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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

PRESS RELEASE

UN-Habitat inaugurates its Canada office in Montreal to support adequate, climate-smart housing solutions

Montreal, Canada, 18 September 2025 – UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, launches its new Canada office in Montréal, marking the Organization's first presence in the country and the sixth UN organization to establish an office in Montreal.

The team of nine professionals is growing to support UN-Habitat's mission to promote inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements. In line with the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2026-2029 adopted in May by UN Member States, the office will work on four key areas:

- **Resource mobilization** – Acting as a catalyst for new partnerships and financing, with a strong emphasis on supporting global housing and urban initiatives;
- **Research–Policy–Action** – Leveraging Montreal's ecosystem of universities, think tanks, and research institutions to bridge evidence-based research with policymaking and practical implementation with UN-Habitat's regional and country offices worldwide;
- **Advocacy and communication** – Amplifying Canadian and North American leadership in advancing adequate, affordable, and climate-smart housing worldwide;
- **Advancing sustainable urbanization multilateral agendas** – Supporting Canada and North America in addressing housing challenges, homelessness, and climate resilience in global processes, aligning with UN-Habitat's global mandate.

The new office is funded with the financial support of the Government of Canada and the Government of Québec as administered by Montréal International, along with a partnership agreement with the City of Montreal.

UN-Habitat also intends to position Montreal and other Canadian cities to play a key role in shaping the future of sustainable urban living, particularly through partnerships within the French-speaking world.

"Advancing sustainable, inclusive and resilient urban development demands strong leadership and expertise, all of which can be found in Montreal," said **Anacláudia Rossbach, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat**. "Today, we face a global housing crisis affecting nearly 3 billion people. Tackling these challenges requires collaboration at the global, regional and local levels. The new office will help bring a unique perspective on housing and urban issues and will strengthen partnerships to help shape a better urban future for all."

Montreal, a world-renowned hub for United Nations offices

The new UN-Habitat Canada office strengthens Montreal's reputation as a hub for international organizations in sustainable development, joining a growing ecosystem of more than a dozen players focused on green finance, biodiversity and other related areas.

It also reinforces the city's status as a host of UN offices, joining five UN agencies based in Montreal that play a key role in developing multilateral relations: the International Civil Aviation Organization, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Refugee Agency, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

The inauguration was celebrated with an official event at Montreal's City Hall in the presence of Valérie Plante, Mayor of the City of Montreal, Gregor Robertson, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure, and representatives from the Ministry of International Relations and La Francophonie, along with representatives from partner organizations.

"By supporting initiatives that leverage innovation to build a more sustainable future, our government is reaffirming its commitment to make cities greener, more resilient and more inclusive. Our funding for Montréal International to open the UN-Habitat office in Montreal is a good example of this. This new office will help position the metropolis and Canada as leaders in the fight against climate change and in the shift to a more sustainable economy. Congratulations to all the partners on such a promising achievement for the future," said **Mélanie Joly, Member of Parliament for Ahuntsic–Cartierville, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions.**

"Our government is proud to support this initiative, which strengthens an already rich ecosystem of international organizations. It reflects recognition of Quebec's expertise in sustainable urban development. This new office will contribute to synergy between local and international players, while strengthening Quebec's position on the international stage," said **Christopher Skeete, Minister of International Relations and La Francophonie, Minister Responsible for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers and Minister Responsible for the Fight Against Racism.**

"My administration is proud to have provided Montreal with an enhanced position on the global scene with this new UN-Habitat office. This recognition reflects our city's leadership when it comes to sustainable development, urban resilience and social innovation. It highlights our efforts to build greener, more supportive and more inclusive living environments. With this new office, which joins the International Sustainability Standards Board and the UN Biodiversity Secretariat, Montreal confirms its role as a global hub for solutions to the major urban and climate challenges of our time," said **Valérie Plante, Mayor of the City of Montreal and President of the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal.**

"UN-habitat stands as a global leader in sustainable urban development. The expertise it will cultivate in Montreal, particularly in issues such as access to housing, will serve as a vital asset to our city, joining a strategic ecosystem of international organizations, academic research institutes, investors, and startups committed to advancing climate solutions. Furthermore, the establishment of this new office reaffirms Montreal's status

as a key destination for multilateral organizations addressing global challenges,” said **Stéphane Paquet, President and CEO, Montréal International**.

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About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is the United Nations entity working for sustainable urbanization. With programmes in over 90 countries, it supports policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in urban areas through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. To know more, visit unhabitat.org or follow us on X @UNHABITAT.

About Montréal International

Montréal International (MI) is a non-profit organization funded by the private sector, the governments of Canada and Québec, the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal and the City of Montréal. Its mandate is to attract and retain foreign investment (companies and startups), international organizations, skilled workers and international talent to Greater Montréal by providing support services tailored to their needs.

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