

TURKEY'S EXPERIENCE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Parliamentarians, as lawmakers, have an important role to play for sustainable urban development through influencing enacting laws and regulations, formulation and revision of laws and public policies.
- In order to address our housing problems, Turkish Parliament has enacted a number of legislation over the years.
- Our Constitution sets the basis of Turkey's legislative framework in the field of human settlements. According to our Constitution, "every citizen has the right to live in a healthy and balanced environment"
- Our Constitution also states that "The State shall take measures to meet the needs of housing within the framework of a plan considering the characteristics of cities and environmental conditions and shall support mass housing projects."
- Following the Constitution, 'Public Housing Act' and "Mass Housing Act" were enacted by the Turkish Parliament in 1981 and 1984 respectively.

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- Thanks to the Act of 1984 establishing Turkey's Housing Development Administration (TOKI) and the recent amendments made to the relevant laws, today, millions of Turkish citizens could become house owners who would not otherwise have an opportunity to own their home, or live in a neighborhood with modern schools, hospitals, libraries and business areas.
- Today through these legislation Turkey could be able to improve the living conditions of its citizens. TOKI has constructed over 400.000 houses in all over the country between 2003-2009. It means that 15 cities with a population of over 100.000 are built. These houses are for small budget and poor households as well as for slum dwellers.
- The enactment of the "Energy Efficiency Law" is also worth mentioning in the context of our efforts for sustainable urban development. With this law, necessary measures have taken to control and reduce greenhouse emissions originating not only from transport, energy and industry but also from residential sector in order to increase energy efficiency and enhance energy saving.
- To my recollection, members of our Parliament have been quite instrumental in passing legislation in the field of human settlements and climate change in recent years. The recent example is the Kyoto Protocol. Environment Committee of the Turkish Parliament has been very active in increasing the awareness to the issue of climate change and has played an instrumental role in Turkey's accession to the Kyoto Protocol.