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Follow-up to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Follow-up to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), July 2022–June 2024

Report of the Secretary-General*

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 23 of General Assembly resolution [77/173](#), provides an update on the implementation of the resolution and an overview of the activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme ([A/77/310](#)).

The Secretary-General summarizes the activities undertaken by UN-Habitat at the global, regional, national and subnational levels, presenting a thematic and regional overview of its four subprogrammes and cross-cutting issues and an update on the implementation of the new governance structure, including the United Nations Habitat Assembly, the Executive Board of UN-Habitat, and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat pursuant to General Assembly resolution [77/173](#).

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline to include the most recent information.



I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted pursuant to paragraph 23 of General Assembly resolution [77/173](#), provides an update on the implementation of that resolution and an overview of the activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme ([A/77/310](#)).

2. Under the leadership of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Maimunah Mohd Sharif, until 19 January 2024, under the interim leadership of the Acting Executive Director, Michal Mlynár, until 11 August 2024, and thereafter under the Executive Director, Anacláudia Rossbach, the Programme successfully serviced the Executive Board of UN-Habitat and the first part of the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly, held in June 2023.

3. Since 2022, the Programme has implemented the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023. In its decisions 2/1 and 2/2, the United Nations Habitat Assembly extended the cycle of the strategic plan until 2025 to align with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system. UN-Habitat has made progress in its alignment with the reform of the United Nations development system and has supported countries in advancing the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Assessing lessons learned is key for preparations to 2026, which represents the half-point juncture of the 2016–2036 timeline of the New Urban Agenda.

II. Governance structure and work of the United Nations Habitat Assembly, the Executive Board and the Committee of Permanent Representatives

A. Background on the governance structure

4. The work of UN-Habitat has been guided by three main policy bodies of the United Nations, namely, the General Assembly, including through the Economic and Social Council, the Governing Council of UN-Habitat and the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

5. In its resolution [73/239](#), the General Assembly decided to dissolve the Governing Council of UN-Habitat and to replace it with the United Nations Habitat Assembly, with universal membership. It retained the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat and provided for the establishment of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat. The United Nations Habitat Assembly reports directly to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. The Executive Board reports to the General Assembly in the years that the United Nations Habitat Assembly is not in session.

B. United Nations Habitat Assembly

6. During the reporting period, 132 Member States convened for the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly, which was held from 5 to 9 June 2023, in Nairobi. At that session, the Assembly extended the cycle of the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023 to 2025 in order to align it with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review process.

7. The United Nations Habitat Assembly adopted by consensus 10 resolutions on a range of critical issues to foster sustainable urban development and effective achievement of the New Urban Agenda principles and commitments. The Assembly also adopted a ministerial declaration entitled “A sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism: achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in times of global crisis”.

8. The United Nations Habitat Assembly decided that its second session would resume from 29 to 30 May 2025. The report of the adjourned second session of the Assembly to the General Assembly is contained in document [A/79/8](#), while the proceedings of the session are contained in document [HSP/HA.2/11/Rev.1](#).

C. Executive Board

9. The Executive Board has met at least twice every year since 2019. During the reporting period, the Board held its sessions from 21 to 23 November 2022, on 28 and 29 March 2023 and from 28 to 30 November 2023. In 2024, the Executive Board held a session from 6 to 8 May, with the second one planned for 4 to 6 December. The composition of the Bureau of the Executive Board as well as the membership of the Executive Board can be found on the UN-Habitat website.

10. The Executive Board has been consistent in considering, inter alia, the implementation of the UN-Habitat strategic plan, resolutions and decisions; financial, budgetary and administrative matters; and the implementation of normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat.

D. Committee of Permanent Representatives

11. During the reporting period, and in line with the expectations set out in General Assembly resolution [73/239](#), the Committee of Permanent Representatives held several informal consultations among Member States on the possible draft outcomes to be considered by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its second session. The preparations for the second session were concluded during the second open-ended meeting of the Committee,¹ held from 29 to 31 May and on 2 June 2023.

12. At its second open-ended meeting, the Committee of Permanent Representatives prepared and recommended 10 draft resolutions, a draft ministerial declaration and 5 draft decisions for further consideration by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its second session (see [HSP/OECPR.2023/2](#) and [HSP/OECPR.2023/3](#)).

13. The Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives met regularly in preparation for the open-ended meeting and the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly and participated in the joint meetings of the bureaux of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat.

III. Update on financial performance and growth prospects

14. UN-Habitat receives funding through four funding sources: (a) the regular budget of the United Nations; (b) the non-earmarked budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation; (c) the earmarked budget of the Foundation (also known as special purpose funding) for global programmes and regional projects; and (d) the technical cooperation budget, for subregional and

¹ See <https://unhabitat.org/open-ended-meeting-of-the-committee-of-permanent-representatives-to-prepare-for-the-second-HabitatAssembly>.

country-specific projects. Across all sources of revenue, total revenue increased in 2023 by 13 per cent compared with the previous year, reaching \$223 million.

15. During the reporting period, UN-Habitat restored and stabilized its core extrabudgetary funding. In 2022, revenue in the non-earmarked United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation budget tripled compared with the previous year, reaching \$7.36 million. This development, together with intensified austerity measures, meant that the Foundation had its first surplus in more than a decade, and it is presently at its highest level of net assets since 2016. In 2023, the Foundation attracted contributions from 30 Member States, the highest number of contributors in a decade, with the highest rate of participation from African States.

16. In 2023, the Executive Board of UN-Habitat, in its decision 2023/4 (see [HSP/EB.2023/23](#)), endorsed the scalability model for the non-earmarked budget of the Foundation, following review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The model serves as a future budget blueprint for core extrabudgetary resources, the first of its kind in the United Nations system. In the same decision, the Executive Board decided to authorize an agreement with the Sustainable Cities and Communities Foundation, a private sector investment fund that designates UN-Habitat as its sole beneficiary. Another first in the United Nations system, this investment fund will contribute a portion of its net income to the core extrabudgetary funding of UN-Habitat.

17. During its second session, the United Nations Habitat Assembly adopted resolution 2/10 on equitable financing, in which it established the Urban Action Funding Window,² an innovative mechanism to direct the use of residual project balances towards the implementation of United Nations Habitat Assembly resolutions.

IV. Activities at the global level

18. During the report period, UN-Habitat continued its targeted efforts at the global level through a range of tailored global programmes and intensified advocacy efforts towards sustainable urbanization across various regions, combining normative guidance, operational piloting across multiple countries, capacity-building and knowledge management.

A. Global programmes

19. Over the years, several global programmes have been initiated and concluded, and many have grown to become international drivers of sustainable urbanization and safe, inclusive and resilient cities and communities. UN-Habitat recently undertook an internal assessment of ongoing and recently concluded global programmes. As a result of that assessment, UN-Habitat will rationalize the existing global programmes to a reduced number of key initiatives by phasing out, streamlining or mainstreaming the work of the global programmes into its regular programme of work.

20. The Safer Cities Programme has supported over 100 million people in improving their living environment from the perspective of urban security and crime prevention. Over the past 23 years of its implementation, the Programme has supported policy and legislative reform in 25 countries, worked with 124 partners and launched over 20 key strategic normative products to support capacity-building

² See UN-Habitat, “Drafting the terms of reference of the urban action funding window”, 30 October 2023.

efforts to advance safe urban environments and prevent crime, violence and insecurity at the city level.

21. The Global Land Tool Network has directly supported more than 1.5 million people in achieving secure land tenure and has provided the indirect benefits of improved land governance and management systems to many more. Over the past 18 years, the Network has supported policy, legislative and administrative reform in more than 30 countries, worked with 84 global partners and several hundred implementing partners, and launched 18 key strategic normative products in the form of recognized land tools with supporting methods, data and training materials. The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme has supported 15 million people in accessing housing, basic services and infrastructure, secure land tenure and livelihoods. Over the past 14 years, the Programme has worked in over 40 countries, supported policy and legislative reform in 30 countries and contributed to the development of new policies in 21 countries. The Programme has reached an estimated 250 partners and launched 42 normative products.

22. The urban basic services trust fund has supported 3 million people in accessing basic services. Over the past 20 years, with \$219 million, the trust fund programme has worked in over 200 cities and towns in 39 countries. In addition, the programme has supported policy and legislative reform in 20 countries, worked with over 50 partners and launched 10 key strategic normative products, including 5 global reports. The Waste Wise Cities programme has supported almost 220 million people in accessing waste management services. Since 2018, the project has worked in 65 countries with 311 local governments, supported policy and legislative reform in 13 countries with 26 local governments, worked with 81 partners and launched 3 key strategic normative products. The African Clean Cities Platform has supported 1.5 million people in accessing waste management services. Since 2017, the programme has worked in 47 countries, supported policy and legislative reform in 25 cities in 12 countries, worked with 14 partners and launched 3 key strategic normative products.

23. The Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance has served an estimated 50 million people by leading water operators' partnerships, supporting 500 utilities in more than 70 countries with over \$1 billion in investments (primarily in Asia). Over the past 15 years, the Alliance has included 150 institutional members and 1,000 individuals from 103 countries. As a global thought leader on water operators' partnerships, the Alliance organized five Global Water Operators' Partnerships Congresses and developed key normative products, including the global water operators' database.

24. The Global Public Space Programme has supported over 2.8 million people in accessing quality and socially inclusive public spaces. Over the past 12 years, the Programme has worked in 102 cities in 55 countries, engaged with over 800 partners and published 11 key strategic normative products. The Urban Planning and Design Lab³ has worked in approximately 50 countries, with over 40 partners in 109 cities to improve urban environments and livelihoods and support policy and legislative reform, and has launched 10 key strategic normative products over the past 10 years.

25. The Global Future Cities Programme has worked in 10 countries, supporting residents in 19 cities towards enhanced urban sustainability through the development of 30 transformative urban projects within the realms of urban planning, mobility, resilience and data. Between 2018 and 2022, the Programme supported policy and legislative reform in 10 countries, worked with 26 partners and launched 5 key strategic normative products.

³ See UN-Habitat, "Urban labs: a tool for integrated and participative urban planning", 2016.

26. The City Resilience Global Programme has supported approximately 40 million people in reducing risk and strengthening the resilience of their cities and communities. Launched in 2013, the Programme has worked in 31 countries, supported policy and legislative reform in 6 countries, worked with hundreds of partners and launched over 60 key strategic normative products. The Programme is part of the Making Cities Resilient Campaign, the largest global campaign promoting city-led action on disaster risk reduction and resilience, with over 3,000 signatory cities.

27. Finally, at the policy level, the National Urban Policy Programme has worked in over 64 countries over the past 9 years, supporting the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of their national and subnational urban policies and raising awareness of the need for national-level policy to manage sustainable urbanization. In addition, the Programme has supported policy and legislative reform in those countries, worked with over 20 partners and launched over 20 key strategic normative products.

B. Global advocacy

28. The UN-Habitat global advocacy efforts include a range of flagship initiatives, including: (a) national and regional forums, as well as the World Urban Forum; (b) various information campaigns; and (c) global advisory services.

29. The World Urban Forum is the premier global conference on sustainable urbanization and cities, convened by UN-Habitat. The Forum sessions have been held every two years since the first session in Nairobi in 2002, to examine the pressing issues of rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate and policies.

30. The eleventh session of the World Urban Forum was held in Katowice, Poland, from 26 to 30 June 2022. Despite the challenging conditions owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and regional geopolitical issues, the session was attended by 17,000 participants, both in person and virtually.

31. The twelfth session of the World Urban Forum was held in Cairo from 4 to 8 November 2024 and was co-organized with the Government of Egypt. The session marked the first time the Forum had been held in a megacity, with a population exceeding 20 million, and a return to Africa after more than 20 years. The theme of the session “It all starts at home: local actions for sustainable cities and communities” emphasized the critical role of communities and local and regional governments in sustainable development through a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach.

32. UN-Habitat organizes regional urban forums to enhance collaboration, share knowledge and strengthen partnerships for implementing the New Urban Agenda. The forums link local, national and global platforms, enabling countries with similar urban challenges to exchange experiences and develop regional solutions.

33. More specifically, in Africa, the African Union Commission and member States of the African Union established the Africa Urban Forum in 2022. The establishment of the Forum reflects the increasing consciousness of the rapid urbanization in Africa and the opportunities and challenges it presents, as well as the need to create a continental forum to support an inclusive and holistic approach to unlocking the potential of urbanization in the continent. The inaugural Africa Urban Forum was held from 4 to 6 September 2024 in Addis Ababa, in collaboration with the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The main outcome of the Forum was the Addis Ababa Declaration on Sustainable Urbanization for Africa’s Transformation.

34. In the Arab States, the fifth Arab Ministerial Forum for Housing and Urban Development was held in December 2023 in Tripoli. It provided a unique opportunity for participants from the League of Arab States to present technical studies and scientific and research papers, as well as to exchange experience on several housing issues, including regulatory frameworks and innovative ways to improve the urban sector.

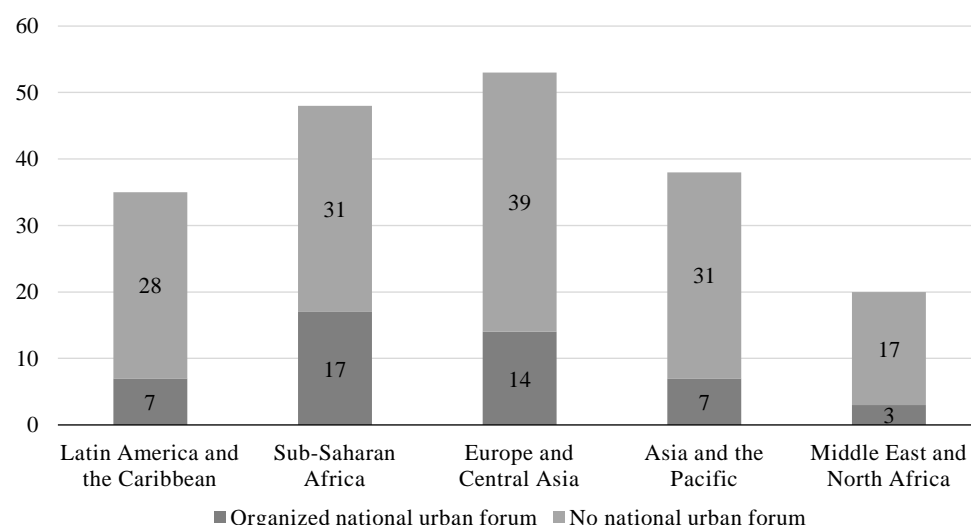
35. In the Asia-Pacific region, UN-Habitat was a cooperation partner of the eighth Asia-Pacific Urban Forum, held from 22 to 26 October 2023 and co-convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Government of the Republic of Korea. The Forum brought together over 1,800 participants from 30 countries and over 80 cities. The Forum served as the venue to launch the publication *Crisis Resilient Urban Futures: the Future of Asian and Pacific Cities 2023*. The sixth Pacific Urban Forum was held from 5 to 7 September 2023 in Suva and provided a platform for over 50 parallel and associated events. The outcome of the Forum was the Suva Statement for a Sustainable Urban Pacific, the aim of which is to accelerate action at all levels for inclusive, safe and climate-resilient cities, towns and communities in Pacific island countries.

36. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development was held from 15 to 19 April 2024 in Santiago, followed by the Central American Urban Forum in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, in May 2024, and the Caribbean Urban Forum from 26 to 28 June 2024 in Santo Domingo. The Caribbean Urban Forum was a pivotal event for urban development professionals, policymakers and stakeholders across the Caribbean. This year's Forum focused on the critical themes of innovation, technology, climate change and sustainable urban planning.

37. National urban forums provide a conducive space for inclusive national urban policies, evidence-based policymaking and reviews, becoming forums to bridge national and local dialogue to show how the priorities of the New Urban Agenda are implemented at the local level.

38. National urban forums have recently been established or are being organized in Azerbaijan, Cabo Verde, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Nepal, Serbia, Spain, Tunisia, Türkiye and the Palestinian Territories. In Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and the Philippines national urban forums are now held on an annual basis.

Countries with national urban forums



39. The World Urban Campaign has grown considerably as a coalition, increasing from 210 to 305 partner organizations during the reporting period. In 2022, the coalition focused on advocating for the acceleration of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda through a thematic campaign entitled “The City We Need”. In 2023 and 2024, the coalition focused on the Housing Matters campaign to explore and highlight solutions in response to the housing crisis.

40. Every October, UN-Habitat and partners organize a month of activities, events and discussions on urban sustainability. Urban October is an opportunity to join the conversation around the challenges and opportunities created by the fast pace of change in our cities and towns. Urban October starts with World Habitat Day on the first Monday of the month and ends with World Cities Day on 31 October.

41. In 2022, the month of events started with World Habitat Day in Balıkesir, Türkiye, and ended with World Cities Day in Shanghai, China. During those celebrations, almost 5 million people were reached, and more than 400 events were organized throughout the month. In 2023, Urban October engaged the international community in discussions and activities on resilient urban economies and financing sustainable urban futures for all.

C. Global advisory role

Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments

42. After the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit, the Secretary-General established the Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments to advise on matters pertaining to engagement and action by local and regional governments to inform Member States’ decision-making in relation to recovery measures from multiple and overlapping crises and implementation of international agreements and standards, including on sustainable development, gender equality, social inclusion, climate action, the New Urban Agenda and human rights. In 2023 and 2024, the Advisory Group pursued its objectives, in accordance with its terms of reference, through facilitation, strategic engagement and advocacy. During the period, four deliverables were presented to the Secretary-General, on policy priorities, modalities to enhance engagement, country-level solutions and a United Nations global strategy

for the engagement of local and regional governments in intergovernmental processes.

43. The establishment of the Advisory Group on Local Regional Governments in the run up to the 2024 Summit of the Future provided Member States with an unprecedented opportunity to promote inclusive, networked and effective multilateralism, as envisioned in the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda” (A/75/982). The Advisory Group’s recommendations on the engagement of local and regional governments in intergovernmental processes helped to inform Member States in their deliberations on the Pact for the Future, leading to the adoption of action 55 of the Pact. UN-Habitat, serving as secretariat of the Advisory Group, is developing a road map post-Summit to support the implementation of the Pact.

44. During the consultations on the Pact for the Future, the Advisory Group worked with UN-Habitat in collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, to engage with Member States through the Group of Friends of UN-Habitat, Sustainable Urbanization and the New Urban Agenda, along with other networks of local and regional governments and other United Nations entities, including the Development Coordination Office and members of the Local 2030 Coalition. The Group of Friends has expressed interest in the follow-up to the Pact and related thematic high-level events, building on the engagement of local and regional governments, among other local actors.

Advisory Board of Eminent Persons on Zero Waste

45. In response to the global waste crisis, the General Assembly adopted resolution 77/161 on 14 December 2022 designating 30 March as the annual International Day of Zero Waste. On 30 March 2023, during the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the role of zero waste as a transformative solution in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Secretary-General announced the establishment of an Advisory Board of Eminent Persons on Zero Waste to promote local and national zero-waste initiatives through awareness-raising and the dissemination of good practices and success stories. The Advisory Board was established for three years, and UN-Habitat and the United Nations Environment Programme serve as its secretariat.

D. Global advocacy messages

Achieving universal access to adequate housing

46. Aligning with the system-wide policy priority of leaving no one behind, UN-Habitat has continued to implement activities focused on the provision of adequate housing for those in poverty, and particularly those in extreme poverty. To address the challenges of informality and the five slum deprivations,⁴ UN-Habitat has continued to provide technical assistance and direct neighbourhood improvements in more than 40 countries under the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme. The draft report on the global state of slum transformation was completed in 2024, concluding the current phase of the programme implementation.

47. UN-Habitat is committed to ending homelessness. UN-Habitat has continued its partnership with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and a broad range of civil society organizations to respond to the request by the General Assembly in its resolution 78/172 for analysis of the different situations related to homelessness. A

⁴ The lack of durable housing, sufficient living space, access to safe water, access to sanitation and security of tenure.

report on inclusive policies and programmes to address homelessness will be made available to the General Assembly in 2025.

48. UN-Habitat has continued to support Member States in the development and implementation of human rights-based housing systems and policies. The foundations of this area of work are the preparation of national housing profiles and the development of national housing policies, for which technical assistance has been provided in more than 40 countries. The work is further informed by the “housing at the Centre approach”⁵ and the Global Housing Strategy promoted by the UN-Habitat Governing Council in its resolutions 23/16 and 24/9 on inclusive national and local housing strategies to achieve the Global Housing Strategy paradigm shift.

49. UN-Habitat is supporting the domestication of the policy framework for slum transformation at the regional and national levels. At its second session, in 2023, the United Nations Habitat Assembly adopted resolutions 2/2, which provides a policy framework for slum transformation, and 2/7, in which it decided to establish an open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on adequate housing for all. This is the first thematic subsidiary body established by a UN-Habitat governing body and the only universal intergovernmental body on housing.

50. Briefings with the Group of Friends of UN-Habitat, Sustainable Urbanization and the New Urban Agenda have facilitated an exchange of views and collaboration between the Group’s members to solicit support for strategic initiatives and events of UN-Habitat, such as the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly and the work of the Third Committee of General Assembly on the resolution on homelessness.

Urban climate action and environmental sustainability

51. UN-Habitat has strengthened its mandate on local and multilevel urban climate action by introducing strengthened climate action and an improved urban environment as one of its four domains of change to achieve sustainable urbanization in its strategic plan for the period 2020–2025. The fundamental importance of climate action at the local level, supported by a strong multilevel governance framework was reconfirmed at the first Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change (17 November 2022) at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the second Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change (6 December 2023) at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, which UN-Habitat facilitated and co-chaired with the Egyptian and the United Arab Emirates presidencies of the Conferences of the Parties, respectively. UN-Habitat further supported the presidency of the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties in the launch of the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative and co-chaired the Local Climate Action Summit of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, at which the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships for Climate Action pledge was launched.

52. At its second session, the United Nations Habitat Assembly adopted resolution 2/5, in which it emphasized the need to enhance the linkage between urbanization and climate change in the work of UN-Habitat to contribute to the objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. Among other things, the Assembly called for strengthening of the UN-Habitat flagship initiative RISE-UP: Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor to build urban adaptation and climate resilience in the global hotspots of vulnerability, which has now reached an active portfolio of \$120 million across 30 countries and is the primary

⁵ See UN-Habitat Governing Council resolution 25/4, para. 16.

vehicle of UN-Habitat for community-level climate action, with an emphasis on least developed countries and small island developing States.

53. There has been ongoing strong engagement in support of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change special report on climate change and cities, which is expected to be published in 2027, and a series of regional “marketplaces” showcasing local needs and facilitating partnerships with innovation leaders was held throughout 2023, leading up to the Innovate4Cities Conference, which was held in September 2024.

Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals

54. UN-Habitat has been leading the global push on Sustainable Development Goals localization, engaging across the United Nations system, with an increasingly relevant global mandate and portfolio. Building on the decision of the UN-Habitat Executive Board, Member States gathered at the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly in June 2023 and achieved an historic milestone by adopting the first resolution on the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (resolution 2/6). In the resolution, the Assembly calls for a global effort to strengthen data, monitoring, capacities and multilevel governance for the Sustainable Development Goals, asking UN-Habitat to continue to provide support worldwide.

55. In parallel, UN-Habitat has been working continuously within the framework of the highest global decision-making processes to advocate for the relevance of local action and integrated localization approaches to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This work significantly contributed to the acknowledgement of localization and the role of local governments in the Pact for the Future (General Assembly resolution 79/1), as well as in key Group of Seven and Group of 20 ministerial communiqués.

56. Under the Italian presidency of the Group of Seven and as a direct outcome of the communiqué of the Group of Seven Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers’ Meeting of April 2024, the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy and UN-Habitat launched a new global initiative to support localization worldwide, the Partnership Platform on Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals. Together with the Sustainable Development Goals Cities global initiative, the Platform is expected to have an impact on 1 billion people by supporting localization of the Sustainable Development Goals in at least 50 countries and 1,000 cities. UN-Habitat supports cities by strengthening data and decision-making, bridging finance gaps and facilitating impactful initiatives. Nationally, it supports over 30 Governments with Sustainable Development Goal localization frameworks to drive policy reforms. These efforts connect with global networks such as the Sustainable Development Goals Cities global community, promoting peer learning and capacity-building.

57. In addition, UN-Habitat is the permanent co-Chair and leads the secretariat of the Local 2030 Coalition, the UN-wide initiative on localizing the Sustainable Development Goals chosen as one of the high impact initiatives during the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September 2023. With multilevel support received from the Government of Spain, the government of the Basque Country, the city of Bilbao and the BBK Foundation, the Coalition opened its secretariat office in Bilbao in 2024. The Coalition has also partnered with the Government of Italy to launch a knowledge and scientific network. Together with the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund, the Coalition developed the Sustainable Development Goals localization marker to support United Nations efforts to prioritize the localization of the Goals at the country level through catalytic local efforts that accelerate the six Sustainable Development Goals transitions, which were presented at the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit to accelerate progress on the

2030 Agenda. They six transitions are: food systems; energy access and affordability; digital connectivity; education; jobs and social protection; and climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.⁶

58. The Local 2030 Coalition advocates actively for localization as a cross-cutting approach to advance the Sustainable Development Goals transitions and accelerate implementation of the Goals, especially in high-level forums, positioning localization in the high-level political forum on sustainable development, Sustainable Development Goals Summits, Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Food Systems Stocktaking Moments and Global Refugee Forums.

Generating prosperity and local finance

59. Over 80 per cent of global gross domestic product is generated in cities, and more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas. The pace of urbanization has often surpassed the capacities of local governments, and there have been calls for stronger institutional support and financial resources to meet the emerging demands. To forge new frameworks for sustainable financing that are fit for cities, a variety of sustainable financing arrangements are being explored by UN-Habitat to harness social impacts rooted in just and equitable transitions aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

60. UN-Habitat has also developed the online rapid own source revenue analysis tool to assist local and national governments to mobilize adequate funding for local governments in developing countries. Support was provided to local governments in Egypt, Iraq, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Malawi in generating their own source revenue, improving local expenditure efficiency and optimizing the financial management capacity of authorities. In addition, to prevent significant resource waste – estimated to cost up to half of total public investments due to poorly targeted and inefficient allocation – UN-Habitat has developed the integrated spatial capital investment plan methodology,⁷ which allows the identification of areas of investment through sustainability indicators.

61. The UN-Habitat Cities Investment Facility initiative takes a step further by providing pre-feasibility assessments of urban infrastructure projects and supporting those projects to reach a bankable and construction-ready status. The UN-Habitat Sustainable Development Goals Cities flagship initiative also enables critical resource mobilization to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on data-driven and inclusive methods to identify development priorities.

Urban crisis response and recovery

62. In June 2023, the United Nations Habitat Assembly, recognizing that an integrated approach was necessary to effectively address the increasing frequency and severity of both climate and human-induced crises affecting human settlements, adopted resolution 2/9 on the creation of a human settlements resilience framework for early warning, foresight, risk reduction, crisis response and post-crisis recovery and reconstruction.

63. UN-Habitat has been active in crisis response and recovery efforts in several countries and regions, including Afghanistan (earthquake, 2023), Libya (flood, 2023), the Syrian Arab Republic (earthquake, 2023) and many more. In response to a request

⁶ See United Nations Sustainable Development Group, "Six transitions: investment pathways to deliver the SDGs", September 2023.

⁷ See Aga Khan Agency for Habitat and UN-Habitat, *Integrated Spatial Plan for Environmental and Socio-Economic Resilience: Khorog, Tajikistan – Compendium of Reports Phase2* (Nairobi, 2023).

from the Executive Board in November 2023, UN-Habitat deployed a mission to explore strategies to respond to the acute crisis in the Gaza Strip. This adds on to the UN-Habitat urban crisis work. The report of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat entitled “Preliminary report on the status of efforts to reconstruct human settlements in the Gaza Strip” (HSP/EB.2024/INF/6) was presented to the Member States at the first session of the Executive Board in 2024.

64. In Ukraine, UN-Habitat developed a response framework and has initiated the Kyiv Urban Lab⁸ to support local urban recovery planning and housing reform activities.

65. In June 2023, UN-Habitat launched its global institutional plan on solutions to internal displacement to ensure that UN-Habitat can maximize its contributions to United Nations efforts to scale sustainable solutions in line with its strategic plan for the period 2020–2025. The global institutional plan was developed in response to the Secretary-General’s Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, launched in June 2022, which is a new United Nations-sponsored framework for solutions to urban displacement, aimed at supporting local authorities.

V. Outcomes of the New Urban Agenda

A. Alignment with the United Nations development system reform

66. The alignment of UN-Habitat with the United Nations development system reform, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 72/279 on repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system required the adoption of an integrative approach to the reform agenda through system-wide strategies on sustainable urbanization. Within UN-Habitat, integration and alignment with the reform was achieved by means of both internal structural changes and operational adjustments. At the internal institutional structural level, the new regional architecture policy was initiated in 2020 to raise the profile of UN-Habitat regional and country representation and to reaffirm the complementarity of the normative and the operational tracks of the UN-Habitat mandate to swiftly respond to the needs of Member States.

67. At the country operational level, UN-Habitat gradually embraced the spirit of integration underpinning the new management and accountability framework⁹ under the leadership of the resident coordinators to design and deliver the programming priorities set in countries’ sustainable development cooperation frameworks as the source for the United Nations entities individual and joint programming and implementation.

68. UN-Habitat also contributes its expertise and knowledge to the regional collaboration platforms for peer review and issue-based coalitions. Highlights include its support to the regional collaborative platform in the Africa region by guiding resident coordinators in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 11 targets and participating in the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development with ECA. UN-Habitat also co-leads the regional issue-based coalition on digital development, including smart city initiatives. In the Arab States, UN-Habitat contributes urban data to the Manara regional data platform with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). In Asia and the Pacific, it co-chairs the group on human

⁸ See <https://unhabitat.org/ukraine>.

⁹ United Nations Sustainable Development Group, *Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System* (2021).

mobility and urbanization with the International Organization for Migration, addressing migration, housing and climate adaptation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, UN-Habitat co-chairs a partnership group with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), advocating for urban development in discussions of the Sustainable Development Goals. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the agency backs the regional collaboration platform on data and statistics, partnering closely with United Nations bodies on issues such as social protection and resilience, among other priorities.

69. Taking advantage of the United Nations development system reform process, UN-Habitat also intensified efforts to reposition itself as the focal point for sustainable urbanization within the United Nations system. Within the reform process, UN-Habitat has been able to sharpen its advocacy messages, stressing the importance of sustainable urbanization as a key tool and a driving force for accelerating the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

B. Collaboration with the United Nations development system across normative and operational dimensions

70. UN-Habitat operates through its 4 regional and 90 country offices, joining forces with United Nations development system partners to foster normative and operational work at the country level.

71. In Africa, the Regional Office for Africa collaborates actively with United Nations partners, including ECA and regional bodies, such as the Africa Union Commission, on a variety of themes. UN-Habitat engaged in the Africa Climate Summit in conjunction with the Africa Climate Week in September 2023, advocating for sustainable urban pathways and enhanced climate action. These events culminated in declarations and resolutions that underscored the need for just urban pathways and integrated climate action. In addition, a harmonized regional framework for implementing the New Urban Agenda in Africa¹⁰ was developed by the African Union Commission jointly with UN-Habitat and ECA. The framework aligns with the transformative vision of Agenda 2063 to address urban issues in Africa. The development of the Africa urban resilience programme with the African Union Commission has become one of the pillars for the achievement of reduced disaster losses and the enhancement of sustainable development.

72. In the Arab region, the Regional Office for Arab States organized the Arab Ministerial Forum on Housing and Urban Development in Tripoli on 19 and 20 December 2023, which remains a benchmark in a series of joint initiatives with the League of Arab States. Through the Regional Office for Arab States, UN-Habitat supported the implementation of the Arab Strategy for Housing and Sustainable Urban Development 2030 as well as the reporting on the New Urban Agenda. In collaboration with ESCWA, UN-Habitat is implementing several projects, focused particularly on Sustainable Development Goals localization and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Between 2022 and 2024, three voluntary local reviews were jointly developed and launched in the Arab region, with four more under way. In July 2024, the Regional Office for Arab States and ESCWA launched the Arab Mayors Academy with a cohort of 12 participants from Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and the Palestinian Territories. To accelerate climate action in the highly vulnerable Arab region, the Regional Office developed the regional climate change strategy for the Arab region 2022–2025 as a guiding document that outlines

¹⁰ Economic Commission for Africa, *A Harmonized Implementation Framework for the New Urban Agenda in Africa* (Addis Ababa, 2020).

the commitment of UN-Habitat to strengthening multi-scale climate action for urban resilience in the Arab region.

73. In the Asia and Pacific Region, UN-Habitat continues to engage in regional collaborative platforms, such as the Asia Pacific Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, to address a range of challenges specific to the region. The provision of water and sanitation policy advisory services remained a priority for normative work in several countries across the region, such as the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Sri Lanka, for the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific – Fukuoka. In addition, UN-Habitat has advocated for a people's process in post-disaster and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction approach, where the affected people are placed at the centre of their development and recovery processes after disasters or conflicts. Accordingly, working closely with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan as partners, UN-Habitat is making concerted efforts in Afghanistan to address risk-sensitive planning and disaster risk reduction, with a specific focus on housing and shelter.

74. In Latin America and the Caribbean,¹¹ the Forum of Ministers and High-level Authorities on Housing and Urbanism of Latin America and the Caribbean held a meeting on financing for climate change mitigation in urban settlements in Buenos Aires in April 2023. The meeting was attended by representatives of 28 Member States, with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and UN-Habitat represented in their role as technical secretariat of the Forum.

75. In other regions, UN-Habitat remained a non-resident agency in most of the countries of Europe and Central Asia, with some limited direct engagement with Governments on housing and sustainable development, the provision of policy advice, capacity-building and technical support. Several country-level interventions were implemented during the reporting period.

76. In addition to its project office in Kosovo¹² and various collaborative initiatives with the United Nations system in Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, new project offices were established in Azerbaijan and Ukraine in 2023.

C. Global monitoring and reporting on Sustainable Development Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda

77. In 2023, UN-Habitat presented a global progress report on Sustainable Development Goal 11 during the high-level political forum on sustainable development.¹³ The report contained a review of the status of achievements related to the targets set out under Sustainable Development Goals 11 to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The 2023 high-level political forum included Goal 11 as one of the major Sustainable Development Goals under review, along with Goals 6, 7, 9 and 17.

78. The conclusion of the report was that by 2030 the international community will not meet key Sustainable Development Goal 11 targets without major shifts in urban

¹¹ The countries benefiting from UN-Habitat activities and projects in 2022 and 2023 included Argentina, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago.

¹² References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

¹³ UN-Habitat, *Rescuing SDG 11 for a Resilient Urban Planet* (2023).

policy and investments. Some progress has been made toward Sustainable Development Goal 11 targets related to transport and national urban policies, but vast gaps remain in the other areas such as slum proliferation, inadequate public space and insufficient waste management. Substantial regional variations prevail, with sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia lagging on most targets.

79. The Urban Agenda Platform is the global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the achievement of the urban targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Platform hosts 40 New Urban Agenda national progress reports submitted by Member States to serve as critical inputs to the 2022 report of the Secretary-General on progress on implementing the New Urban Agenda, along with guidelines and other resources to support Member States in their national reporting.

80. In May 2024, UN-Habitat published revised national reporting guidelines¹⁴ as part of its efforts to increase support to Member States in their preparation of New Urban Agenda national progress reports. In response to the excessive reporting burden that was identified in a report of the Executive Director on the principal obstacles to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda by Member States ([HSP/EB.2023/14](#)), the revised guidelines introduced multiple new reporting modalities, including options to update previous reports and leverage synergies with other reporting processes, such as national urban forums, voluntary national reviews and voluntary local reviews. Voluntary local reviews, of which more than 330 have been published to date, provide a wealth of information on the status of urban development and can strengthen national reporting from the bottom-up.

D. Cross-cutting issues

81. Member States have committed to adopting a smart city approach that harnesses technology to ensure that the digital future is inclusive and supports the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In response to a request from Member States during the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly, (see resolution 2/1) in June 2023, UN-Habitat is currently developing guidelines to fill global normative gaps in the domain of smart cities and digitalization.

82. In 2022, at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, UN-Habitat and UNDP launched a joint initiative aimed at integrated urban resilience in small island developing States and coastal cities. Since then, efforts have been intensified to prioritize programming in small island developing States within the specific context of UN-Habitat support to least developed countries and landlocked developing countries.

83. Building on the outcomes of the fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Antigua and Barbuda from 27 to 30 May 2024, at which the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for Small Island Developing States: A Renewed Declaration for Resilient Prosperity was adopted, UN-Habitat has been actively engaged in contributing to the coordinated efforts by the United Nations system to implement the Agenda and is integrating the most relevant elements supporting the realization of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 11 into UN-Habitat programming.

84. UN-Habitat continued to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment across its normative and operational work. Efforts have been introduced to ensure the effective participation of women and girls, especially those at risk of

¹⁴ UN-Habitat, "Reporting on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda: revised guidelines", 2024.

marginalization, and to set specific gender-transformative objectives across the UN-Habitat area of operations through, for example, the implementation of the gender equality marker. Programmatically, for instance, the Her City global programme¹⁵ led by UN-Habitat has implemented gender transformative projects in 25 locations on all continents. In March 2024, UN-Habitat launched its internal Gender Champion Award to promote gender-transformative approaches.

85. Throughout the reporting period, UN-Habitat continued to apply a human rights-based approach across its normative and operational work, including supporting Member States in progressively realizing the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living. UN-Habitat also promoted human rights-based approaches internally through ongoing capacity-building through community of practice workshops and by strengthening its engagement with the United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as the universal periodic review.

86. UN-Habitat continued to expand its engagement with children and youth for sustainable urbanization by, inter alia, contributing to the chapter on youth and future generations of the Pact for the Future, and to the Declaration for Future Generations contained in annex II to the Pact for the Future. These efforts have helped to highlight the indispensable role of young people in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as advocates for policies that are responsible towards future generations.

87. The UN-Habitat Youth Advisory Board submitted the Urban Youth Imperative advancing this agenda through, inter alia, the Young Gamechangers and Youth 2030 Cities initiatives. UN-Habitat also fosters youth public spaces and programmes, expanding the One Stop Youth Resource Centre Programme to Latin America and Asia, in collaboration with the IntegrHa-bitat global network, and promoting inclusive community transformation.

88. UN-Habitat promoted accessible and inclusive urban development to mainstream disability inclusion and accessibility across its normative and operational work. It co-designed and upgraded public spaces with persons with disabilities in Bangladesh, India, Jordan, Kenya, Nepal, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and Viet Nam. Building on its *Design Guide on Streets for Walking and Cycling in African Cities*,¹⁶ UN-Habitat is also co-designing guidelines on accessible streets and transport stations in African cities with the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, the World Blind Union and persons with disabilities in Kenya. Through the safety, human rights and social inclusion community of practice, UN-Habitat also joined a task force, led by the German Agency for International of Cooperation and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, to develop a global initiative on resilient and inclusive cities, as part of a flagship initiative for the upcoming Global Disability Summit in Berlin in 2025.

VI. The way forward

89. The UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023 was extended until 2025 to align with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system. Within the reform process, UN-Habitat has intensified its efforts as the focal point for sustainable urbanization within the United Nations system, building advocacy messages that stress the importance of sustainable urbanization for accelerating the implementation

¹⁵ UN-Habitat and Shared City Foundation, *Her City: A Guide for Cities to Sustainable and Inclusive Urban Planning and Design Together with Girls*, 3rd ed. (Nairobi, 2023).

¹⁶ UN-Habitat, *Streets for Walking and Cycling: Designing for Safety, Accessibility, and Comfort in African Cities* (2018).

of the New Urban Agenda and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The resumed second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly will take place on 29 and 30 May 2025.

90. UN-Habitat has progressed on the reform of the United Nations development system, supporting Member States in advancing the implementation of the New Urban Agenda while enhancing multilevel governance, promoting adequate and affordable housing with basic services and ensuring inclusive urban planning and the transformation of slums and informal settlements. Further collaboration has focused on the mobilization of cities on climate mitigation and adaptation and environmental sustainability, urban crisis and recovery, and approaches to leveraging financing for local development priorities.

91. Given the pace of urbanization, which has often surpassed the capacities of current local governments, there have been calls for stronger institutional support and financial resources to meet emerging demands. UN-Habitat has been exploring ways to forge new frameworks for sustainable financing that are fit for cities to increase social impact aligned with sustainable development issues relating to urban poverty and inequality, children, youth unemployment, gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women, persons with disabilities, older persons and human rights to contribute to the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals.

92. In 2023, total funding across all UN-Habitat funding sources increased by 13 per cent compared with the previous year, to \$223 million. UN-Habitat restored and stabilized its core extrabudgetary funding, tripled its non-earmarked budget and achieved the highest level of net assets since 2016 for the earmarked budget of the Foundation. These achievements are expected to continue to boost targeted efforts of UN-Habitat at all levels of governance, with prioritization given to country-level activities. UN-Habitat will continue to mobilize resources from all sources to increase its institutional and programmatic activities to allow direct and expanded engagement with its constituencies and national and local partners.

93. By combining its normative guidance, operational piloting, advocacy and knowledge management, and capacity-building to achieve sustainable urban development, UN-Habitat is streamlining and further mainstreaming its global programmes into its regular programme of work. While continuing its global activities, UN-Habitat will intensify its efforts to mobilize broader initiatives and partnerships to advance the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

94. On Sustainable Development Goal 11, several targets have been reported as being off track for implementation by 2030, suggesting that major shifts in urban policy and investment are needed. While some progress has been made on targets related to transport and national urban policies, vast gaps remain relating to slum proliferation, inadequate public space and insufficient waste management. Substantial regional variations prevail, with sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia lagging on most targets. Activities to achieve measurable and sustained progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 11 will remain a priority, with UN-Habitat continuing to focus on: (a) achieving universal access to adequate housing; (b) urban climate action and environmental sustainability; (c) localization of the Sustainable Development Goals; (d) generating prosperity and local finance; and (e) urban crisis response and recovery. In addition, it will integrate cross-cutting issues into its programmatic work at the global, regional and national levels.

95. Looking ahead, 2026 marks a critical half-point juncture within the 2016–2036 timeline of the New Urban Agenda. UN-Habitat will launch a comprehensive review of the New Urban Agenda prior to the 2026 quadrennial report of the Secretary-General to take stock of the progress made and challenges faced in the implementation

of the New Urban Agenda since its adoption and to identify further steps to address them.¹⁷ Preparations between now and 2026 provide an opportunity to comprehensively review current progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and signal the “Quito+10” milestone of 10 years since the adoption of the Agenda with an assessment and key recommendations to ensure the continued effectiveness and impact of the Agenda as the comprehensive framework for sustainable urban development.

VII. Recommendations

96. To accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, Member States could:

(a) Enhance the visibility of the issue of sustainable urbanization and mobilize broader initiatives and partnerships to advance the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda at key convenings in 2025;

(b) Leverage preparations for the resumed second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly to inform the second World Summit on Social Development, to be held from 4 to 6 November 2025, in Doha.

(c) Utilize already existing convenings in 2025 and enhance multilevel governance with the mobilization of cities and local actors to inform the comprehensive review of the New Urban Agenda prior to issuance of the 2026 quadrennial report of the Secretary-General marking the “Quito+10” milestone of 10 years since the adoption of the New Urban Agenda.

¹⁷ See General Assembly resolution [71/256](#), para. 175.