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English News

# 07 SEP IACSC 2016 FOCUSES ON PROSPEROUS URBAN LIVING IN THE 21ST CENTURY



USM, PENANG, 6 September 2016 - The UN-Habitat's State of the World Cities 2012/2013 Reported Prosperity of Cities specifically highlighted that the five pillars of a prosperous city are economic productivity; infrastructure development; quality of life; equity and social inclusion; and environmental sustainability.

This was mentioned by the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) Professor Dato' Dr. Omar Osman during his officiating speech at The 7th International Academic Consortium for Sustainable Cities (IACSC 2016) at USM recently with the theme of IACSC 2016 'Prosperous Urban Living' that aptly addresses the broad issues of urban studies, urban planning and urban health towards achieving prosperous urban living in the 21st century.

According to Omar, the conference also corresponds well with the recently launched 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the UN-Habitat, to be carried out in countries across the globe and it has been widely acclaimed that the 21st Century is the Century of the Cities thus, by 2050, it is estimated that nearly three-quarters of the global population will live, work and play in urban areas.



“Common problems associated with a high population growth especially in the context of developing countries are (a) land abuse and loss of productivity; (b) depletion of natural resources and conflicts arising over scarce new sources; (c) lack of food security leading to hunger and famine; as well as (d)



social, economic, and security crises and threats.”

“Hence, this conference provides an opportunity and a platform for all of us as citizens of the city to redefine and revisit our sustainable cities; exchange trans-disciplinary ideas; and seek plausible integrated solutions to complex urban problems, especially from an Asian perspective,” he said.

Furthermore he mentioned that, Asia is noted as the fastest-growing region in the world with over a billion people added to its cities, which is home to half of the world’s megacities and as the world becomes more urbanized, cities have become entangled in serious issues of resource depletion, unaffordable housing, traffic congestion, poor infrastructure, income inequality, poverty, disease and food insecurity.





"We at Universiti Sains Malaysia strive to be at the forefront of sustainable development and sustainable education in our mission to conserve and manage the city towards ensuring a sustainable and prosperous urban living," he emphasised.

Meanwhile, Chairman of The IACSC Secretariat and President of Yokohama City University, Dr. Yoshinobu Kubota said that, Yokohama City University will continue to support the organising of IACSC in the future and will extend the collaborations and network between all the parties involved.



"We hope that this partnership will continue and improve the quality and quantity of the work that all parties had done together," he said.

He further added that, our world today is undergoing the largest wave of urbanization and migration in human history and much of this urbanization is unfolding in Asia, resulting in marked transformations on the social, economic and environmental front.



"Whilst urbanization contributes to economic growth, it also spreads high incidences of poverty and income inequality," he said.

Also present at the event were The President, Malaysian Association of Local Authorities (MALA) Dato' Maimunah Mohd. Sharif; Dean, USM School of Housing, Building & Planning, Professor Dr. Aldrin Abdullah; Chairman of Organizing Committee of 7<sup>th</sup> IACSC Conference 2016, Associate Professor Dr. Azizan Marzuki; Executive Director for General Affairs, Department of International Affairs, Bureau of The City of Yokohama, Mr. Takahito Kosuge and the Head of USM Sustainable Tourism Research Cluster, Prof. Dr. Badaruddin Mohamed.

A total number of 33 papers would be presented in 3 parallel sessions during this one-day conference.

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