

## Media Release

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### **UN-Habitat to Launch the *International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning* and the *State of the Asian & Pacific Cities 2015 Report* in Sri Lanka.**

**23 February, 2016.** The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, will launch two major publications in Colombo, Sri Lanka - the ***International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning*** and the ***State of Asian and Pacific Cities 2015 Report*** on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

The global urban population has reached 3.96 billion in 2015, 54 per cent of the total population. By 2030, the urban population is expected to exceed 5.06 billion, close to 60 per cent of the global population. Governments will face major challenges in their planning and programming, in order to keep pace with this exponential growth.

The ***International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (Guidelines)*** have been produced by UN-Habitat and are designed to fill a critical gap by providing a reference framework for planning. The ***Guidelines*** will provide national governments, local authorities and planning professionals with a global reference framework that promotes socially inclusive and better integrated and connected cities and territories that will foster sustainable urban development that will be resilient to climate change.

The ***State of Asian and Pacific Cities 2015 Report***, entitled 'Urban Transformations - Shifting from Quantity to Quality' is the second in the series, first published by UN-Habitat and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) in 2010/2011. The report seeks to contribute to policy-relevant literature on the region's urban change. It highlights growing gaps between current urbanisation patterns and provides recommendations to shift to a more inclusive and sustainable urban future, in which the role of the region's cities is tied to national, regional and global development prospects.

The national launch of the two publications will be held at Water's Edge, Battaramulla on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016. The Hon. Patali Champika Ranawaka, Minister of Megapolis and Western Region Development will be the Chief Guest, while Hon. Sajith Premadasa, the Minister of Housing and Construction will be the Guest of Honour. Mr Yoshinobu Fukasawa, UN-Habitat's Regional Director, Mr. Srinivasa Popuri, Senior Human Settlements Officer, of the UN-Habitat Regional Office of the Asia Pacific, and Mr. Rafael Tuts, Coordinator, Urban Planning and Design Branch of UN-Habitat Head Quarters in Nairobi will participate at the event together with a number of Government officials, development and civil society partners.

A Panel discussion on the relevance of the guidelines in the Sri Lankan context will follow the publication launch. The panel will include Mr. Madhawa Waidyaratna, Additional Secretary to the Minister, Ministry of Megapolis and Western Development, Mr. Nayana Mawilmada, Director General, Urban Development Authority, Ms. Srimathi Weerasinghe, Acting General Manager, National Housing Development Authority, Ms. Ramani Ellepola, Environment Consultant to Megapolis Planning Project and former Director General, Central Environmental Authority and Dr. Bilesha Weeraratne, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies.

It is anticipated that the publications will contribute towards guiding Sri Lanka's future planning strategies to make cities more inclusive, productive and sustainable.