



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

PRESS RELEASE

Saudi Arabia, UN-Habitat sign Host Country Agreement to advance sustainable urban development

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 11 October 2023 – UN-Habitat and Saudi Arabia signed a Host Country Agreement today to advance the existing partnership and collaboration on sustainable urban development in the country. The Host Country Agreement will strengthen ongoing collaboration between UN-Habitat and Saudi Arabia in urban transformation, while expanding partnerships with stakeholders from the government, academia, civil society, and the private sector.

The signing ceremony took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Riyadh in the attendance of Ambassador Dr. Abdulrahman Al Rassi, Deputy Minister of Multilateral International Affairs, and Dr. Erfan Ali, Chief of Staff, UN-Habitat.

“The past period has witnessed an expansion of cooperation with the international community, especially United Nations organizations, and we hope for more joint and fruitful cooperation to support urban development efforts and transfer Saudi experience to countries around the world,” Dr. Al Rassi commented.

“We are proud to cooperate with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and hosting UN-Habitat in the Kingdom will strengthen the role of the Kingdom in the field of urban development at the regional and international levels, and will also contribute to supporting the implementation of the United Nations general framework of work in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” Dr. Ali stated.

Mr. Mohamed El Zarkani, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Saudi Arabia, Ms. Rania Hedeya, Regional Representative (a.i.), UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States and Ayman Elhefnawi, Country Manager (a.i.), UN-Habitat Programme in Saudi Arabia, also attended the event.

Since 2013, UN-Habitat has been supporting Saudi Arabia across various sectors to cultivate more liveable, sustainable and inclusive cities. This collaboration began with the Future Saudi Cities Programme and has since expanded to support Saudi Arabia's Development Housing Programme, urban transformation efforts, the ongoing urban regeneration initiatives in Saudi cities, and an innovative partnership with the Quality of Life Programme.

The signing of the agreement is important as Saudi Arabia undergoes a significant transformation in its cities to realize Vision 2030 and to advance the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This partnership will also amplify the global impact of Saudi Arabia's urban transformation efforts through various United Nations platforms and international forums, such as the World Urban Forum including its twelfth iteration in Cairo, Egypt, in 2024.

The collaboration between UN-Habitat and Saudi Arabia and the increased United Nations presence in Saudi Arabia serve as a pillar of support for this transformation, culminating in a comprehensive partnership with the Saudi government.

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 and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. For more information, visit <https://unhabitat.org/>

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