

## Children and Youth Statement- UNHA2 {Delivered 8th June}

Thank you for the floor Mr.President,

Madam Executive Director, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

My name is Alphonse Muia from Kenya and I am delivering this statement on behalf of UNMGCY the formal youth engagement mechanism to the UN system broadly and by extension the global demographic at its radiant scheme of life.

At the outset, my delegation wishes to underscore the disproportionate role of urban centres in rolling back the triple planetary crisis.

Some of my colleagues and I here grew up in rural and urban settlements where waste management was a utopia due to the lack of municipal initiatives or even political will, exposing our people to numerous consequences affecting their quality of life, their health and their mobility. In the cities of the world, the mobilization of young people to the management of waste and creation of dignified settlements has often been remarkable, through initiatives of collection, local recycling etc.

Today, these actions are insufficient as large-scale political mechanisms and governmental actions are required to treat the cause of the problem but not the consequences only, because urbanization spurs a unique set of issues to both humans and their biodiversity. The promise of jobs and prosperity, among other factors, pulls people to cities. Half of the global population already lives in cities, and by 2050 two-thirds of the world's people are expected to live in urban areas. But in cities two of the most pressing problems facing the world today are poverty and environmental degradation.

In some areas, cities are grappling with a plethora of problems including waste-disposal, scarcity of human basic needs such as water, electricity and quality sanitation which are exacerbated by the increasing population density and demands of urban environments. Strong city planning mechanisms will be essential in managing these and other difficulties as the world's urban areas swell.

One of the commitments taken by the signatory states of the New Urban Agenda consists in and I quote:

“Ensure environmental sustainability by promoting clean energy and sustainable use of land and resources in urban development, by protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, including adopting healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature, by promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, by building urban resilience, by reducing disaster risks and by mitigating and adapting to climate change.”

At the Children and Youth Constituency, we believe that cities **MUST** move away from a growth-centric paradigm that is profit-centric to one that is people and planet centered, ensuring human rights and development within planetary boundaries. We request that this assembly strengthens the institutional linkages between the New Urban Agenda and

Meaningful Youth Engagement in the localizing process of our common sustainability agenda.

I Thank you!