



Abu Dhabi Signs Agreement with UN-Habitat to Host 10th World Urban Forum in 2020

UAE will be first Arab country to host landmark United Nations Forum

ABU DHABI, 17 October 2018: Today, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC) and the Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities signed an Agreement with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) for Abu Dhabi to host the tenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF10) in 2020. This will be the first time an Arab country hosts the landmark Forum.

WUF10 will be convened by UN-Habitat and jointly organized with the Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities, along with partners including the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism, Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and General Secretariat of the Executive Council.

Established in 2001, WUF is the world's premier gathering on urban issues. The Forum examines the impact of rapid urbanization and its implications for social, economic and environmental policies in communities, cities and towns. UN-Habitat, the convener of the Forum, is the United Nations focal point for sustainable urban development working for an inclusive and prosperous urban future.

The Forum will provide a platform to discuss 21st century city planning within a context of rapid development with specific cultural and demographic considerations. It will showcase the *Abu Dhabi Plan* through which the city aims realize its long-term sustainable development vision through concrete achievements that position the Emirate as a benchmark in a region with one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the world.

In the lead up to the Forum, the Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities will host the first Pan-Arab Urban Development Symposium in partnership with UN-Habitat in April 2019. Key decision makers, city authorities and urban experts from 22 Arab countries engaged in implementing the *New Urban Agenda* – to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, will be invited to exchange views and compare experiences about urban challenges facing fast-changing Arab cities.



H.E Mr. Falah Al Ahabbi, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities, said: “We are extremely pleased Abu Dhabi has been chosen to host the tenth session of the World Urban Forum, particularly as it marks the first time an Arab nation has hosted this global event. Abu Dhabi has already attracted international merit for implementing urban sustainability in innovative ways, having itself experienced a phenomenal shift towards urbanization in a relatively short space of time. This Forum provides an opportunity to showcase these achievements and Abu Dhabi’s role in promoting and implementing sustainable urban development as well as cementing our reputation as a global hub for innovation.”

“I would like to congratulate Abu Dhabi and commend the timely preparations and planning already underway by the city authorities and by the United Arab Emirates Government for this important event,” said UN-Habitat Executive Director, Maimunah Mohd Sharif. “Abu Dhabi, like so many cities in this region, is undergoing rapid and transformative urbanization and we commend the focus on sustainability shown by the Government. This open, inclusive Forum, with its high-level participation, is a unique opportunity to focus on how urban development can be implemented in a sustainable way around the world.”

H.E. Mr. Falah Al Ahabbi, added: “We are delighted and eager for the opportunity to discuss solutions that are being tested by pioneering cities around the world while also showcasing our city, country and renowned Emirati hospitality. Hosting the World Urban Forum in 2020 also provides the opportunity to celebrate our late Founding Father, His Highness Sheikh Zayed’s vision which put us firmly on the path to sustainable development, as well as recognising our young country’s achievements in what will be the 49th year since the union of our emirates”.

WUF10 will lead to new partnerships and actions to meet the challenges of urban areas. Key topics including human capital, resource management, education and culture, mobility, data and much more, will be discussed during the conference.

The Forum plays a key role in implementing the New Urban Agenda, a framework unanimously adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), laying out how cities should be planned and managed to best promote sustainable development. Abu Dhabi strongly supports the New Urban Agenda as it represents its own ideal for creating a sustainable Emirate by preserving and enriching its physical and cultural identity, while improving quality of life for all its residents. Abu Dhabi’s urban development vision encompasses four pillars: economic, social, cultural and environmental.



The Forum will bring together some 20,000 delegates from more than 150 countries. It will provide an opportunity to strengthen relationships and engagement and demonstrate the feasibility of incorporating sustainable and context based practices in developed and developing countries.

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About the Abu Dhabi Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities

The Department of Urban Planning and Municipalities (DPM) was established by Law No. 5 of 2018 and is the entity responsible for supporting the growth and urban development of Abu Dhabi Emirate. The expert Authority guides, regulates and monitors urban development activities, improves municipal work to provide comprehensive services and creates higher living standards for residents through the supervision and management of the municipalities and municipal councils.

The DPM ensures the use of best practices in all aspects of its business, and provides advice on urban development and municipal services, in line with the highest international standards. One of the DPM's top priorities is to fulfil the vision of H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, which draws on the vision of our UAE Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Abu Dhabi will host the 10th World Urban Forum (WUF10) in 2020. This will mark the first time an Arab country will host the landmark conference. In close collaboration with UN-Habitat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MOFAIC), the DPM will organize the conference at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC).

About UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is a United Nations programme working towards a better urban future. Its mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable cities and communities and provide adequate shelter for all. It works to ensure that cities become drivers of economic prosperity and social development for all.

UN-Habitat has 40 years of global experience in cities and human settlements ranging from working on the highest levels of policy to specific technical issues on the ground. UN-Habitat has gained universally acknowledged expertise in all urban areas and is the UN's focal point on urban issues.

For more information go to www.unhabitat.org