

Global Observance of the Annual World Cities Day 2020

Introduction

The United Nations has designated every 31st of October as World Cities Day (WCD). UN-Habitat is the coordinating agency in the United Nations system to organize the annual Global Observation of World Cities Day, together with the host city. UN-Habitat is inviting cities to express their interest in hosting the global observation of the 2020 World Cities Day.

World Cities Day was established on 27 December 2013 by the General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/68/239, in which the General Assembly “decides to designate 31 October, beginning in 2014, as World Cities Day, invites States, the United Nations system, in particular UN-Habitat, relevant international organizations, civil society and all relevant stakeholders to observe and raise awareness of the Day and stresses that the costs of all activities that may arise from observing the Day should be met from voluntary contributions”.

The WCD has been strongly supported by the People’s Republic of China through the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the Shanghai Municipality.

Background

WCD is expected to promote the international community’s interest in global urbanization, push forward cooperation among countries in meeting opportunities and addressing challenges of urbanization, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world.

The general theme of World Cities Day is *Better City, Better Life*, while each year a different sub-theme and a location for its global observance is selected, to either promote successes of urbanization, or address specific challenges resulting from urbanization.

The first global celebration of the World Cities Day was in Shanghai, China on 31 October 2014, under the sub-theme *Leading Urban Transformations*. In 2015 it was celebrated under the sub-theme *Designed to live together* in Milan, Italy; in 2016 *Inclusive Cities, Shared Development* in Quito, Ecuador, in 2017 *Innovative Governance, Open Cities* in Guangzhou, China and last year in Liverpool, United Kingdom emphasizing the sub-theme *Building Sustainable and Resilient Cities*.

The sub-theme for the World Cities Day 2019 is *Changing the world: innovations and better life for future generations* and will be held in Ekaterinburg, Russian Federation. This World Cities Day will focus on galvanizing discussions at all levels of government and relevant stakeholders on how to implement concrete initiatives to improve urban governance in the context of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Concept

The main objective of WCD is to raise international awareness of urbanization trends, challenges and visions for sustainable urban development, to promote international cooperation and make contributions to the global efforts in building equitable, prosperous and sustainable cities and improving people's living environment and quality.

World Cities Day is an advocacy event for UN-Habitat and the host city and country. It is a public event to be held in an open space – if security allows – around the selected sub-theme to raise awareness with as wide a range of partners as possible. The public should be involved as much as possible through the media, including social media, television, radio, the press and banners placed in designated places.

Participation

UN-Habitat will take the lead in inviting and mobilizing the United Nations system, relevant international organizations, civil society and all other relevant stakeholders to observe WCD, with the assistance and the financial contribution from the host of the Global Observance and other partners. The host may also invite other stakeholders in the region, such as Ministers and Mayors. For this purpose, the invitation letter could be signed jointly by UN-Habitat and the host city.

Financial contribution

To host the Global Observance of the WCD in 2020, a cash contribution of 300,000 USD to UN-Habitat is required. The contribution will serve for the planning, mobilizing stakeholders, travel, outreach activities, website, social media, design, communication, editing, programme development, operations support, reporting and evaluation. Ultimately it will support the overall advocacy and communication of World Cities Day within the framework of the Urban October in various regions of the world. The details on commitments, roles and responsibilities, will be outlined in a legal document which will be signed by all parties involved.

Additionally, the host city is required to provide an in-kind contribution of: the venue with its facilities; exhibition space; services; security within the city, around and within the venue; interpretation from English to the local language or other languages of high-level speakers; operational and logistical needs with respective human resources and international travel and local costs for key delegates from least developed countries (for information see Annex 1).

Selection Process and Criteria

The selection will be made by an UN-Habitat Committee. The selection of the global host for World Cities Day will be guided on the following basis:

- Demonstration of good practice in the general theme of World Cities Day
- Geographical balance
- Demonstration of ability and financial commitment to meet the conditions outlined in (5) above and provided in more detail in the attached World Cities Day hosting guide
- Experience of hosting international events and/or have planned events relevant to cities
- Accessibility of the city for international delegates

Theme

The general theme of World Cities Day is Better City, Better Life, and the sub-theme will be agreed upon between UN-Habitat, the host city and relevant parties. The sub-theme is to promote or address issues on sustainable urbanization.

Activities

Activities to be undertaken in the Global Observance shall be developed on the availability of human and financial resources from the voluntary contributions. UN-Habitat will provide advocacy tools and kits on the website to maximize the outreach activities for other participating cities around the world in order to have a common branding and messaging of the theme and subtheme for the 2020 WCD. Details of planned activities in other cities will be uploaded on the designated website as information becomes available. A detailed plan on responsibilities of UN-Habitat and the host will be provided well in advance.

Timeframe

The closing date for receiving the Expression of Interest is 11 November 2019. The table below outlines important milestones and dates.

Milestones	Date
Call for Expression of Interest open	30 August 2019
Deadline for receiving Expressions of Interest	11 November 2019
Outcome of selection process is communicated to the cities	25 November 2019
Legal Agreement finalized	20 January 2020
Announcement of the 2020 WCD Global Observance host city with its sub-theme	At WUF 10, February 2020

Expression of Interest to host the 2020 WCD Global Observance

A city wishing to express its interest to officially host the Global Observance in 2020 of the WCD is required to send an official communication (on letter head and with signature), reflecting within the commitment of the cash contribution of 300,000 USD to UN-Habitat, addressed to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif.

The official communication is to be transmitted within the deadline via the following email address:
unhabitat-wcd@un.org

Kindly note that any submission for the call for Expression of Interest not on official letterhead and duly signed or received after the deadline will not be considered.

Annex 1

Hosting the World Cities Day 2020

The specific responsibilities of UN-Habitat will be as follows:

UN-Habitat will designate a focal point to work with the local focal point and organizing team.

UN-Habitat shall provide the necessary backstopping and support to ensure the successful hosting of the events by undertaking the following responsibilities:

1. Advice and support to operations and logistics

- Give guidance to the host on the preparation of WCD;
- Assist with invitations of international guests;
- Support logistics and travel arrangements relating to invited and sponsored international guests from outside the host Country;
- Handle online registration of international participants;
- Engage with the City to agree on venue and setting up of the same according to requirements;
- Shipment of information and promotional materials to the venue;
- Maintain the database and disseminate all international invitations.

2. Invitations

- Invite high-level representatives of the United Nations system and relevant international organizations; civil society; representative of Member States, Mayors and other relevant stakeholders;
- To invite representatives of the diplomatic community to the host Country
- To disseminate all international invitation letters, which could be jointly signed.

3. Publicity

- Prepare on-line information kits and branding tools, a World Cities Day concept note, relevant Statements, design posters and banners, invitation letters, the programme of the day;
- Provide information to Governments and other stakeholders on the theme and location of WCD by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat;
- Advertise WCD Global Celebration events around the world through all available means, including targeted newsletters, social media and internet adverts;
- Prepare and disseminate press releases and bring the Event to the attention of the international media;
- Develop a dedicated WCD page on the UN-Habitat website in English.

4. Programme

- Guidance on the main programme for the Global Observance of World Cities Day;
- Guidance on the programme of side events/workshops/break out session at venue on the day, or if applicable in the period leading up to and immediately after World Cities Day.

UN-Habitat shall invite United Nation officials, Mayors outside the host country and internationally recognized organizations and experts, representatives of foreign missions and other partners, in close collaboration with the City, to the Event. The City shall invite, in close collaboration with UN-Habitat, the highest possible representative from the host Government and Representatives from Ministries responsible for various aspect of urbanization e.g., Ministries of Local Governments, Housing, Infrastructure, Urban Development, Regional Planning and Environment, local experts, among others, to the event.

Where possible, invitation shall be done through a joint invitation letter by UN-Habitat and the City with the provision of the electronic signatures for strictly this purpose only. The parties will consult and agree on whether the electronic signature of the Mayor of the host City will be provided to UN-Habitat, or the signature of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat will be provided to the City for purposes of signing the joint invitation letter.

The specific responsibilities of the City will be as follows:

1. The City will designate a focal point and organizing team who will be working with UN-Habitat;
2. The City shall provide UN-Habitat with the list of international participants whom the City wishes to invite to the event for onward dissemination by UN-Habitat;
3. The City may invite all identified personalities, i.e. Mayors or experts from the host City to attend the event while sharing the contacts with UN-Habitat;
4. The City shall provide UN-Habitat with a total amount of US\$ 300,000 (United States Dollars Three Hundred Thousand) 30 days after the Legal Agreement has been finalized;
5. The City shall provide all required logistical and IT services and cover all local costs related to the preparation and organization of the WCD;
6. The City shall, at no cost to UN-Habitat, provide the necessary material and logistical support, including printing of merchandise, printing of badges, provision of photographers and videographers for the event;
7. The City shall, at no cost to UN-Habitat, provide the necessary premises for the Event and related activities, which shall take place at the host City, including the conference and workshops rooms, working areas, office space and equipment, media rooms and press conference room;
8. The City shall ensure stable Wi-Fi connection at no cost throughout the venue, including all premises dedicated to the Event, for all participants and provide internet high speed LAN connection to also enable linking to other locations to the world via the internet for live transmission. It further shall make arrangements to provide free interpretation services (including equipment) to all meetings of the Event in at least the two working languages of the Event, that is, English and local language if different from English and add, as appropriate, for the opening/closing sessions, other United Nations Official languages or other language(s) that may apply in case of high level attendance from such country;
9. The City shall work in partnership with UN-Habitat in all aspects towards the realization of the Event and will provide at no cost to UN-Habitat a venue for the celebration of the Global Observance of World Cities Day with the following facilities:
 - Main hall for the celebration of the Global Observance with sufficient seating for invited guests, a raised podium for speakers and for the presentation of awards;
 - At least two to four rooms for technical discussions and side events at the venue, if this is included in the day's programme. One of these events will be the presentation of best practices by award winners;

- Press conference room;
 - Photography and video coverage of the event and other bilateral meetings of the Executive Director;
 - Space for the Exhibition;
 - Registration and information desk;
 - An office for the UN-Habitat Executive Director for bilateral meetings set-up with executive furniture (desk, swivel chair, sofa set/chairs, coffee table) for meetings with up to 6 persons including coffee/tea/snacks throughout being served;
 - A designated limousine with driver for the Executive Director throughout the duration of event;
 - An office for UN-Habitat staff (8 pax) with a large boardroom table;
 - An office for City and other staff;
 - Luncheon for invited guests to include award winners and international guests; and refreshments (e.g. water) during meetings; coffee/tea snacks during breaks;
 - Public Announcement system and equipment for Powerpoint, video presentations and Internet Connectivity in each room;
 - Interpretation facilities from English to local language if different from English and vice versa; and additional languages as by confirmed delegates;
 - World Cities Day branding throughout the venue and build as backdrop in the main hall and other rooms;
 - Ensure Security for delegates;
 - 5 flag poles with the provision of UN flag in addition to local City flag; Country flag may be added if a Minister from the host Country is in attendance.
10. The City shall provide adequate medical facilities with English/local language speaking personnel for first-aid in emergencies within the Event's area. For serious emergencies, the City shall ensure immediate transportation and admission to a hospital. All medical expenses incurred thereafter shall be borne by participants. UN-Habitat as an invitee to the Event shall not in any way be liable for any medical expenses of any participant;
 11. The City shall ensure the availability of adequate public or private transportation on a reasonable commercial basis for all the Event's participants and UN-Habitat officials to and from the airport before, during and after the Event, as well as to and from the principal hotels and the Event premises for the duration of the Event;
 12. The City shall ensure the availability of adequate hotel accommodation on a reasonable commercial basis for all the Event's participants;
 13. The City is committed to implementing the activities and providing the services outlined under the Agreement through its organizational structure and by using appointed professionals and in accordance with its specific needs as identified by the City;
 14. The City shall engage and provide, at its expense, the local staff required and volunteers, who will work in close collaboration with the staff of UN-Habitat and under the overall coordination of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat or persons designated by her;
 15. The City shall ensure that local staff shall be available for work throughout the entire period of the Event and, where necessary, before the Event;
 16. The City may put up street banners, and branding, at strategic locations within the city;
 17. The City may, at the request of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat or any person designated by her, arrange for additional numbers of the local staff as may be required by UN-Habitat.