

Press Release

Department of Transport of New York City and UN-Habitat Join Transportation Alternatives' "Bike Train" over the Williamsburg Bridge

New York, U. S. A., 18 July 2018 -- *Ride from Williamsburg to the United Nations highlights the role cycling can play in meeting modern urban infrastructure challenges – in New York City and around the world*

In coordination with the United Nations High Level Political Forum taking place in New York City this week, the Department of Transportation and Transportation Alternatives (TA) welcomed Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat, for a ride with the weekly Williamsburg Bridge "Bike Train." The Bike Train was created and is hosted by TA to address the challenges of the L train disruption scheduled to begin next April.

"We are thrilled to have Madam Sharif, a world leader in urban planning, join our ride this morning," **said DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg.** "Cycling is booming around New York City and around the world -- as more people discover a means of transit that it is affordable, carbon-free, healthy and fun. Speaking of fun, the 'Bike Train' has already developed into a great tradition that encourages cycling as inexperienced cyclists join experienced ones, which will be especially helpful when cycling triples over the Williamsburg Bridge -- as we expect when the L train tunnel closes next year."

"The New Urban Agenda being discussed at the UN this week provides a blueprint for actions to be taken by cities to make progress toward Sustainable Development Goals," said **Madam Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat.** "And the so-called Bike Train serves as a creative global model for community organization to increase cycling. I urge participants at the United Nations High Level Political Forum to look at the experience in New York City and consider adopting examples that are relevant to their context in their countries and cities."

She continued: "Transportation Alternatives and the Department of Transportation NYC have shown how collaboration between advocacy groups and city administration can result in more people friendly streets and public spaces. As we cycle on this route, we can see how New York City has translated its commitment to city-level Sustainable Development Goals into practical actions that create more livable, safe, and equitable communities."

Last week, New York City became the first city in the world to report to the United Nations on its progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals. "This voluntary reporting helps create a model for other cities worldwide to translate goals into actions, such as those we see embodied in protected bike lanes, traffic-calming treatments, pedestrian safety measures, and bike sharing systems here in Brooklyn and Manhattan," said Ms. Sharif.

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"We are pleased to cooperate with UN Habitat to help cities worldwide better understand how they can save lives, improve access to affordable mobility, and protect the environment through initiatives that adapt from best practices, just as New York has learned from other cities to accomplish what it has done in recent years with Vision Zero, where in four years, we have helped reduce traffic deaths by 28 percent and pedestrian deaths by 45 percent," said Commissioner Trottenberg.

"The Bike Train is a weekly showing of L Train commuters who are dedicated to building world-class streets when the L Train shuts down next year," **said Chelsea Yamada, Transportation Alternatives Manhattan Organizer.** "Transportation Alternatives and local advocates will continue to work with agencies to encourage top notch infrastructure, for biking, but also walking and riding the bus, so that our mass transit can keep up with changing demands."

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