solve their basic housing problems.

### **3.2.2 Development of Rural Housing**

- **Goals**

China will improve the level of rural housing quality, design and construction, encourage developers to build sufficient facilities or reserve room for future expansion, develop housing with good performance in ventilation, lighting and insulation, encourage the use of green building materials and products, adopt energy saving measures and employ low-cost construction technologies, explore the excellence in local ways of construction and context of local buildings, carry forward local and ethnic architectural cultures, and basically complete the upgrading of existing stock of dilapidated rural buildings by 2020.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Strengthen the guidance and management of rural housing construction.** China will promote the establishment of construction management teams in towns and villages, establish and improve the quality and safety management system of rural housing, carry out the examination, guidance and supervision of the design and construction of rural housing, strive to make the newly-built rural housing meet the anti-seismic criterion, specification and requirement, and enhance the awareness of the quality and safety and strengthen technical guidance for rural housing construction.

**(2) Continue the renovation of dilapidated rural buildings.** The Thirteenth Five-year Plan and annual plans for renovating dilapidated rural buildings in the countryside will be made based a thorough investigation about the situation of those buildings. It will formulate the renovation plan for poverty-stricken areas, continue to increase the support to these areas and impoverished people, improve the existing information system on work related to renovation of dilapidated buildings and gradually make it known to the public. It shall strengthen the management, supervision and inspection on the renovation work.

**(3) Research, develop and promote green and energy efficient construction methods.** China will continue to carry out the research and demonstration projects on green residential houses built with modern rammed earth, promote the construction of safe, practical, energy-saving and waste-reducing, affordable, good-looking, healthy and comfortable green rural housing, and promote the use of energy-saving, emission-cutting, convenient and recyclable green building materials in the countryside. It shall organize the recommendation and recognition of typical rural buildings, including rural residential buildings, public buildings and agricultural production buildings, to provide reference for rural house building. A data bank of good practical examples shall be developed.

**(4) Promote the local features in rural housing construction.** China will promote the local styles and features in rural housing construction while ensuring safety and cost-effectiveness. It will strengthen the technical guidance and management on the development of local styles and features, pay attention to carrying forward the traditional style of local dwellings in terms of architecture forms and details and interior and exterior finishing, promoting the construction of modern rural housing with local characteristics. It will strengthen the comprehensive development of styles and features of rural housing, improve the functions of and beautify courtyards, and strive to make the renovated rural housing and courtyard be harmonious with the surrounding environment.

### **3.3 Infrastructure in the Urban and Rural Settlements**

The infrastructure of a country is the foundation of normal operation and sound development of urban and rural areas, playing an important role in improving the human settlements, increasing the comprehensive carrying capacity, improving the urban and rural operation efficiency and steadily promoting new-type urbanization. China's urban and rural infrastructure has such problems as insufficient total amount, low standard and extensive management. Outdated facilities of flood control, serious traffic jams, frequent occurrence of public security accidents and low efficiency of urban management and operation appear in some cities because they pay attention to construction while ignoring management and service. So we need to accelerate the construction of infrastructure, improve the level of operation and management and raise the supporting capacity for population agglomeration and services.

- **Goals**

China will continue to strengthen the construction of infrastructure, including road transportation, vigorously develop green transport such as public traffic, walking and

cycling and form a comprehensive urban transportation system with emphasis on green transport. We will satisfy the water demand, strive to establish a safety system for urban water supply, and promote the coordinated regional water supply between urban and rural areas. We will strengthen the construction of flood control, urban drainage, and sewage treatment facilities to build a more comprehensive flood control and urban drainage engineering system in about 10 years, and promote landscaping and greening efforts to promote the overall infrastructure level.

By 2020, the average road network density of the built-up urban areas will reach 8 kilometers per square kilometers, and the road surface area ratio will reach 15 percent; share of public transport will reach 40% or more in very large and extralarge cities, 30% or more in large cities and 20% or more in small and medium-sized cities; the central water supply rate will reach 95 percent; sewage treatment rate in cities, county seats and key towns will reach 95%, 85% and 70% respectively. Urban harmless treatment rate of domestic garbage will reach 95%, all county seats will build their capacities for harmless treatment of wastes, and key towns will realize the overall coverage of garbage collection and transfer. Green space coverage rate of urban built-up areas will reach 38.9%. Urban facilities for flood control and water drainage will be improved considerably.

#### · **Policies and Actions**

(1) **Improve legislation and regulation.** Accelerating legislation is the foundation of urban and rural infrastructure development. Clear legal provisions on the relationship between city and infrastructure development and relevant factors, conditions, guarantees for the development of infrastructure will be defined from the perspective of guiding economic and social sustainable development. Institutional design for urban and rural infrastructure development will be further optimized, including promoting the process of urban public transportation legislation, accelerating the legislation on the management and protection of drinking water sources, improving the laws and regulations on securing the safety of urban water supply, promulgating laws and regulations for urban water drainage and sewage treatment, and accelerating urban park legislation.

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(2) **Strengthen planning guidance.** China will scientifically arrange the distribution and coordination of public transport facilities with urban development, and explore the new mode of public transportation. It will work hard to promote the construction of facilities for flood control and disaster reduction, urban utility tunnels and sponge city, to reduce and control black and odorous waters in cities, and to restore urban ecology, so as to promote the transformation of urban development mode; accelerate the development of urban flood control plans and comprehensive plans for urban water

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drainage (rainwater) and water-logging prevention to specify the goals, tasks and measures for urban flooding control and disaster reduction, further regulate urban sewage treatment planning, construction, management and supervision, and strengthen the planning and construction of parks and green space such as community parks, street gardens, suburban parks and green corridors in combination with urban and rural environment improvement, upgrading urban villages and ecological restoration of abandoned land.

(3) **Enhance investment and financing system.** The Chinese governments at various levels will proactively guide the involvement of private capital in the construction, operation and management of municipal public utilities through the special transfer payment from the central finance, promote and regulate the partnership between the government and market entity, and introduce competition mechanism through the adoption of the system of franchise operation to improve the service quality and efficiency of the municipal public utilities sector.

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(4) **Improve management.** China will strengthen the digitalized urban management to boost the management levels in terms of standardization, information technologies application and sophistication; improve the management system of city-wide roads and bridges, identify the maintenance and safety management responsibility, enhance the capacity in securing the safe operation of urban roads and bridges; strengthen the transport demand management, encourage the development of green transport modes such as walking and cycling and their coordination with public transportation so as to meet the diversified demands; implement the strictest management system for water resources to enable the carrying capacity of water resources to be compatible with the urbanization level; strengthen the development of a monitoring and early warning system for urban flood control and disaster reduction; boost the capacity in urban disaster prevention and reduction and emergency response and improve the preparedness in urban flooding control to enhance the awareness of disaster prevention and risk aversion as well as the ability in self-help during emergency; strengthen the whole-process control and management of urban landscaping and greening activities to realize the expansion of urban and rural green areas, improvement of green space quality and enhancement of management and maintenance level; intensify efforts to protect and manage green land in parks, and actively explore and study the management of parks by grade and category.

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(5) **Boost scientific and technical support.** China will actively promote the development of management information system for urban roads and bridges, further intensify the construction of public transport information service system, expand the

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application of public transport intelligent scheduling, public bus priority system and electronic ticketing system; improve the urban flood control command system, accelerate the establishment of a comprehensive information management system with the functions of disaster monitoring, forecasting and early warning and risk assessment, and strengthen the support of digital information technology to water drainage and water-logging prevention. With the help of the National Urban Sewage Treatment Management Information System, we can have access to realtime information on the construction and operation of urban sewage treatment facilities; establish the urban sewage treatment assessment system which integrates quality and quantity.

### **3.4 Green Development of Urban and Rural Settlements**

Due to the continuous increase of urban and rural new buildings and the population's ever expanding demand for energy and resources, the continuation of the traditional extensive development mode will result in many risks such as deterioration of resources and environment and increase of social conflicts. It is urgent for China to transform the development mode, improve the energy efficiency, reduce building energy consumption, develop eco-cities and promote the formation of green and low-carbon production method, life style and urban construction and operation mode.

#### **3.4.1 The Development of Low-carbon Eco-Cities**

- **Goals**

China will gain eco-city experience by promoting the development of “demonstration cities for low-carbon and eco-oriented growth”, “green urban eco-districts”, and “key green small cities and towns” to guide urban transformation, improve human settlement and boost the quality of urbanization.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Develop nationwide low-carbon eco-city plans and assessment standards to identify the goal and direction of development.** The assessment index system of eco-cities will be established and improved to make scientific and macro evaluation of the current urban ecological level. Eco-city planning & construction standards will be developed and both basic and special indicators reflecting nationwide circumstances and local conditions will be improved to promote the implementation of ecological development strategy in cities and towns located in various climate zones and of different sizes in light of their respective local conditions.

**(2) Make development guidelines for low-carbon eco-cities and identify the**

**guidance principles for various regions.** According to factors such as geological conditions, climate conditions, resources and economic levels in different geographic regions, different incentives, guidance policies and support systems will be developed and key measures aiming to scientifically and reasonably guide local low-carbon eco-city practice will be adopted to promote the achievement of the low-carbon eco-city goals in various regions.

**(3) Identify the planning content of low-carbon eco-cities and carry out implementation with different approaches.** Aiming to promote the harmony between human settlements and nature, China will summarize and improve traditional spatial planning and design methods and technical systems to define the goals, principles, content and methods for planning low-carbon eco-cities of different sizes.

**(4) Promote the development of demonstration projects and boost the application of appropriate technologies.** China will carry out pilot or demonstration projects in different regions around the country on new technologies relevant to low-carbon eco-city construction, including those concerning green buildings, new energy, green transport, circular industry, ecological environment, waste utilization and green infrastructure and boost the application of appropriate technologies in regions where conditions permit to develop demonstration bases. China will conduct international cooperation on low-carbon and eco-cities, to learn from and draw on the good experience of other countries to guide and promote the sustainable development of domestic cities.

**(5) Transform the production methods and life styles to promote social harmony.** The methods include: integrating the concept of “low-carbon”, “ecology”, “livability” into construction work and daily life of residents to gradually adjust the production and consumption structure of the city and fundamentally change the traditional extensive urban development mode; promoting the concept of green ecology through various methods such as series of lecturing, selection and demonstration of best practices and media report; encouraging residents to choose green consumption, helping them to develop the habit of green consumption and demonstrating the green life concept from various aspects of life including clothing, food, shelter, travel and consumption.

#### **3.4.2 Building Energy Efficiency**

- **Goals**

China will strive to ensure half of the newly-constructed buildings in cities will be green buildings by the end of 2020.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Launch green building actions.** The measures include: carrying out pilot schemes on promoting compulsory green building standards, making green buildings compulsory in all the new construction in regions where conditions are right; promoting the construction of green eco-urban areas and the regional and large-scale development of green buildings; preparing guidelines on applicable technologies for green buildings suitable for different climate zones, and accelerating the promotion of application of green building technical systems and products consistent with national conditions; fostering and supporting the development of green building industry and technical service industry.

**(2) Enhance the energy-saving standard and quality of new buildings.** The measures include: promoting the implementation of the compulsory standard of saving the energy by 75 percent in new residential buildings in cities or towns in cold and severe cold areas, and encouraging the implementation of still higher compulsory standard of saving energy in residential buildings in very large and extralarge cities and towns in the areas where summer is hot and winter is cold and the areas where summer is hot and winter is warm; further improving the energy efficiency supervision system of new buildings throughout the processes of planning, design, construction and completion acceptance, accelerating the development of energy efficiency management system of new buildings to improve the implementation of energy efficiency standards; encouraging regions where conditions are right to adopt higher building energy efficiency standards, and actively conducting the pilot construction of energy efficient buildings with ultra-low energy or zero energy consumption.

**(3) Carry out energy efficiency retrofitting of existing residential buildings.** The measures include: promoting the energy efficiency retrofitting of the existing residential buildings in northern China where heating was necessary in winter, and strengthening the quality control of the energy efficiency retrofitting projects throughout the whole process from design to construction to material selection and acceptance; further promoting the billing method based on the volume of heat actually consumed; actively promoting the application of appropriate technologies concerning sun-shading, ventilation, greening, window and door retrofitting and thermal insulation in areas with hot summer and cold winter, and involving the promotion of energy efficiency retrofitting in the process of renovating dilapidated rural housing, if possible.

**(4) Promote the energy efficiency supervision of public buildings.** The measures include: further promoting the work of calculating energy consumption of public buildings, energy auditing and public notification of energy efficiency; stepping up

the efforts to construct the platform for monitoring the energy consumption of public buildings, and gradually increasing the number of the buildings to be monitored and the depth of monitoring; promoting the energy saving management of public welfare buildings, fostering the development of conservation-oriented schools and hospitals, and stepping up efforts in developing key cities for energy efficiency retrofitting of public buildings.

**(5) Accelerate the application of renewable energy in buildings on a larger scale.** The measures include: intensifying efforts in promoting wider application of clean energy such as solar energy in public welfare sectors and urban and rural infrastructure; encouraging the expansion of technical application of renewable energy in buildings, and promoting the gradient application of deep geothermal energy and the wider application of photothermal and photovoltaic technology.

### **3.4.3 Waste Treatment**

- **Goals**

By 2020, the rate of harmless treatment of domestic garbage will have reached 95% in Chinese cities, and the facilities for treating garbage will operate in accordance to industry standards. Domestic garbage in 90% of villages across the country will receive effective treatment, and for this purpose, sufficient facilities and equipment, developed treatment technologies, stable team of cleaning staff, improved supervision and sustained and secure funding support will be in place. By 2030, the facilities and services of urban domestic garbage treatment will spread to small cities, towns and villages, and urban and rural domestic garbage treatment will approach the average level of developed countries.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Select appropriate technologies according to local conditions.** The measures include: selecting appropriate technologies for treating domestic garbage according to local conditions by factoring in the level of local economic development, location of the facilities and specific characteristics of the wastes; further promoting the application of the technology of garbage incineration; adopting various kinds of methods to turn more garbage into resources that can be put into use and enhancing the level of harmless treatment of garbage.

**(2) Enhance the construction of facilities.** The measures include: increasing the investment in the construction of domestic garbage treatment facilities, accelerating the processes of facilities planning and construction; continuously promoting the development of the system for recycling the resources derived from kitchen wastes and

construction wastes; improving the national urban domestic garbage management information system, and enhancing the supervision on treatment facilities.

**(3) Steadily promote garbage sorting.** The measures include: linking domestic garbage sorting with wastes recycling system and dangerous waste treatment system, fostering the construction of classified collection, transportation and treatment system; stepping up the efforts to establish a system regarding garbage sorting.

**(4) Promote the management of rural domestic garbage.** The measures include: improving laws, regulations and policies related to rural domestic garbage treatment, establishing synergetic mechanism engaging both central government departments and local governments; coordinating urban and rural domestic garbage management with emphasis on counties, and encouraging the specialization and outsourcing of cleaning, garbage collecting and transporting services.

#### **3.4.4 Environment Improvement**

- **Goals**

In the near future, China will continuously improve urban appearance, maintain urban environmental order, strengthen and make innovations in social management, and raise the level of the standardization, IT application and sophistication of urban management as well as the efficiency of urban management. China will also promote rural human settlements improvement according to local conditions and strive to make significant improvement to people's basic living conditions regarding housing, water supply and transportation. It will develop clean, tidy and convenient human settlements, and build a number of beautiful livable villages with distinctive features by 2020.

- **Policies and Actions**

**(1) Improve laws and regulations and strengthen the management of appearance of cities, towns and villages.** China will accelerate the process of legislation on urban and rural management, revise relevant laws and regulations concerning city safety and orderly management of urban public spaces, and develop a comprehensive and systematic system of laws and regulations governing urban and rural management.

**(2) Strengthen planning regulation and control to accelerate the construction of public toilets.** The measures include: incorporating urban public toilets as a key issue in the special plan on environment and sanitation and other relevant urban plans in line with local conditions, with the focus on distribution, land use and size; accelerating the planning and construction of new public toilets, upgrading of old and rundown public

toilets and the construction of public toilets as necessary supportive facilities.

**(3) Accelerate the construction of digital urban management platform to achieve sophisticated urban management.** China will increase investment to promote the construction of digital urban management platform. It will bring the role of digital urban management platform into full play in transforming the way of law enforcement to pool efforts in urban management and enhance the sophistication of urban management.

**(4) Strengthen the protection of urban rivers and lakes as well as the water ecology to improve the urban water ecological environment.** China will intensify efforts in wastewater collection and treatment. In light of the goal of intensifying emission reduction by combining actions in both upstream and downstream areas, efforts in collecting and treating wastewater should be promoted and the amount of water pollutants discharged into rivers should be continuously reduced, efforts would be strengthened to control black and odorous water to improve the quality of water environment. The source of urban drinking water should meet the standards, and the supervision system for water quality should be set up and improved. The comprehensive improvement of urban water environment should be conducted to facilitate the natural flow of water between rivers and lakes and to improve the urban environment.

**(5) Strengthen media publicity to guide public participation.** The measures include: enhancing the awareness of the whole society that cities should be built, managed and enjoyed by all, enabling the public to play their role in urban management, mobilizing the initiatives of civil organizations and volunteers in urban management, giving commendation to outstanding urban managers, and reward individuals, enterprises and other civil organizations for making contribution to urban management to guide the whole society to pool efforts to build harmonious cities.

**(6) Further the improvement of rural settlements.** The measures include: accelerating the preparation of village plans, guiding the management of rural human settlements according to different categories, ensuring village plans are operational, properly determining the priorities of improvement; progressing gradually and highlighting the key points, working hard to guarantee the basic living standards and carrying out the rural environment improvement in a step-by-step manner to steadily promote the development of livable villages.

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#### **4. The Work that the Chinese Government Has Done to**

## Support Habitat III and Expectations of the Conference

Habitat III is the most important conference on the development of human settlements in the United Nations system. China supports Habitat III and will donate \$500,000 to Habitat III Trust Fund. It is our hope that the conference will do its contribution to future global sustainable development.

The Chinese government has always attached great importance to the development of human settlements. It is proactively promoting new-type urbanization strategy and has participated actively in international cooperation on urbanization development. Especially in 2013, advocated by the Chinese government, the UN made the decision to establish the World Cities Day, which is an important contribution of the Chinese government to global human settlements cause and global urban sustainable development. The Chinese government believes that the improvement of human settlements needs three pillars: taking the sustainable development path, pursuing new urbanization to promote the integrated development of urban and rural areas, and reinforcing international cooperation.

**(1) Taking the sustainable development path is the prerequisite for solving the problems of human settlements.** The relationship between population growth, environment protection and improvement of human settlements shall be correctly handled. While being consistent with economic development, the development of human settlements shall also be coordinated with population growth, development of the productive force, resource development and utilization and environment protection, and follow the path of sustainable development.

**(2) Equal emphasis should be put on both urban and rural development.** The development of urban and rural human settlements is related with and complements each other. With the rapid development of urbanization, more and more attention has been directed to the problems of urban human settlements. However, in a considerable long time to come, large numbers of people in developing countries will still live in rural areas, and thus, issues related to rural human settlements will constitute the weak links and may trigger serious problems in the efforts to address global settlements issues. In this sense, the comprehensive and balanced development of human settlements can only be guaranteed by putting equal emphasis on both urban and rural areas.

**(3) Strengthening international cooperation is an important way to solving the problems of human settlements.** In order to solve the problems of human settlements, on the one hand, countries should rely on their own efforts, and on the other hand, they need to have a favorable external environment and effective international cooperation.

The key point and priority area of the universal improvement of global human settlements is to solve the human settlements problems in developing countries.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is another important document following the UN Millennium Development Goals. The year of 2016 is the first year of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, when the international development and cooperation is entering a critical stage of connecting the past and the future. Considering the significant role of Habitat III in the design of a new urban agenda, the Chinese government hopes that the conference can develop a universal and workable new urban agenda which takes full account of the important role of urbanization in the process of sustainable development. The new urban agenda needs to consider the different concerns of countries in different urbanization stages, including challenges confronting developing countries in primary or intermediate stages of urbanization and issues stressed by developed countries in an advanced stage of urbanization, and fully consider the vulnerability of the least developed countries. Currently, in the process of urban development, the developing countries are still faced with severe challenges such as growing population living in poverty, urban sprawl, employment problems, transportation problems, social conflicts and widening gap between the rich and poor. Bearing in mind the common interests of mankind, the international community should take actions to narrow the gap between the rich and poor. They should follow the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and fully leverage the functions of South-North cooperation as the main channel in international cooperation and development to strengthen international cooperation and mutual assistance. Developed countries should show political resolution and sincerity, honor their commitments of development assistance and provide support to developing countries in capital, technology and capacity-building, to enhance the developing countries' ability and to tackle the human settlements problems.

Although China has made great progress in the development of human settlements environment, the unbalanced, uncoordinated and unsustainable issues in the development process remain acute. China will learn from the good experience of countries all over the world while giving consideration to its own national conditions. The Chinese government is willing to strengthen the cooperation and exchange with UN-Habitat, relevant international organizations, national governments and partners to jointly promote the sustainable development of human settlements environment in the whole world.