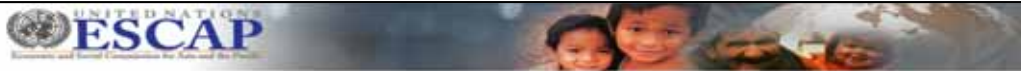




Outcomes of the Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum

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ESCAP, its mandate and mission in sustainable urban development

- Regional arm of the UN in Asia and the Pacific
 - 53 member countries & 9 associates
- Mandate to strengthen cooperation among countries of Asia and the Pacific in economic, social and environmental issues
 - 7 substantive divisions, 4 sub-regional offices, 5 regional centres

Mission in sustainable urban development:

Regional platform for innovative policies and practices on sustainable cities and towns



Asia-Pacific Urban Forums

- ESCAP has been convening Asia-Pacific Urban Forums periodically since 1993
- Multi-stakeholder forums: Ministers, Mayors, senior government officials, private sector, academics, CSOs, community leaders and media
- Objectives of the Forums are:
 - Identify and discuss critical and emerging urban issues among various stakeholders
 - Share experiences and best practices
- Fifth Forum in 2011
- Sixth Forum scheduled for 2015

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ESCAP has been convening Asia-Pacific Urban Forums periodically since 1993. The first Forum was held in conjunction with the Ministerial Conference on Urbanization which called for such forums to be held on a periodic basis.

Unlike single stakeholder networks, ESCAP has convening power at the regional level. The Asia-Pacific Urban Forums bring together various stakeholders such as Ministers, Mayors, captains of industry, academics, civil society organizations, community leaders and the media under one platform to:

1. Identify and discuss critical and emerging urban issues among various stakeholders
2. Share experiences and best practices



Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum

- Held in Bangkok from 20-25 June 2011
- Over 900 participants from 45 countries
 - Ministers, mayors, senior national government and local government officials, academics, civil society organizations, the private sector
- Opening address by H.E. Prime Minister of Thailand

The Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum was held in Bangkok from 20-25 June 2011. It was organized by ESCAP in partnership with 30 partner organizations

Over 900 participants from 45 countries attended, including Ministers, mayors, senior national government and local government officials, academics, civil society organizations, the private sector.

The opening ceremony presided over by Dr. HRH Princess Chulabhorn Mahidol

Opening address by H.E. Prime Minister of Thailand



ESCAP organized the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum in Partnership with 30 other organizations within and outside the UN family.



Unique features and process innovations of APUF 5

- Multi-stakeholder
- Multi-sectoral
- Free, “no-holds bar” discussions
- True market-place of ideas and practices
- Multi-partner organizational approach
- Use of new social media to reach a larger audience

Asia-Pacific Urban Forum was unique and ground breaking in many ways. First and foremost it is designed to be multi-stakeholder so that all stakeholders can discuss emerging and critical urban issues from their perspectives, with equal standing. So the minister has the same right to speak as a slum dweller. As there are no declarations, there are no binding texts to be negotiated, the exchange is frank and open. In fact the issue of corruption and organized crime in urban areas came up in several discussions. And all sorts of issues related to cities were discussed from green buildings to financing development to social fabric and slums. The Asia-Pacific Urban Forum was designed to allow participating agencies organizing break-out sessions to advertize their sessions in special plenary session slots. As you have seen APUF 5 was organized by several partners. In fact ESCAP organized several preparatory meetings with partners before and after the Forum. New media such as twitter, webcasting, video conferencing were used not only to organize APUF 5 but to link APUF 5 to local urban forums in four cities in Asia and the Pacific.



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Structure of the Urban Forum

- Plenary panel discussions (linked to local urban forums in 4 cities in Asia)
- Ministerial Dialogue on Cities Without Slums
- Five sub-regional focus group discussions
- Bazaar of Ideas and Practices (19 parallel events)
- 11 associated and side events
- 2 study visits
- Exhibition (26 exhibitors)
- Documentary evening

The Forum comprised 3 plenary discussions which were webcasted live and were also linked to local forums in 3 other cities in Asia and the Pacific through twitter. There were also five sub-regional focus group discussions, 19 sessions in the Bazaar of Ideas and Practices, 11 associated and side events including the Ministerial Dialogue on Cities Without Slum organized by the Government of Thailand, Asian Coalition for Housing Rights and ESCAP. There were also 2 study visits, an exhibition and a documentary night




Follow-up agreements

- Bilateral agreement between the government of Indonesia and Thailand on technical cooperation to promote cities without slums
- CITYNET and Asian Coalition for Housing Rights on low-income housing
- Cities Development Initiative for Asia and CITYNET on financing urban development

As a direct result of the Forum several agreements were signed at the Forum. These included:

1. A bilateral agreement between the governments of Indonesia and Thailand on technical cooperation to promote cities without slums
2. Between CITYNET and Asian Coalition for Housing Rights on low-income housing
3. Between Cities Development Initiative for Asia and CITYNET on financing urban development



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Key conclusions

- The Magnitude and pace of urbanization needed to be taken into account in policy making
- Majority of urban population lives in towns of less than 1 million about which we do not know enough
- With globalization, information revolution and increased connectivity the definition of "urban" was changing
 - Urban agglomerations extended beyond administrative boundaries
 - Manufacturing and non-agricultural activities located in the periphery, officially defined as "rural"
 - Aspirations and expectations of urban and rural populations were converging

The Forum came to the following key conclusions. Mr. Chung may wish to read out the text



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Key conclusions (cont.)

- Positive impacts of globalization and trade liberalization on Asian and Pacific Cities
 - Manufacturing, logistical and financial global hubs
 - Job creation and poverty reduction
 - Creation of a globally connected urban middle-classes
 - Greater access to economic and social infrastructure services
 - Greater opportunities for social mobility

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Key conclusions (cont.)

- Negative impacts of globalization and trade liberalization on Asian and Pacific Cities
 - Increasing exposure to global shocks
 - Inability of governments to internalize social and environmental costs of rapid economic growth
 - Increasing depletion of already scarce natural resources and pollution
 - Increasing disparities within cities manifested by slums
 - Geographic disparities between rural and urban areas and mega-urban regions and small towns

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Key conclusions (cont.)

- Cities and towns of Asia and the Pacific are more vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters than cities in other regions
- The nature and extent of migration to cities was changing
 - International migration
 - Eco-migration
- More emphasis was needed to address the issues of social equity and poverty in cities

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Key conclusions (cont.)

- To address these challenges a holistic approach was needed that integrated social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development with resilience to climate change and natural disasters
- Increased coordination was needed between different government agencies and departments and between different levels of government as well as between government and other actors

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Key Recommendations

- ESCAP should establish a regional knowledge platform to collect, analyze and disseminate knowledge and good practices on inclusive and sustainable urban development;
- Promote research on urban issues, particularly linked to the preparation of the second *State of Asian Cities Report*;
- Convene multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral regional, sub-regional and national urban forums linked to ministerial dialogues or conferences;

The Fifth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum made the following recommendations for actions by ESCAP and its partners. Mr. Chung may wish to read out the text



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Key Recommendations (cont.)

- Organizes thematic policy dialogue on specific urban issues, such as
 - urban land management,
 - urban finance,
 - urban transport,
 - urban governance,
 - slum upgrading,
 - low-income housing, and
 - urban culture and social fabric

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Key Recommendations (cont.)

- Provide increased training and capacity development opportunities for national governments and other stakeholders;
- Explore setting up a regional alternative financing mechanisms for strengthening financing for sustainable urban development.

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