



## PRESS RELEASE

# UN-Habitat and the Slovak Republic partner to advance multilevel climate action and urban resilience

**7 November 2024, Cairo** – In a landmark agreement aimed at enhancing urban climate resilience and sustainable urban development, the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic and UN-Habitat today signed a Letter of Intent to operationalize the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) Initiative.

The Letter of Intent, signed by Deputy Prime Minister Tomáš Taraba and UN-Habitat Executive Director Anacláudia Rossbach, underscores the necessity of empowering cities and communities to collaboratively address the challenges of climate change and shape a resilient, just and sustainable urban future.

This partnership, formalized during the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum in Cairo, marks a crucial advancement in promoting multilevel climate action and fostering resilient, sustainable urban environments. With COP29 just a few days away, this new partnership links well to one of the core action agenda of this year's climate conference – multilevel and multisectoral climate action, critical to achieve the targets of the Paris Agreement.

Key activities will include the establishment of a SURGe Secretariat to oversee implementation, the expansion of collaborative partnerships, and the launch of a dedicated SURGe portal to facilitate knowledge sharing across various sectors.

Through these activities, both partners aim to provide technical support to Member States and bolster the capacity of local governments to implement integrated and cross-sectoral climate adaptation and mitigation strategies in five key areas: buildings and housing, urban energy, urban waste and consumption, urban mobility, and urban water.

"Through the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative, we're bringing together governments, local authorities, and partners to forge adaptable and sustainable urban environments," said **Anacláudia Rossbach, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat**. "The recent resolution from the UN-Habitat Assembly to operationalize SURGe marks a significant step forward. By establishing the SURGe Secretariat and supporting pivotal events, including the Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change, we are reinforcing our dedication to effective multilevel climate action and ensuring that our cities are equipped to face the challenges ahead."

According to **the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Environment of the Slovak Republic, Tomáš Taraba**: "Increasing the quality of life in cities is one of the main challenges of modern times, in particular in developing countries. Slovakia has experienced robust economic development in recent years and wants to actively share its experiences, but also become inspired and implement positive changes. At the same time, as a state directly neighbouring Ukraine, we are aware of the future need to support the development and reconstruction of habitats and territories affected by war."

This partnership is anchored in UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 2/5, which aims to strengthen the link between urbanization and climate change resilience. The resolution calls for implementing the SURGe initiative to improve climate action at all government levels. Key steps include creating a SURGe Secretariat, organizing Ministerial Meetings on Urbanization and Climate Change, and launching a SURGe portal to attract financial support, with the goal of raising USD 1 million per year.

### **About the SURGe Initiative**

SURGe is a COP27 Presidency Initiative dedicated to connecting the local, national, and global levels with the vision to achieve global climate goals by using effective multilevel governance to transform cities to be healthy, sustainable, just, inclusive, low-emission, and resilient urban systems for a better urban future for all. The SURGe Initiative has been developed under the leadership of the COP27 Presidency in collaboration with UN-Habitat and facilitated by ICLEI. It was officially launched at the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at COP27. It has been endorsed by 180+ global partners.

### **For further information:**

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