

## PRESS RELEASE

### **UN-Habitat and Egypt to host Global Observance of World Cities Day 2021 in historic city of Luxor**

**Nairobi/Luxor 14 October 2021** – UN-Habitat and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt have announced that this year's Global Observance of World Cities Day will take place in the ancient city of Luxor on Sunday 31 October.

The theme for World Cities Day 2021 is *Adapting Cities for Climate Resilience* reflecting the fact that climate change will have a huge impact on city residents, with hundreds of millions of people experiencing floods, rising sea levels, storms and increasing periods of extreme temperatures.

The Global Observance to be held in a hybrid format will bring together high-level representatives from national and local governments, UN agencies, development partners, the private sector, civil society organisations and academic institutions to exchange innovative ideas, best practices and solutions to build urban climate resilience.

Cities and towns around the world are encouraged to hold events to mark World Cities Day to raise awareness about sustainable urbanization. Many urban centres have failed to invest in city resilience due to lack of funding, capacity, awareness or action plans thus threatening efforts to reduce poverty and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

"The least well off in cities and communities will bear the brunt of climate change in the form of floods, droughts, landslides, extreme heat, storms and hurricanes. There are more than one billion people living in informal settlements with 70 per cent of them highly vulnerable to climate change," said UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif. "We urgently need investment in climate resilience and innovative solutions."

The general theme of World Cities Day, established through a UN resolution in 2013, is *Better City, Better Life*. The event in Luxor will be the eighth celebration as well as the first Global Observance to be held in the Arab region and the second in Africa.

The Global Observance will begin with the official ceremony addressed by high level speakers from national and local governments, UN agencies and international organisations. There will be live link to World City Celebrations at the Dubai 2020 Expo and video messages from China's national celebrations in Shanghai along with the launch of the Shanghai Manual.

In the afternoon there will be a series of Roundtables on Building the climate resilience of the urban poor, the Outcomes of the Innovate4Cities Conference, looking at moves Towards a resilient and green future: COVID-19 recovery in partnership and Challenges and opportunities presented by climate change in the Arab Region.

An exciting day of events is planned by the Government of Egypt and UN agencies the day before World Cities Day on 30 October focusing on the Upper Egypt Local Development Programme, the National Programme on Local Development and Youth alongside Climate Resilience in African Cities. For those attending in person there will be afternoon field visits including to UN-Habitat's River Bank Filtration Programme in Luxor.

The Global Observance is open to all. Register [here](#) to attend either in person or online and ask questions in the Roundtables. The Global Observance will also be livestreamed on UN-Habitat's You Tube [here](#).

More information about World Cities Day including concept notes, key messages and logos can be found at <https://urbanoctober.unhabitat.org/wcd>

**For more information contact:**

Susannah Price, UN-Habitat Chief of Communication  
+254 722 719867 [susannah.price@un.org](mailto:susannah.price@un.org)