

Statement for the plenary session of the European Habitat Conference

16th March 2016

Dear Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Marc Calon, president **Housing Europe**, the European federation of social, public and cooperative housing. Our members provide housing to 11% of the European population.

Let me start with a sad reality:

There are **more people without a home today** in Europe than six years ago...

There are **not enough affordable homes available** in most European countries to meet the increasing demand... (State of housing report).

The new forms of migration as well as the continuing effect of the economic crisis in many member states will sustain this trend.

- Between and within continents
- Between and within countries
- Between rural and urban areas

Migration is here to stay as an effect of:

- Climate change
- War and authoritarian regimes

- Economic osmosis
- Demographic trends and shrinking areas

What do we need?

- A. More Housing from public, social and cooperative organisations
- B. Good public transport
- C. Liveable communities

More Housing requires:

- a. Strong political support to work together with stakeholders for more affordable housing
- b. Strengthen the institutions, regulation and framework that will deliver affordable housing
- c. Better financing directed towards sustainable and affordable housing in cities
- d. Better land use and spatial planning (including dedicated land use for affordable and social housing)
- e. A last point is that we need to work together with the construction costs by generating together innovations and new building and renovation concepts

To guarantee **liveable communities** where people feel secure and where they can reach their full potential we need to:

- Provide housing in an integrated manner: together with the provision of local services is key to guarantee safe, stable and liveable communities.

Good examples are integrated health services, education, debt prevention. But also direct measures such as district managers, prevention of vandalism, activate inhabitants to participate of in local activities and events.

To conclude,

I want to stress that in these unstable times people need a degree of certainty about their future. Current trends of reduced **employment stability, evictions and ghettoization** in our cities are detrimental for our societal development.

They want a good roof over their head, safety and liveable neighborhood.