SDG Goal 11

I am Zakir Hossain, from Krisoker Sor (Farmers' Voice) today representing Asia Pacific RCEM (Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism). Thank you Chair for giving me the opportunity.

For the first time in history, there are more people living in cities than in rural areas. Each month, five million people are added to the cities of the developing world It is expected that by 2045, six billion people will live in urban areas. Today, 828 million people already live in slums. **Goal 11 on Urbanisation** is immensely cross cutting and touches on economic, social and environmental dimensions. An integrated approach is essential to the achievement of this Goal, not only across the 3 dimensions of sustainable development but also in linking to other goals such as on poverty eradication, food security, provision of key services such as health, education, water, and energy, climate change and disaster risk, decent employment and industrialisation, bio-diversity and so on.

We want to draw your attention to a few core issues that urban communities face on the ground. A key challenge that urban poor communities face is forced eviction, losing a secure living space that is key to the development process. Urban poor communities are looked at as second-class citizens and deprived of opportunities available for other citizen groups and informal residency status creates additional problem for them. They are also plagued by the systemic barriers such as land grab by state and FDI by corporations lead to extreme marginalisation. Available laws are not enforced especially those related to human rights, involuntary resettlement policy, and rights based housing policies. Eviction is also used as a tool in the name of development. In fact even SDG target 11.1 has been misused to grab land and force eviction. The right to shelter, along with other social services required to make human settlements resilient and sustainable are noticeably absent from SDG 11.

The rural sector has a major role to play in urban areas. The provision of food and industrial raw material remains important but rural to urban migration creates huge pressure on urban communities. But urban solutions that are sought are never connected to rural situations.

SDG 11.5 express the concerns of people affected by disasters, systemic barriers and mechanisms in th post disaster management express exclusion of the various communities who are already marginalized Evidence suggests that the impacts of disasters undermine hard-earned development gains in bot developing and developed countries, potentially dragging the poor and most vulnerable even deeper int poverty.

*We have **key recommendations** that came out of the Peoples' Forum. We urge governments to; adopt law with a human rights based development approach including on eviction; ensure visibility of urban poor and recognition as 'full citizens'; provide adequate opportunities to maintain sustainable living standards including access to employment and decent wage; provide social protection measures including universal access sexual and reproductive health and rights and child protection; extend participatory governance to all types of urban poor including participatory budgeting and community monitoring; and finally address root causes and push-pull factors behind rural-urban migration.*

We further emphasise empowerment of local authorities through regulatory and financial means to work and coordinate with civil society, communities and indigenous peoples and migrants in disaster risk management at the city level.

CSOs and governments together must spread more awareness about laws and rights of residents including legal aid, and jointly undertake urban studies on neighbourhoods, transform participatory planning principles into action planning level, and prompt local peer learning among local authorities. We must engage the academic and media communities to highlight identity related issues and the issue of economic, social and environmental aspects of urban injustice. We must promote the ways in which people themselves are taking action, create paths for communities to become the leaders of implementation of SDGs, and finally ensure that SDGs are implemented in a positive manner.