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## **Over US\$152 million raised for urban Sustainable Development Goals at first UN-Habitat Assembly**

**NAIROBI, 29 May 2019** - Over 100 delegates attended a Partnership and Pledging Conference at the first UN-Habitat Assembly. More than US\$152 million in contributions and commitments were announced to finance UN-Habitat's work to support implementation of the urban dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 11 to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Commitments were made by 38 governments, 10 local governments, and 32 other organizations including seven companies in a show of commitment for achieving urban related SDGs.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat, outlined the Agency's Strategic Plan aimed to help countries reduce spatial inequality and poverty, enhance prosperity of cities, strengthen climate change action, improve the urban environment, and mitigate and respond to urban crises.

She said that the Plan would be guided by the principles of social inclusion and human rights for all including women, children, youth and older persons, the disabled, and other vulnerable groups. She added that one of UN-Habitat's roles would be as a centre of excellence, providing a point of reference on data, norms, standards, legal frameworks, policies, strategies and urban innovations.

Representing the European Commission, Mr. Lars Gronvald from the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development said that unlike before, sustainable urbanization was now at the forefront of the European Commission's development strategy, because of its linkage to the transformation of society and sustainability. He stressed the need for different types for partnerships to implement the urban agenda. The European Commission is a lead donor, and supports major urban programmes carried out by UN-Habitat.

The importance of regional partnerships was highlighted by MINURVI's President and Housing Minister of Costa Rica, Ms. Irene Campos Gómez. The work done by the inter-governmental ministerial body covering 35 countries in Latin America includes data collection, capacity building and implementation of pilot programmes. She underscored the importance of preferential loans combined with capacity building to allow local and national governments to implement projects.

Meanwhile, Mr. Naser Adel Khraibut, responsible for Planning and Design for Housing Welfare in Kuwait outlined the country's partnership with UN-Habitat in Kuwait, and the wider Middle East region on urban policy and planning, capacity building and knowledge exchange. In addition to urban programmes, Kuwait supports major rehabilitation programmes Iraq, Syria and Yemen. He concluded by sharing a proverb from Kuwait: "If a village collaborates, it will never be afraid", urging all to be part of the solution.

From Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where the current population is fifty times that of 1972, Mayor Armand Roland Beouinde highlighted the need for integrated development encompassing security, housing, health, mobility, land security, waste management, environmental protection and equitable access to urban social services. His city promotes the use of local materials and appropriate technologies to support urban development. He said the will to mobilise resources, tools and capacity building is important for managing emerging cities. He added UN-Habitat is an important partner for local governments.

The private sector plays an important role in providing technologies for sustainable urbanization. Microsoft's Alexandre Pinho, Global lead for the United Nations at Microsoft outlined the company's partnerships with the United Nations and other development actors. The company has moved from providing resources through corporate social responsibility to strategic partnerships to ensure fit for purpose use of technology. He highlighted the role of cities as important hubs of opportunity and where the digital dimension is critical in planning innovative and sustainable urban development. He concluded by saying: "Start with the outcomes and then build the partnerships you need to create larger impact".

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Norway, a lead supporter for UN-Habitat's normative work, urged other Member States to provide core funding for predictability and flexibility to fund new priorities and to facilitate cooperation with different partners.

Sweden urged prioritization of UN-Habitat's normative mandate, noting UN-Habitat's role in providing knowledge, evidence, tools, policy advice and technical support so that actors can improve their capacities to address a myriad of urban challenges and opportunities within their local contexts. A new global multi-year agreement was confirmed to be announced in due course.

South Africa, which also pledged support, said it would continue to champion UN-Habitat's work in areas such as slum upgrading, urban and territorial planning, and urban safety.

Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), a global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development, underlined the importance of bold and innovative leadership in the management of this transformational process, UN-Habitat's continued engagement with local authorities and encouraged Member States to increase financial and technical contributions to support UN-Habitat's programme of work.

UN-Habitat's host country, Kenya, pledged increased support for UN-Habitat's work. The country has also provided significant support for the UN-Habitat Assembly.

Other countries that spoke in favour of partnerships for sustainable urbanization and announced financial support at the Conference included China, Colombia, Republic of Congo, France, Gambia, Germany, India, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Senegal, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland.

In conclusion, Ms. Sharif said: "Given the milestones reached so far, the commitment shown at the Partnership and Pledging Conference, and the progress made at the UN-Habitat Assembly, I have absolutely no doubt that together, as partners, we can raise the necessary funds to help us achieve the Sustainable Development Goals".

The UN-Habitat Assembly, in session at UN-Habitat's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, from 27 to 31 May 2019, has attracted over 3,000 delegates from all over the world, including Heads of State and Government from Fiji, Kenya, South Sudan and Yemen, ministers and representatives of national and local governments, civil society, NGOs, businesses, academia, and other United Nations agencies.

Key meetings during the Assembly include a high-level dialogue on the theme of ***Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities***, a Ministerial Roundtable, a Mayors' Forum, a Business Leaders' Dialogue, meetings on women and youth, participatory slum upgrading and innovative urban mobility, among others. The latest innovations in sustainable urbanization are showcased by over 90 exhibitors at the Urban Solutions Exposition while over 80 side events by partners from all over the world present best practices, innovative urban solutions, experiences from successful urban programmes and inclusive partnerships for sustainability.

The UN-Habitat Assembly was established by the General Assembly in its resolution on 20 December 2018 on strengthening UN-Habitat. It is the highest-level decision-making body focused on sustainable urbanization and human settlements and has universal membership of all 193 United Nations Member States who together, will frame the global urbanization agenda, an important agenda given that the world's urban population is expected to nearly double with 68 per cent of the global population living in urban areas by 2050.

UN-Habitat's focal point role on sustainable urbanization and human settlements within the United Nations System to support implementation, follow-up to and review of the New Urban Agenda, has been recognized by Member States. UN-Habitat has been asked to lead on a United Nations System-wide strategy on urban and continue generating

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evidence-based and practical guidance for implementation of the New Urban Agenda and related dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In response to this call, UN-Habitat is presenting its Strategic Plan for 2020 – 2025 to the Assembly, which gives strategic guidance to the organization. The results-driven plan, which requires estimated funding of US\$1.9 billion over six years, focuses on four major domains of change: **(1)** reducing spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban rural continuum; **(2)** enhancing shared prosperity of cities and regions; **(3)** strengthening climate action and improving urban environment and, **(4)** effective urban crisis prevention and response. It is hoped that its implementation will help realize the vision of a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world.

**List of development partners providing contributions and pledges**

<b>GOVERNMENTS</b>
Bahrain
Barbados
Benin
Cameroon
China
Republic of Congo
Czech Republic
Egypt
Finland
France
Gambia
Germany
India
Israel
Italy
Japan
Kenya
Republic of Korea
Kuwait
Libya
Malawi
Mauritania
Morocco
Netherlands
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<b>Private Sector</b>
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Cyberview Sdn
Doppelmayr
Microsoft
National Oil Company
Wanxiang and Xinchao
<b>Civil Society</b>
Global Environment and Technology Foundation
University of Durham
University of Warwick
<b>Local Authority</b>
Agència Catalana de Cooperació al Desenvolupament
Alcaldia De Cali
Junta de Extremadura
<b>Inter- Governmental Organization</b>
Adaptation Fund
Cities Alliance
Islamic Development Bank
Peace Building Fund
Somalia Humanitarian Fund
Syria Humanitarian Fund
<b>UN Agencies</b>
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
UN Environment (UNEP)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur
United Nations Water Inter Agency Trust Fund

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