



Interfaith Dialogue in line with the High-Level Meeting on the New Urban Agenda

Multi-religious and Multi-stakeholder Collaboration for the Advancement of New Urban Agenda: How Far Have We Come? Where to Next?

Purpose

As the UN General Assembly meets to discuss the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda on 28 April 2022, it is timely to reflect on the fruitful partnerships between urban-relevant organisations such as UN-Habitat, and faith-based organisations. This meeting provides a space to acknowledge and consider past and recent developments and to share ideas for working together in the future.

Details

Date: 26 April 2022

Time: 9 -10 30 EST

Venue and Format: In-person and hybrid Zoom dialogue. Physical location booked is the Church Center for the United Nations, 777 UN Plaza – 8th Floor (corner of 44th Street and 1st Avenue), New York, NY 10017

Organiser and Dialogue Co-Leaders: World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) and *Religions for Peace*.

Partner: UN-Habitat

Registration Link https://religionsforpeace.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_B1U2fTa9RGyqS-RVy6dPag

Background

Urbanisation is a major force in the 21st century. While occupying only 2% of the total land area, it was noted in 2016 that cities were responsible for 70% of GDP, over 60% of energy consumption, 70% of greenhouse gas emissions and 70% of waste globally. With continued urbanisation, these percentages are growing. At a global level, the increasing impact of cities has been reflected in frameworks for sustainable development. Global conferences, Habitat I in 1976, Habitat II in 1996 and Habitat III in 2016 have each produced guidance for urban development in the following years. After Habitat I the intergovernmental body was created which developed into today's UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme which was mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. From Habitat III came the New Urban Agenda, an action-oriented document which sets global standards of achieving the urban Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 11), and rethinks the way we build, manage, and live in cities.

SDG 11 aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. This requires a high level of participation from all groups in our urban areas. Religious institutions, faith leaders and Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have played an increasing role in the urban dialogue, with significant events including the first Faith-Based Urban Thinkers Campus in 2017. This gathering

produced the historic “Singapore Declaration,” a multi-faith statement acknowledging the necessity of faith-based perspectives, and working relationships with faith-based organizations, for the success of the New Urban Agenda. FBO’s increased their presence at the 9th World Urban Forum, and at the 10th World Urban Forum FBOs hosted a formal networking session. In the period since WUF11 several organizations have been working on forming an international, representative, specialist urban expertise multi-faith body capable of being a valuable religious partner to UN-Habitat (and other international organizations) on issues pertaining to urbanism.

Relationships between UN entities and faith actors are growing as there is increasing recognition of the role that faith-based communities have to play in sustainable and inclusive development. With many faith-based communities holding values that align with the aspirations of the New Urban Agenda, there is much potential for continuing collaborations in urban development.

Goals and Outcomes

How far have we come?

1. Provide a brief overview of faith actors’ perspectives and contributions to the implementation of the NUA from Habitat III to the present.

Where to next?

2. Provide a forum for religious institutions, faith leaders, and FBO’s to express their goals, intentions, plans, and projections for their contributions implementing the NUA and/or advancing SDG11 and related SDGs.
3. Provide a forum for faith actors to express the challenges and barriers they have achieving #2.
4. Provide a forum for faith actors to express the solutions they have to achieve #2.
5. Collect, analyse, and report back to the FBO urban community the information shared in this dialogue for the purposed of advancing the individual and collective work of FBOs implementing the NUA and SDG11.
6. Use the report in #5 to design for WUF11 a follow-up dialogue that will further advance FBOs urban work, including, potentially, next steps in the formation of an international, representative, specialist urban expertise multi-faith body that can work with UN-Habitat, UNEP, and other UN agencies and international bodies.

Themes the side-event contributes to:

"Inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities" (Multi-Religious collaboration places an emphasis on inclusiveness and through social capital helps providing opportunities);

"Environmental sustainability and resilience" (community building is also a focus point of Faith-Based initiatives which is ground for resilience); and

“Sustainable urban economic development”.

Contact persons:

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Programme

Introduction and welcome	Facilitator: TBD	5 mins
Speaker 1: Introduction and welcome	Andre Dzikus, UN-Habitat	5 mins
Speaker 2: Introduction and welcome	Chris Elisara, WEA	5 mins
Speaker 3 Introduction and welcome	Azza Karam, Religions for Peace	5 mins
Speaker Topic Expert: Framework	FBO Representative	10 mins
Speaker: Perspective	Representatives from 6 FBOs	30 mins
Q & A/ Discussion		25 mins