



*The First*  
**UN-Habitat  
Assembly**

27-31 MAY 2019



The UN-Habitat Assembly is the world's highest level decision-making body focused on sustainable urbanization. The Assembly is universal, therefore all 193 Member States and Observer States of the UN are members. The Assembly will meet every four years and is expected to make decisions and pass resolutions that will frame the global agenda on human settlements and urbanization, look at major trends, norms and standards related to human settlements and sustainable urbanization.

The Assembly will advise on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by Member States in 2015 in particular Goal 11, on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Several other SDG goals are also directly connected to urbanization including water and sanitation, affordable and sustainable energy, environment and sustainable consumption.

The Assembly will also look at progress being made on the New Urban Agenda, a roadmap for sustainable urban development, was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016 and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2016.

The UN-Habitat Assembly is the highest-level governance body of UN-Habitat. Previously this role was undertaken by the Governing Council, comprised of 58 member states. The Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), based in Nairobi, made up of Member States and Observer accredited to UN-Habitat will continue to meet to prepare and take stock on progress twice a year.

# INNOVATION FOR BETTER LIVES

## UN-Habitat

UN-Habitat is a Programme of the United Nations working towards sustainable human settlements and a better urban future. Sustainable urbanization is one of the most pressing issues facing the world which is urbanizing rapidly due to migration and population growth mostly in Africa and Asia. Half the world's population now live in cities and this is projected to increase to two-thirds by 2050. Cities are the hub for economic development and can improve lives – but can also exacerbate inequalities and create challenges such as lack of affordable housing or decent infrastructure, pollution, crime and disease.

UN-Habitat's mission is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlement development and to achieve adequate shelter for all. UN-Habitat works in over 90 countries supporting people in cities and human settlements for a better urban future. The Organization has been focusing on human settlements and sustainable urban development for over 40 years. Working with governments and local partners, its high impact projects combine world-class expertise and local knowledge to deliver timely and targeted solutions.



## Participants in the UN-Habitat Assembly

The Assembly will take place at the United Nations Complex located at the United Office at Nairobi (UNON), where UN-Habitat has its headquarters. It is open to all UN Member States. It is expected that Heads of State, Ministers of Housing, Urban Development and Planning, Local Government, and other representatives from the UN Member States will take part. Other stakeholders such as local authorities, partners, NGOs, academics and the private sector will be able to attend as observers along with Heads of UN agencies, representatives of UN agencies in Kenya, regional groupings, academics, the private sector and the media. When the Assembly is not sitting in plenary, there will also be side events, receptions, press conferences, report launches, exhibitions, regional meetings and stakeholder meetings.

For more information or to register to attend the UN-Habitat Assembly, visit [www.unhabitat.org/habitatassembly](http://www.unhabitat.org/habitatassembly)

## The Executive Board

The Executive Board will ensure Member States' oversight of UN-Habitat's normative and operational work and will strengthen the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the work Programme. The Board will be composed of 36 members and will meet two or three times a year. It will meet for the first time following the election of its members by the UN-Habitat Assembly and is expected to focus on procedures and on the approval of the work programme and budget for 2020. The Executive Board is expected to meet at once more in 2019 for a full substantive session.

## **Evolution of the UN-Habitat Assembly**

It has taken 14 years to finally arrive at the current governance structure. The new structure will replace the bi-annual Governing Council and its intersessional structures. The 72nd session of the General Assembly established an Open-Ended Working Group which arrived at the current consensus, which was fully endorsed by the 73rd session General Assembly in December 2018.

## **2019 theme for the UN-Habitat Assembly**

The theme is “Innovation for a better quality of life in Cities and Communities” with the sub theme: “Accelerated implementation of the New Urban Agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals”



## Components of the UN-Habitat Assembly

Before the UN-Habitat Assembly, there will be a Global Stakeholders meeting (25 May), a dialogue on the private sector (26 May) and regional meetings.

On 27 May, the first UN-Habitat Assembly will be inaugurated. It is expected that The Assembly will meet to choose a President and adopt its agenda and rules. There will be side events, press conferences, and exhibitions. There will be a one-day dialogue on the theme of the Assembly which will involve all stakeholders.

It is anticipated that the UN-Habitat Assembly will adopt resolutions on the theme and on the progress of implementation of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. UN-Habitat's new Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the necessary resolutions, including finalizing rules and procedures for the functioning of the new governance structure will also be agreed on.

## UN-Habitat Assembly link to the wider UN System

UNHA will report to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

## The World Urban Forum

The World Urban Forum (WUF), convened by UN-Habitat, is the world's premier conference on urban issues – but is not a decision-making body. In 2018 it took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and in 2020 WUF10 will be held in Abu Dhabi from 8 to 13 February. WUF is complementary to the UN-Habitat Assembly and the primary advocacy platform for all stakeholders in the fields of human settlements and sustainable urbanization. The theme of WUF10, which will be the first held in the Arab region, is *Cities of opportunities: Connecting culture and innovation*.



[www.unhabitat.org/habitatassembly](http://www.unhabitat.org/habitatassembly)

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