



Statement by Minister of Internal Affairs, Honorable Boutu Bateriki
Second UN-Habitat Assembly
5-9 June, 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya

Your Excellency, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director for UN-Habitat,
Head of States

Honorable Ministers,

Distinguished participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

I bring warm greetings to you from the people of Kiribati, the President and the Government and the President of Kiribati on whose behalf I am honored and delighted to address this assembly.

In Kiribati we begin all formal addresses by conferring blessings of peace and security on all those present, so I would like to start by saying – **KAM NA BANE N MAURI** – meaning ‘may you all be blessed’

Your Excellency, Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

Kiribati is very privileged to participate in this Second UN-Habitat Assembly and I express my gratitude for extending the invitation to my Government.

It is gratifying to see that the arrangement for this Assembly in particular the agenda has allowed the Member states to interactively and constructively deliberate on the activities of UN-Habitat including coordination matters, progresses made for the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

development, dialogue on the Special theme of this Second UN-Habitat Assembly, UN-Habitat's strategic Plan and other matters that are of relatively important to be considered in this Assembly.

The UN-Habitat Assembly is a very significant platform bringing together representatives from member states, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to discuss and formulate strategies for the sustainable urbanization of the world. It is also a great opportunity for us to deliberate on ways forwards and make further decisions in respond to what we have encountered in relation to Urban crisis. In light of this, Ms Chairlady, I therefore would like to congratulate everyone especially those who have put in their effort making this assembly a success.

Your Excellency, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

Kiribati is a very small island nation, with a total population of 119,438 according to the 2020 census. It has 3 urban councils and 20 island or rural councils. As a small island developing state, we continue to face serious challenges posed by climate change as well as the growing urbanization mostly in the capital city of South Tarawa causing the proliferation of informal settlements, squatters and the frequent dispute over land. All these challenges are creating pressures on our land use and security challenges that continue to undermine our efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Your Excellency, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

I wish also to reiterate the government strong support and commitment to the resolutions recent meetings on Climate changes, Urban Crisis and the endorsement to the UN-Habitat Strategic plan 2020-2023 at the first session in 2019.

However, Your Excellency, I wish to share few progresses made since the UN-Habitat Assembly convened in 2019 that also contributes to accelerating the implementation of the New Urban Agenda;

1. The completion of the Kiribati Development Plan 2020-2023. This is a national blueprint document that guides the national government interventions and to implement the Kiribati 20 Vision, a national overarching plan for a period of 20 years.
2. Completion and approval of the Kiribati National Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy (KNWMRRS) – the document set a roadmap to guide where Kiribati is heading to on waste management and pollution control
3. Completion of the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (2019-2028)
4. Development of the draft South Tarawa Informal Settlement Upgrading Strategy under the PSUP III – The plan is developed to improve the lives of informal settlement dwellers. It is a 10-year plan and will soon be endorsed. This has also contributed to the implementation of the existing Kiribati National Urban Policy.

Your Excellency, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

Despite all these achievements, the Government continues to face challenges in terms of the financial and technical support. But, we believe that working together and strengthening partnership after this assembly is of paramount.

To conclude my remarks, I wish to affirm our support from Kiribati towards the implementation of the new UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2024-2027 at the local level and to ensure the objectives and decisions of this meeting are met and that our theme to **“A sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism: achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in times of global crises”** were achieved.

I thank you all (Kam rabwa).