



United Nations Habitat Assembly ends with the decision to prioritize housing

Nairobi/Kenya (9 June 2023) – The second United Nations Habitat Assembly adopted a historical resolution on “Affordable Housing for All”. The Member States have agreed to renew their call to prioritize adequate housing and view housing as a human right for the first time since 1948 when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted.

“Delegates of the Assembly recognized that the global housing crisis affects all and is present in all regions of the world,” said the Executive Director of UN-Habitat Maimunah Mohd Sharif. “Almost all countries are struggling to ensure their citizens have access to affordable and adequate housing. Globally, 1.6 billion people continue to live in inadequate shelter. We must act now to create a better urban future for them.”

According to the resolution, an open-ended intergovernmental working group will be set up to convene Member States to study the provision of affordable housing. The resolution recommends setting up a platform to collect, consolidate and compile housing data to better understand the housing needs and existing gaps as a basis for relevant solutions.

In its second session from 5 to 9 June 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya, the United Nations Habitat Assembly, the highest legislative body on urbanization and human settlements matters, adopted ten resolutions, a set of five procedural decisions, and a Ministerial Declaration.

The resolution on adequate housing was championed by Kenya, Bahrain, France, Jordan, Egypt, Pakistan, and USA.

Other adopted resolutions included:

- international guidelines on people-centered smart cities; France, Germany, South Korea, Pakistan, Botswana and Israel.
- accelerating transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030; South Africa, Botswana, Peru, Costa Rica and India.
- World Cleanup Day; Estonia, Sweden, Colombia, Botswana, Georgia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Ukraine, Pakistan, Türkiye, Nigeria, Qatar and Bahrain.
- biodiverse and resilient cities; Costa Rica, Colombia, Singapore, Germany, Ecuador, Botswana, Peru, Uruguay, Pakistan, Estonia and Chile.
- enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience; Group of African States and Pakistan
- localization of SDGs; Brazil, Egypt, Spain, Malaysia, Italy, Portugal, Peru, Finland, Botswana, Sweden, Chile and Ecuador



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- urban planning and sustainable infrastructure; Group of African States and Pakistan.
- creation of a human settlements resilience framework; Group of African States and Pakistan.
- equitable financing and effective monitoring of the implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly; Group of African States and Pakistan.

Delegates agreed to extend the mandate of the current Executive Board and Bureau of the Assembly by two years until 2025 to align with UN-Habitat's other governing bodies.

Delegates also agreed to extend the current strategic plan until 2025. The resumed second United Nations Habitat Assembly will take place on 29-30 May 2025.

The assembly concluded with a Ministerial Declaration reaffirming the important role of UN-Habitat as the United Nations' focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements.

Ministers responsible for cities and human settlements, together with stakeholders, welcomed multilateral efforts to accelerate the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals and reaffirmed their commitment to the New Urban Agenda and its implementation. The declaration further states their deep concern about the multiple crises and acknowledges the importance of local action for tackling global challenges.

About the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UNHA2)

The [second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly](#) was held from 5 to 9 June 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya. The theme of the session was "A sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism: achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in times of global crises."

The United Nations Habitat Assembly is the global authority on urban trends and policies. It convenes once in four years. 193 UN Member States have voting rights, while delegates also include non-Member States, other UN bodies and specialized agencies, as well as intergovernmental organizations, civil society, private sector, academia and research institutions, women, youth and children, and grassroots organizations.

President of Kenya, William Ruto, opened the second United Nations Habitat Assembly. On the second day of the Assembly, on 6 June 2023, the First Lady of Kenya, Mama Rachel Ruto, held the first-ever First Ladies Roundtable to discuss the role of women in cities and communities.

About the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

[UN-Habitat](#) is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries that support policymakers and communities to create socially



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and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action.

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