

Business Leaders Dialogue at the First Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly



26 May 2019 10:00–17:00



Conference Room 1

Innovating for cities and communities: How industry and investors are harnessing the true value of urbanisation to address the SDGs

With the adoption of the New Urban Agenda in 2016, sustainable urbanisation is now recognised as both a need and an opportunity for improved equality, prosperity, climate change action and resilience. Implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires collaborative action by all actors in urban development, and UN-Habitat is responding to this by ensuring high-level engagement with business, industry and investors in line with its new strategic plan.

In the leadup to the First Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly, UN-Habitat will convene a high-level Business Leaders Dialogue with leaders from business, industry, investment and start-ups together with local authorities. The dialogue will focus on the 'true value of urbanisation' and demonstrates the advantages of sustainable urban growth and development, and the proactive role to be played by the private sector.

It will be a powerful moment to inspire new approaches to multi-sectoral collaboration and foster a more dynamic relationship between all stakeholders in addressing global sustainability challenges. Contributors will include high-level global decision-makers, leaders, pioneers, innovators, investors, and representatives of subnational governments.

Traditionally, United Nations organisations tend to distance themselves from profit-seeking entities—often eschewing collaboration with businesses given their mandate from member states. This Dialogue sets out a new path—one which ensures the global business community can define their own role in advancing the concrete actions required to implement the New Urban Agenda and achieve the SDGs.

It will also provide the opportunity for UN-Habitat to more clearly define its own areas for collaboration with the private sector. Ultimately, it will explore opportunities to strengthen the investment climate together with central and local governments and define mechanisms to facilitate increased investments in urban related initiatives. The outcomes will help to define UN-Habitat's business engagement strategy and will help to facilitate further multi-sectoral collaboration opportunities.

This Dialogue is the third in a series of Global Strategic Dialogues: A two-day Dialogue hosted by the city of Mannheim, Germany on 25 to 26 March 2019; and the United Nations Roundtable on Sustainable Floating Cities: Exploring the Next Frontier for Human Settlements in New York on 3 April 2019.

By formulating its agency-wide strategy for engaging with business, industry, investors and start-ups through these dialogues, UN-Habitat will be better equipped to lead and convene urban development actors and decision-makers through multiple platforms, including the Tenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF10) in Abu Dhabi in 2020 and future global platforms.

Expected outcomes of the dialogue include:

- An understanding of how business, industry, investors and start-ups can support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda, and UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2025;
- Strengthened alignment facilitating improved collaboration among industry, investors and start-ups together with UN-Habitat, the UN system and other stakeholders identified;
- Consensus on an outcome document/communiqué on strengthening the role of business in sustainable urban development in partnership with UN-Habitat, other UN system organisations and stakeholders – to be shared at the UN-Habitat Assembly;
- Proposals for a UN-Habitat Business Network.

Schedule of the day

10:00 – 10:10 WELCOME

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| 10:10 – 10:15
Opening Statements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat Peter Munya, Cabinet Secretary, Trade and Industrialisation, Kenya |
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| 10:15 – 10:45
Opening Rapidfire Dialogue – Setting the scene | <p>Moderator: Axel Threlfall, Thomson Reuters Editor-at-Large</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bob Collymore, Chief Executive Officer, Safaricom Victor Kisob, Deputy Executive Director, UN-Habitat |
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| 10:45 – 11:00
Inspiring Practices: Floating Communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kunlé Adeyemi, Founder & Partner, NLÉ Works Architecture |
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| 11:00 – 12:00
Roundtable: Affordable cities through collaboration

Moderator: Axel Threlfall, Thomson Reuters Editor-at-Large | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private investors Innovators in planning Disruptors—companies that change the urban landscape Technology companies—both digital and materials Mobility and transport experts Future Cities |
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12:00 – 12:30 Interactive Session

12:30 – 13:30 WORKING LUNCH

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| 13:30 Afternoon opening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
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| 13:40 – 14:20 Rotating Dialogue 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breaking the Silos: Making cities better clients |
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| 14:20 – 15:00 Rotating Dialogue 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building bridges: Engaging in concrete work with UN-Habitat |
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| 15:00 – 15:40 Rotating Dialogue 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnering for Bankability: Turning Investors into Financiers |
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| 15:40 – 16:00 Open Dialogue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion on the way forward |
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| 16:00 – 16:30 Startup pitch session | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three startups with opportunities |
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16:30 NETWORKING DRINKS