



Speech Minister of Housing, City and Territory of the Republic of Colombia, Jonathan Malagón

- His Excellency Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia; His Excellency Dr. Basuki Hadimuljono; Indonesian Minister of Public Works and Housing; The Honorable Tri Rismaharini, Mayor of Surabaya, Indonesia; Mr. António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations; Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat; Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing; Honorable Juan Camilo Valencia, Ambassador of Colombia in Indonesia; Ms. Martha Delgado, host of the Global Observance of World Habitat Day 2019 and Under Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights; Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Representative of the Economic Commission for Asia Pacific; I send you a warm greeting, as well as to all the attendees who are accompanying us virtually or in person in this wonderful event.
- Today, on World Habitat Day, it is a source of great happiness and pride for Colombia to receive the recognition of the “Scroll of Honor”, the highest award in terms of housing and urban development policies. Undoubtedly, this distinction - which the National Government obtains for the first time in history - is a valuable recognition of both a comprehensive, equitable and efficient housing and habitat policy, as well as an innovative and timely management of the emergency caused by the Covid-19 in terms of housing, habitat, drinking water and basic sanitation.
- Colombia's public housing and habitat policy has been designed in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda and has achieved a robust institutional framework over time. Last week, we celebrated 9 years of existence as an independent Ministry of Housing and although it is one of the youngest Ministries in Colombia, in almost a decade we have achieved great results, such as reducing the housing deficit by more than 4 percentage points, assigning more than 600 thousand subsidies for the purchase of housing and giving access to drinking water for the first time to 6.8 million Colombians, just to mention a few achievements.
- In addition, through this policy, we ratify President Iván Duque's commitment to move towards a country with greater equity, where we leave no one behind and guarantee a better quality of life for all Colombians through housing solutions and worthy habitats.
- In terms of equity in housing and habitat policy, we have also made great strides in these two years of government. In the first place, while between August 2016 and August 2018 30% of the subsidies were assigned to the most vulnerable households, in recent years we have managed to raise this percentage to 65%. In addition, we designed a mechanism based on an alliance between the National Government and private sector companies to increase the amount of the subsidy for lower-income families. Lastly, we are providing comprehensive assistance to all Colombians, regardless of whether they live in rural or urban areas or whether they require a new home or a home improvement. Thus, thanks to subsidies from the National Government, 76 thousand families fulfilled their dream of owning their own home and more than 337 thousand families have benefited from qualifications, housing or environment improvements.



- This recognition, in addition to making us feel proud of the work done so far, motivates us to continue working to develop more actions that improve the quality of life of citizens.
- We understand that the effectiveness of policies requires the articulation of the public sector, the private sector, citizens and multilateral and international organizations, so that working together is essential to achieve the proposed goals. This premise becomes especially important in a situation like the current one. Together we will not only get through this episode, but we will come out stronger.
- Although we must continue to be physically separated, today more than ever is the time to integrate, to remain interconnected. For this reason, from the Presidency of the Forum of Ministers and Highest Authorities of Housing and Urban Planning of Latin America and the Caribbean MINURVI, we will continue to identify and promote good practices that allow the implementation of the new urban agenda, through reflection and coordination regional. I would like to take advantage of this space and convey a message of appreciation and gratitude to UN Habitat for the support received so far in our region. The Government of Colombia will continue to strengthen collaboration and strategic alliances between MINURVI and UN-Habitat, in a common effort to strengthen regional public goods for the benefit of our urban communities.
- I thank once again UN-Habitat and everyone here for this recognition. From the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory of Colombia we will continue to promote public policies that transform lives, we will continue to contribute to the dissemination of good practices in the region and we will continue to advance towards a Colombia with greater equity and social justice. Thank you very much.