Country: Spain

Committee: UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)

Agenda Item: Environmental Problems Regarding Cities

UNEP committee, as the Delegation of Spain we are privileged to talk about the critical importance of addressing environmental problems in cities to ensure sustainable urban development and improve the quality of living standards for urban residents. As a nation with a significant urban population, Spain is committed to tackling environmental challenges in its cities and promoting policies and initiatives that foster resilience and sustainability.

Spain acknowledges that cities comprise less than 3% of the Earth's surface, on the other hand there is an extraordinary concentration of population, industry and energy use, leading to a massive local pollution and environmental degradation. In the cities, approximately 78% of carbon emissions are due to human activities. The ecological footprints of cities go far beyond their urban boundaries to forests, agriculture, water and other surfaces, which supply their residents so that they have an enormous impact on the surrounding rural, regional and global ecosystem.

Spain is also aware that rapid urbanization, population growth, and unsustainable development practices have contributed to environmental problems in cities, including inadequate water supply, wastewater, solid waste, energy, loss of green and natural spaces, urban sprawl, pollution of soil, air, traffic, noise, etc. All these problems are particularly serious in developing countries and countries with economic transition, where there is a conflict between the short-term economic plan and the protection of the environment.

Spain is pushing for the personality of integrated and holistic planning and management. We demonstrate the significance of encouraging for the growth of compact, walkable and transit-based environments that help to reduce the dependency on the private vehicles and the active choices like walking, cycling, and public transport are promoted. Spain also endorses the programs aimed at improving energy efficiency, fostering renewable energy sources and building green infrastructure in cities which is a step to cut back on environmental problems and increase the climate resilience.

Moreover, Spain acknowledges that community involvement as well as stakeholder participation in the community planning process is critical. We promote the empowerment of local communities, their civil society organizations, as well as other stakeholders, to contribute meaningfully in the designing, execution and monitoring of the urban environment policies and projects.

In conclusion, Spain affirms its agenda of eliminating urban environmental problems and invites members-states to pull their weight through the exchange of best practices geared towards promoting sustainable urban development on a global scale.

Sincerely,

Delegate of Spain