

Speech at the Ministerial Roundtable at COP27 in Sharm-el-Sheik, Egypt**Date: 17 November 2022**

Distinguished delegates,

The world population passed 8 billion this week. Growing urbanization coupled with economic development and rising prosperity, is driving-up greenhouse gas emissions. The very future of human settlements hang in the balance.

By 2050, towns and cities are expected to grow by 2.5 billion people, raising the urban share to 68% of the global population. Groundwater depletion, food shortages, sea-level rise, extreme temperatures, and the increased frequency of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts and storms, affect city infrastructure, the livelihoods and health of all residents.

Climate Change combined with the other big three Cs including Covid, Conflict and the crisis of Capital, is taking an extraordinary toll on cities and the most vulnerable populations in our human settlements. We have been saying for years, that cities cannot deal with the climate crisis alone.

I am therefore extremely pleased that we are coming together in this first ever Ministerial Meeting on Climate and Urbanization at COP27. We need to develop the global multilevel climate change response to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. I am glad to know that 40 Housing and Urban Development Ministers have registered for this event.

National governments have increasingly integrated urban and local climate action into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). What we need now is local action and as co-chair of the Secretary-General's Local 2030 Coalition, UN-Habitat stands ready to support Member States and local governments work better together.

Evidence-based decision making is more critical than ever, we are thus grateful for the outstanding work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in highlighting the need for urban action. A special report on Cities and Climate Change will be prepared by the IPCC in the next Assessment Cycle, and we rely on your collective support for it to be prioritized.

We look forward to meeting you again at the UN-2023 Water Conference in New York in March 2023. UN-Water Action Agenda provides the opportunity for our common agenda on sustainable cities and communities to leverage water to improve climate change resilience. We need better infrastructure and services, better public health and new ways to raise financing to achieve equitable urban development in our cities.

Over the last six months, the COP27 presidency, with the support of UN-Habitat, and the facilitation of ICLEI as the custodian of the Local Government and Municipal Authorities Stakeholder constituency, the UNFCCC has developed an extraordinary partnership process with more than 150 registrations. We hope the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the next Generation (SURGe) initiative will provide the platform for further collaboration, with a very strong view towards accelerated climate change adaptation and mitigation action.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the COP27 Presidency and the Ministry of Housing of the Arab Republic of Egypt for their leadership, and thank them for convening this important meeting, and thank you for being here. We are looking forward to continuing this journey together, at the upcoming UN-Habitat Assembly, at the UN-2023 Water Conference and ultimately to the World Urban Forum in Cairo in 2024, where we can all commit to declared actions to localise and mainstream climate action. I hope these Ministerial Meetings will continue at COPs every year.

Thank you.