

Secretary General's Foreword



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In 2016, the international community adopted the New Urban Agenda to harness the power of sustainable urbanization to achieve our global goals of peaceful, prosperous societies on a healthy planet.

Despite progress since then, the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises have posed huge challenges. Urban areas were particularly hard hit by the pandemic – underscoring the importance of stepping up efforts to build a more sustainable and equitable urban future.

Local is the space where we connect the dots. Cities and towns can spearhead innovations to bridge the inequalities gaps, deliver climate action and ensure a green and inclusive recovery from the pandemic – especially as the proportion of people living in urban areas is projected to grow to 68 per cent by 2050.

The *World Cities Report 2022* stresses that building resilience must be at the heart of the cities of the future. The success of cities, towns and urban areas will largely depend on policies that protect and sustain all, leaving no one behind. We need green investment for sustainable patterns of consumption and production; responsive and inclusive urban planning; the prioritization of public health; and innovation and technology for all.

These steps will help cities adapt and respond to shocks and stresses and lead our world to a resilient, just, and sustainable urban future.