



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

World Urban Forum 12 (WUF12) unites global leaders to address urbanization challenges

Cairo, 29 October 2024 – The twelfth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF12), convened by UN-Habitat, is set to take place from 4-8 November 2024, under the theme **“It all starts at home: Local actions for sustainable cities and communities”**. This global platform will convene leaders, experts, and stakeholders to discuss and develop sustainable solutions for urban living, focusing on how housing and home environments play a pivotal role in resilient and inclusive cities.

WUF12 will feature a range of impactful dialogues, special sessions, and roundtables, with key global voices addressing the most pressing urban challenges of our time. These sessions will highlight innovative approaches to housing, climate resilience, urban governance, and inclusivity.

Key speakers and discussions

Housing our future: At the core of the Forum is the dialogue on housing and its transformative role in sustainable urban development. Key speakers include:

- **Jonathan Reckford**, CEO of Habitat for Humanity, addressing the global need for affordable housing as a path to sustainable urbanization.
- **Marie-Josée Houle**, Canada’s Federal Housing Advocate, discussing housing as a fundamental human right and the need for policies that ensure housing for all.
- **Thierry Fournier**, CEO for Southern Europe, Middle East, and Africa at Saint-Gobain, who will share insights into sustainable construction and urban infrastructure solutions.

This dialogue will focus on how cities can create inclusive and resilient communities through housing initiatives that prioritize social development and sustainability.

Cities and the climate crisis: This dialogue will bring together key figures in climate resilience and urban governance to explore how cities can adapt to the growing challenges of climate change. Speakers include:

- **Carlos Moreno**, International Expert on the Human Smart City, famous for developing the “15-Minute City” concept, will present strategies for building climate-resilient urban areas.
- **Yvonne Aki-Sawyer**, Mayor of Freetown, Sierra Leone, who will share her experiences in addressing climate change in one of Africa’s most vulnerable urban environments.
- **Eleni Myrivili**, Global Chief Heat Officer, UN-Habitat & Arsht-Rock Resilience Center, who will speak on mitigating the impacts of extreme heat in cities.

This dialogue will explore innovative climate adaptation strategies and the role of city leadership in fostering sustainable urban growth.

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Empathy in motion: Inclusive cities for all: Moderated by **Maruxa Cardama**, Secretary-General, Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT), this special session will focus on the importance of designing cities that cater to all residents, including marginalized communities and persons with disabilities. Key panellists include:

- **Milagros Costabel Bionda**, UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board.
- **Rushda Majeed**, Chief Programme Officer of the Van Leer foundation.

This session will explore how empathy-driven urban planning can lead to cities that are inclusive and accessible for all citizens.

Special session: Zero Waste World Moderated by Egyptian journalist **Shahira Amin**, this session will focus on innovative strategies for waste reduction and sustainable urban practices. Key participants include:

- **José Moller**, Founder and CEO of Algramo, who will discuss circular economy initiatives and how they can be applied to urban environments.
- **Manal Saleh**, CEO of the Egyptian Clothing Bank, sharing insights into sustainable practices in the fashion industry and their impact on urban waste management.

A platform for global urban Innovation

WUF12 will serve as a premier forum where global urban stakeholders collaborate to address critical urbanization challenges. With over 10,000 participants expected, this year's event will set the course for sustainable, inclusive, and resilient cities.

About the World Urban Forum

The World Urban Forum (WUF) is a premier international gathering organized by UN-Habitat since 2002. It is the foremost global platform for discussing the impact of urbanization on communities, economies, and the environment.

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