



## PRESS RELEASE

### The Urban Resource Center official opening and the Provisional Myanmar National Building Code handed-over to Ministry of Construction

**6 September 2013, Yangon** – Urban Resource Center was officially opened by H.E. Dr. Win Myint, Union Deputy-Minister of Construction in the premises of Department of Human Settlements and Housing Development, Ministry of Construction in Yangon.



*H.E. Deputy-Minister of Construction, Dr. Win Myint and H.E. Madame Katja Nordgaard, Ambassador of Norway together with representatives from Myanmar government ministries, members of the diplomatic corps, UN agencies and international NGOs - at the official opening of the Urban Resource Center and the handover of the Provisional Myanmar National Building Code (MNBC).*

The Urban Research and Development Institute (URDI) was officially inaugurated in January 2012 as a result of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Ministry of Construction and UN-Habitat in September 2011. URDI functions as a think tank in areas of urbanization, urban

development, housing and disaster risk reduction providing policy advice, capacity development and urban research.

In an event held at URDI on 6 September, 2013 a copy of the Provisional National Building Code for Myanmar was handed over to the Deputy Minister for Construction Dr Win Myint, while the Urban Resource Center under URDI was jointly inaugurated by the Deputy Minister, the Ambassador of Norway to Myanmar H.E. Madame Katja Christina Nordgaard and the UN-Habitat Country Programme Manager for Myanmar Mr. Bijay Karmacharya.

The event was attended by representatives from government ministries and agencies, members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of UN agencies, international NGOs and well wishers.

In his keynote speech at the event, H.E. Dr. Win Myint addressed the importance of urban development in Myanmar during a time of immense change and emphasized the importance of the comprehensive urban development initiatives that are currently underway. “Urbanization as a physical and economic phenomenon will be a key factor in determining the quality and speed of economic growth of Myanmar and the importance of the collaboration between the Ministry of Construction and UN-Habitat which aims at offering technical assistance to the Ministry for possible responses to challenges Myanmar will encounter on the path to modernization and development”, he said.

H.E. Madame Katja Christina Nordgaard also commented on the importance of urban policy development and the necessity of strategically planned urban development. “URDI has played and the newly opened Urban Resource Center will play a substantial role in knowledge transfer”, she underlined.

Mr. Bijay Karmacharya, Country Programme Manager of UN-Habitat in Myanmar, explained the collaborative initiative between the Government of the Union of Myanmar, the Ministry of Construction and UN-Habitat in technical assistance for policy and institutional strengthening.

The Country Programme Manager spoke on the inevitability of urbanization in Myanmar and the positive benefits to be derived from it. “The initiative was devised to ensure that the urban sector is all inclusive, environmentally sustainable and complementary to rural development”, Mr. Karmacharya said.

He also spoke on the successful formulation of the Provisional Myanmar National Building Code (MNBC), undertaken in partnership with the Myanmar Engineering Society (MES) and on the process of consultations with relevant national stakeholders and inputs from international experts to address disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation issues in the provisional code and the process ahead to improve the code and strengthening enforcement mechanism.

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