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PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Global Report on Human Settlements 2013 – Planning and Design for Sustainable Urban Mobility

New York, 23 September 2013: UN-Habitat has launched its biannual flagship report, the *Global Report on Human Settlements 2013 - Planning and Design for Sustainable Urban Mobility* at a press conference in New York in the run up to the United Nations General Assembly.

Current urbanization patterns are causing unprecedented challenges to urban mobility systems, particularly in developing countries. The report calls for a paradigm shift to understand the role of transportation within cities. Cities need to envisage their long-term futures, crafting visions that are eventually articulated into spatial plans and specific-land use initiatives. Mobility is not just about developing transport infrastructure and services, but about overcoming the social, economic, political physical barrier to movement. The purpose of ‘transportation’ and ‘mobility’ is to gain access to destinations, activities, services and goods; access is the ultimate objective of all transportation.

The *Global Report on Human Settlements* provides an up-to-date assessment of conditions and trends in the world’s cities and other human settlements. These reports are essential tools and references for researchers, academics, planners, public authorities and civil society organizations around the world.

The theme of this year’s publication, Planning and Design for Sustainable Urban Mobility, is also the topic of this year’s World Habitat Day, celebrated annually on the first Monday of October to reflect on the state of human settlements and sustainable urbanization.

Speaking at the launch, UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos said, “Urbanization is growing very fast particularly in developing countries, where populations and number of motorized vehicles are rising at rates where urban infrastructure investments are unable to keep pace. This report will serve as a starting point to guide local authorities and other stakeholders to address the challenges faced by urban transportation systems all over the world.”

As the United Nations Human Settlement Programme, UN-Habitat is the United Nations agency for sustainable urban development. UN-Habitat is working in human settlements throughout the world, focusing on building a better future for developing villages, towns and cities of all sizes, which are most in need to support in guiding the process of urbanization.

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