



PRESS RELEASE

World Urban Forum in 2026 in Azerbaijan to focus on housing

Nairobi, 30 May 2025 – The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) presented today the theme of the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13) to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 17 to 22 May 2026.

WUF13 will shine a global spotlight on the urgent need to address the global housing crisis and its central role in sustainable urban development through the theme: **“Housing the world: Safe and resilient cities and communities.”**

The announcement was made on the sidelines of the resumed second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly, convening 193 Member States of the United Nations, currently being held in Nairobi, Kenya.

“Established by the United Nations General Assembly as a non-legislative platform in 2001, the World Urban Forum facilitates inclusive dialogue among global stakeholders on pressing urban issues,” said Anacláudia Rossbach, Executive Director of UN-Habitat. “It is one of the largest UN platforms convening diverse parties to exchange, partner and act on priorities to promote sustainable cities and communities – in line with the priorities of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals – and is a truly transformative global urban coalition.”

“We are determined to work closely with a wide range of partners to make WUF13 in Baku a major milestone for the global housing agenda,” said Anar Guliyev, Chairman of the State Committee on Urban Planning and Architecture of Azerbaijan and WUF13 National Coordinator. “The year 2026 marks several important anniversaries for UN-Habitat and its partners: 50 years since Habitat I in 1976, which led to the establishment of UN-Habitat; 30 years since the landmark Habitat II conference in Istanbul in 1996; and 10 years since the adoption of the New Urban Agenda. This is a valuable opportunity to scale up our commitments, with WUF13 playing a central role in shaping the cities of tomorrow.”





Tackling the global housing crisis

With nearly 3 billion people today experiencing some form of housing inadequacy, more than 1.1 billion in informal settlements or slums, and over 300 million experiencing homelessness, the theme of WUF13 underscores the pressing need to realize the universal right to adequate housing.

Amid deepening climate risks, heightening urban crises and widening inequalities, WUF13 will explore how housing can drive inclusion, equity and climate resilience. The Forum will highlight practical solutions that connect housing to broader urban systems, including integrated planning, climate adaptation, land and tenure security, inclusive governance and locally driven action.

As the world reaches the midpoint of the New Urban Agenda, WUF13 is set to play a key role in shaping global discussions and will contribute directly to the 2026 UN Secretary-General's quadrennial report on its implementation.

About the World Urban Forum

Established in 2001 by the United Nations General Assembly, the World Urban Forum is the premier global conference on sustainable urbanization, designed to examine the impacts of rapid urbanization on cities, communities, economies, and climate change. Since its inception, WUF has been hosted in 12 cities across the world, with the first session held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2002. The last session of the World Urban Forum (WUF12), which took place in 2024 in Cairo, Egypt, gathered over 25,000 attendees from 182 countries and culminated in the [Cairo Call to Action](#) – a global roadmap for sustainable urban transformation.

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries supporting 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. To know more, visit unhabitat.org or follow us on social media @UNHABITAT.

Media contacts for more information





The resumed second session of the
United Nations Habitat Assembly

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UN-Habitat Media Team
unhabitat-media@un.org

World Urban Forum Secretariat
unhabitat-wuf@un.org

