



United Nations Habitat Assembly of the
United Nations Human Settlements Programme
Second session
Nairobi, 5–9 June 2023

Draft ministerial declaration

A sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism: achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in times of global crisis

1. We, the ministers responsible for cities and human settlements, gathered for the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), being held in Nairobi from 5 to 9 June 2023, together with representatives of local authorities, international organizations and other stakeholders, recognize that urbanization constitutes both an opportunity and a challenge with respect to achieving sustainable development in times of global crisis.
2. We acknowledge the leading role played by the Assembly in global urban policymaking that provides us with an opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda¹ and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, principally Goal 11, by making cities and other human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
3. We recognize that inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable human settlements enable the formation of strong social networks and civic engagement, leading to shared prosperity and environmental protection for current and future generations. Cities hold most of the world's population, and, when well managed, are major sources of Member States' gross domestic product, shared prosperity and solutions for addressing climate change through mitigation and adaptation at scale and tackling biodiversity loss, pollution, desertification and drought, among other challenges.
4. We reaffirm our commitment to the New Urban Agenda and its implementation plan, including our commitment to urban and rural development that is people centred and protects the planet and is age, gender and disability responsive, and to the realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, facilitating living together, ending all forms of discrimination and violence, and empowering all individuals and communities while enabling their full and meaningful participation, and we pledge that no one will be left behind.
5. While we welcome multilateral efforts to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, we are deeply concerned by the multiple crises that threaten the very future of humanity and the fate of our planet. More people and places are being left behind with the ripple effects of various cascading shocks threatening communities globally. Inequality continues to deepen between and within countries and territories, with social and economic exclusion and spatial segregation often an irrefutable reality in cities and human settlements, thus lowering their resilience.

¹ General Assembly resolution 71/256 of 25 January 2017, annex.

6. We welcome the 2022 quadrennial report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda² and the continued support of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat to Member States, upon request, in monitoring and reporting on the progress of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. We acknowledge the importance of local action for tackling global challenges. We are convinced that expanding implementation of the transformative and inclusive approaches and solutions provided under the Agenda will support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.
7. We welcome the holding, in April 2022, of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to assess progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.
8. In addition, we welcome the Sharm El-Sheikh Implementation Plan³ as adopted at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, recognizing the role of cities in addressing and responding to climate change, and we highlight the urgent need for cooperative action in this regard, within the mandate of UN-Habitat.
9. We welcome the discussions held at the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028 and are encouraged by the voluntary commitments set out in the Water Action Agenda, which will accelerate efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6, including by ensuring access to clean water and sanitation for all, taking note also of other water-related processes, such as the tenth World Water Forum, to be held in 2024.
10. We recognize the importance of aligning efforts at all levels, including through taking action-oriented measures to accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
11. We welcome the recommendation by the Advisory Committee, cited in paragraph 46 of General Assembly resolution 77/262 of 30 December 2022, encouraging UN-Habitat to continue to cooperate closely with the resident coordinator system and to explore opportunities for increased cooperation with other entities, and we welcome cooperation with other entities, including at the regional and subregional levels.
12. We commit ourselves to advancing multilateral engagement and international cooperation, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, to address the need for adequate housing, urban crises, Sustainable Development Goal localization and the importance of integrated urban development through inclusive urban and territorial planning, multilevel governance, urban climate change adaptation and mitigation, response to natural disasters, and sustainable finance approaches.
13. We therefore encourage Member States and other relevant stakeholders, including through inclusive and effective multilateralism and international cooperation, as appropriate, to:
 - (a) Explore mechanisms and platforms for advancing sustainable solutions to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living without discrimination and for ending homelessness;
 - (b) Explore just urban pathways for environmental action and sustainable consumption and production and ways in which integrated and participatory urban climate action, measures to curb waste and pollution, and biodiversity action can be strengthened through the relevant global, regional and local initiatives that enhance the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change;
 - (c) Promote inclusive urban recovery frameworks that empower cities to respond to natural and human-made urban crises and support national recovery efforts, considering that crises are increasingly urban and cities increasingly host those fleeing crises;
 - (d) Advance effective multilevel governance and promote integrated local and regional planning and investment, particularly to support small, intermediate and rapidly growing cities and contribute to the transformation of informal settlements and slums;
 - (e) Strengthen Sustainable Development Goal localization and empower local and regional authorities and governments as central actors to accelerate action towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda;

² A/76/639–E/2022/10.

³ Decision 1/CP.27.

- (f) Explore policies and initiatives for directing financial flows towards sustainable urban development, including at the local level;
- (g) Identify and promote engagement with key multilateral forums that could benefit from stronger engagement of cities and other forms of local and regional authorities and governments;
- (h) Promote people-centred smart city approaches by enhancing UN-Habitat's existing work on smart cities.
14. We agree that inclusive and effective action requires a multilevel, multi-stakeholder and multisectoral approach, with strong attention to data systems and knowledge for evidence-based policies and results monitoring, innovation, advocacy and communication, partnerships, capacity-building and digital transformation for accelerated progress.
15. We recognize the importance and growing uptake of the worldwide observance of Urban October, which starts on World Habitat Day and ends on World Cities Day, and commit ourselves to further strengthening mobilization and advocacy efforts in this regard.
16. We take note of the outcomes of the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum, held in Katowice, Poland in 2022, and look forward to actively participating in the twelfth session of the Forum, to be held in Cairo in 2024.
17. We commit ourselves to aligning the strategic planning process of UN-Habitat with the cycle of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to promote policy coherence across the United Nations system, by extending the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023 to also cover the period 2024–2025, and to convening, in 2025, a resumed regular second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly to adopt the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2026–2029.
18. We reaffirm the important role of UN-Habitat as the United Nations focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements, and the support provided by UN-Habitat to Member States, local authorities, members of civil society and the private sector in that regard.
19. We commit ourselves to strengthening UN-Habitat so that it can deliver effectively on its mandate by providing financial resources, taking into account the special interests and needs of developing countries, and by exploring innovative resource mobilization options, as well as by overseeing and providing strategic guidance for the Programme's normative and operational activities.
20. We welcome a commemoration in Nairobi of the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of UN-Habitat before the third regular session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly.
21. We call upon the Executive Director of UN-Habitat to follow up on progress in the implementation of the actions set out in the present declaration that fall within the mandate of UN-Habitat, as part of the overall follow-up of progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the strategic plan of UN-Habitat.
-