

# THE STATE OF **CHINA'S CITIES**

2012/2013



**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

 FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS

# THE STATE OF **CHINA'S CITIES** 2012/2013

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**国际欧亚科学院中国科学中心**  
The China Science Center of International Eurasian Academy of Sciences



**中国市长协会**  
China Association of Mayors

**UN HABITAT**  
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**Jiang Zhenghua**

Executive Chairman, International Eurasian Academy of Sciences  
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Urbanization is the inevitable trend of social and economic development, the momentum to promote further development and also an important symbol of the modernization of the country.

Since the reform and opening-up starting from 1978, China's urban residents increased by more than 500 million. Such a large scale rural-urban population movement was unprecedented, which not only changed the destiny of millions of Chinese peasants, but also became an important driving force of the rapid economic development.

In 2011, the urbanization rate in China exceeded 50% for the first time, which indicated the historical transformation of the social structure. From now on, China will be faced with big challenge in terms of overall planning for the urban and rural development, transformation of dual economic structure, realization of population migration from rural to urban areas, reasonable utilization of natural resources, enhancement of environmental protection, optimization of urban spatial layout, improvement of urban industrial structure, crossing the middle-income trap and promoting social equality and justice, etc.

Currently, China is at the new stage of rapid development. Globally, this kind of large-scale and high-speed urbanization is no parallel in history and, there is no experience we can directly apply in China as how to use the positive role of urbanization to its greatest advantages, eradicate or decrease its negative impacts and establish the urbanization pattern in conformity with the actual situations of China. China needs to define her own road map.

The Twelfth Five-Year Plan of China proposes that new ways shall be explored for the coordinated development of industrialization, urbanization and agricultural modernization with priorities focused on nurturing agriculture with industry, supporting rural areas with urban areas, bringing into full play the radiating and leading role of industrialization and urbanization for the increase of income for farmers, and strengthening the rural infrastructure and public service systems. China will rely on rapid and sustainable economic growth to create the opportunities for development and employment to the utmost, ensure the basic welfare and security for the public and the equal opportunities and impartial participation in the whole development process by the public of different social status and different social groups, and provide prospective vision and guidance to the economic and social transformation at appropriate time.

With the active support of the UN-Habitat, we compile the *English version of The State of China's Cities 2012/2013*. It will serve as an international platform to introduce and comment the urban development of China for the information of world countries. The presentation of the state, cases and data analysis of urban development in China will help the international community to share the experience and lessons, understand the urban-rural development blueprint of China more fully and objectively, and jointly seek a better and more harmonious future for the healthy development of urbanization.

I would like to strongly recommend *The State of China's Cities 2012/2013* to the readers around the world, the decision-makers of the cities, various social institutions and organizations of different fields and all our friends with their concerns over China's urban development.

August, 2012



**Qiu Baoxing**

Vice Minister  
Ministry of Housing and Urban-  
rural Development  
The People's Republic of China

The first English report of *The State of China's Cities 2012/2013*, as a collection of contributions from the China Science Center of International Eurasian Academy of Sciences, the China Association of Mayors and UN-Habitat released in two years ago, has received wide acclaim in the international community. The scheduled publication of this biennial report serves not only as an obligation but also an opportunity for China to provide a window for the international community to learn about urban development in China and a platform to facilitate the exchange between China and the international community.

*The State of China's Cities 2012/2013* has been completed and is ready to be released. The first report made a brief and comprehensive introduction to China's urbanization, housing, environment and infrastructure, social development and urban services, urban planning and management in the past 60 years after the New China was founded. The report enabled the international community to have a general understanding of the state of urban development in China. Starting from the second version, focuses of the report will go beyond the presentation of biennial urban development through official statistics, charts and pictures to further highlight special features of urbanization with Chinese characteristics and address interested issues such as implications of "special Chinese features," and innovations, challenges and countermeasures China has undertaken in its urbanization process. In my opinion, after over half a century of uneven development and through continuous practices and lessons learned, China has entered a new path of sustainable urbanization with its characteristics such as integration and coordination of urban and rural areas, interactive development between industries and cities, saving and intensive use of natural resources, ecological and livable environment, and harmonious development. Although there is much to be done to address numerous contradictions and problems ahead, clear direction and goals have been set for China's urbanization with its own characteristics. As long as we move forward unswervingly along this path, the urbanization with Chinese characteristics will see a brighter future.

As China is the largest developing country in the world, its healthy development of urbanization with Chinese characteristics will not only help promote the sustainable development and modernization in China, but also provide valuable experience of urbanization and modernization for developing countries, and make contributions to peace and development of the world.

August 17, 2012



**Dr. Joan Clos**

United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Today humanity has crossed a major historic milestone and entered a path in which cities have become the dominant habitat. The significance of the demographic and geographic transformation is quite profound for the future of humanity and the configuration and sustenance of the world as a whole.

Cities are human artifacts, shaped, steered and composed by engagements, transactions and interactions among people. They embody human creativity, vision, needs and desires, as well as tensions and compromises.

Modern cities are, unarguably, our engines of economic growth and wealth creation, as well as enduring human institutions for self-actualization through employment generation. They are configured to generate prosperity, provide opportunity, and increase access for all to the benefits accruing from urban transformation. However, when not properly managed, the manner in which this process occurs may well undermine the dynamism, equity and sustainability of the same prosperity. For instance, prosperity and poverty are now almost coterminous. Not only does poverty impede the realization of the full potential of cities, but it also weakens human agency, creating tensions and generating dysfunctions that can ultimately undermine the very basis of prosperity. While this interplay of prosperity and poverty defined in broad terms continues, human beings have to rise and find innovative solutions to all diverse challenges to their urban future.

As the foundations of the urban future are being built and consolidated, urgent steps are required to rectify past imperfections by recognizing fully that development is an evolutionary process with assignments that cannot be entirely resolved in one decade and by one agency acting alone. The urban future we envisage is one where economic growth and prosperity proceed with equity; human exploitation of the natural environment is carried on sustainably; and inequality and under-employment are attenuated by strong human-centered policies. To achieve all these, there is a need for collective response with concrete actions.

*The State of China's Cities 2012/2013* is a collection of contributions from UN-Habitat, China Science Centre of International Eurasian Academy of Sciences, China Association of Mayors and Chinese Society of Urban Planning. This publication captures new initiatives taken by the central and local governments of China to make the life of rural migrants equitable to those of urban residents in terms of security of employment, education, pension, medical care and housing; build 36 million flats for low income families in cities between 2011 to 2015; consolidate institutions for disaster reduction and prevention; expand poverty reduction programmes in rural China; and build and demonstrate low-carbon and ecological cities and communities. I am convinced that these policies and practices can provide useful knowledge to many growing cities around the world as they address their own urban challenges.

August, 2012

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\* The content of this Report only covers the Mainland China, does not cover Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR and Taiwan

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