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DEAR ORGANIZERS, LECTURERS AND PARTICIPANTS OF THE EUROPEAN URBAN SUMMER SCHOOLS,

- > I would like to thank you for inviting me to attend the European Urban Summer School in Wrocław, which is co-organised by the UN-Habitat, the Faculty of Architecture of the Wrocław University of Technology and the Association of European Schools of Planning. I do welcome the fact that that this interesting event will bring together young urban planners from all across Europe. I very much regret that I will not be able to take part at this meeting but I would like to seize this opportunity and get some of my comments across to all those who are involved in this event.
- > The challenges regarding urbanisation in Europe and in the world as a whole require an international discussion. The activities and good practices, attained by local communities which thanks to decentralisation of powers can get actively involved in spatial planning and management processes, are worthy and need to be disseminated. Urbanisation in countries which are subjected to rapid social and economic changes creates new opportunities. Urban sprawl is not an adverse phenomena in itself. It is an inevitable trend in transition countries where people are eager to afford appropriate housing standards. So it can serve as an opportunity to build new towns, new urbanisation with high landscape standards and opportunities for human beings. That is why I think that cooperation between international urban planners can play a very special role in this regard. People who are involved in the spatial planning professionally are well aware that the urbanisation proces is inevitable. But they are also required to meet the imperatives of reasonable spatial management and sustainable development. Urbanisation shall always be seen as a human activity. Hence one can say that urban planners create the living environment for human beings as well as a space for social, work and leisure time activities, thus shaping the culture of human settlements. I am very delighted to welcome an initiative to share experiences between urban planners from all across Europe. It is also my sincere hope that this form of cooperation will be enhanced in the future. Let me also thank the UN-Habitat and co-organisers for promoting and preparing this event. I believe that the European Urban Summer School will create fully-fledged networks of contacts between young urban planners in Europe. I am hopeful that the participants of this meeting will serve as ambassadors of the new urbanism.

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