

**Video message by the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohammed**  
**Partner and Pledge for Sustainable Urbanization**  
**2 December 2020**

President of the UN-Habitat Assembly Ms. Martha Delagdo Peralta  
Ms. Maimunah Mohhamed Sharif Executive Director of UN-Habitat  
Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am pleased to add my voice in solidarity to the partner and pledge for sustainable urbanization with UN-Habitat.

Today 55% of the world's population lives in urban areas. A proportion that is expected to increase to almost 70% by 2050. As recognized during the last United Nations conference on housing and urban sustainable development Habitat III, the mandate of this organization is more important than ever. We must heed the call to work together with all stakeholders to make cities more inclusive, prosperous, green and resilient. The global pandemic has put a bright spotlight on the urgency to address inequalities and sustainable development challenges in cities.

By leveraging cities as innovation hubs and creative solutions we can build back a more just, equitable and greener recovery to improve the quality of life for all. The solutions to the world's most pressing challenges; from the pandemic to climate adaptation to equity and inclusion start in cities to make sure that no one and no place is left behind.

Recovering better will demand putting in practice the New Urban Agenda agreed at Habitat III. UN-Habitat cannot do this alone, its role is a catalyst for sustainable urban development requires genuine collaboration, partnership and investment. I call on member states to support this effort to emerge stronger from this crisis and accelerate progress in our urban settlements during this decade of action.

As you know well the SDGs will be won or lost at the local level. Our actions must align with this reality. I know of the importance of this work firsthand. Just two weeks ago I visited UN-Habitat's work in GaMashie near Ghana's capital in Accra. I saw the reality of overcrowding, the lack of services in these informal settlements and the real impact of UN-Habitat's work in changing young people's lives.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme provides opportunities for community leadership, youth engagement and long term economic viability. During the COVID-19 response UN-Habitat worked with the community and authorities to expand water and sanitation, reinforce measures to prevent the spread of the virus and improve livelihoods in the community, strengthening resilience and reducing urban poverty.

UN-Habitat is committed to helping strengthen capacities of national institutions so they can take advantage of urbanization. This supports the sustainable development goals. I saw the results of this work in the faces of all those that I met, young and old.

Today's objectives are quite clear. We are asking member states to pledge support for sustainable urbanization through advocacy to build strong ownership and strong commitment to sustainable urbanization, through partnership to leverage financing to achieve the urban SDG targets and through funding to provide financial support for the core mandate of the organization and to lead and to bring public and private partners together to deliver the New Urban Agenda 2030.

I urge member states and other funding partners to contribute to UN-Habitat's financial targets of 205.9 million dollars of which USD 10 million is core non earmarked funds and USD 195.9 million is for global thematic and country programmes. We look forward to working with all member states and stakeholders to accelerate action on the ground towards sustainable and resilient urban areas that can continue to propel inclusive growth and development.

Thank you for your commitment and your continued support.