

Speech of the UN-Habitat Executive at the Commonwealth of Nations Event

Date: 27 October 2021

Good morning, Good Afternoon and Good Evening to friends, partners and colleagues throughout the Commonwealth of Nations. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to support this momentum call to action on the eve of the United Nations Climate Conference. COP26 will be taking place in Glasgow, in the United Kingdom and I feel privileged to be able to highlight how central Sustainable Development Goal 11 is to the aspirations of all of us as we work towards a better urban future.

Colleagues, as you know 65% of the 169 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals are attributable to urban and territorial development. As the United Nations Secretary-General said, urbanisation is an unstoppable mega-trend. I am very impressed with the leadership of the Commonwealth of Nations for the leadership in making urbanisation a force for good. Without equitable and inclusive human settlements, we will miss the opportunity to develop a ‘whole of society’ strategy and action plan to ensure no one and no place is left behind in our urban world.

Let me acknowledge the Declared Actions made by our Commonwealth partners at the 10th Session of the World Urban Forum in Abu Dhabi in February 2020. I am very impressed by the tireless efforts to fulfil the promised actions despite the disruption and continuing fallout of COVID-19. Your continued commitment in the past two years has laid the foundations for a new social contract to ensure we put adequate housing, integrated planning and the localisation of actions as the basis in the fight for climate resilience.

Finally, let me share with you that UN-Habitat is with the Commonwealth of Nations and we applaud the advocacy, action-oriented approaches and spirit of togetherness that is the bedrock of multilateral efforts to create a better tomorrow. Let me also thank His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, for his global leadership, the world is finally catching up with his way of thinking about sustainability and leaving no one behind.

Thank you!