



Global Observance - World Cities Day 2022

31 October 2022 – Shanghai, China

Venue: The Grand Halls, 118 Huangpu Road, Shanghai, People's Republic of China

Theme: Act Local to Go Global

UNDP KEYNOTE REMARKS

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Honorable Mr. Chen Jining, Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee,
Honorable Mr. Gong Zheng, Mayor of Shanghai,
Honorable Mr. Jiang Wanrong, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, and
Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting UNDP to join today's celebration of the 2022 World Cities Day.

Let me first pay tribute to the people of Shanghai for all their efforts in fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic earlier this year and for their contributions in the ongoing recovery. History will remember the people of Shanghai and the city!

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are living through a period of intersecting crises: including the continued effects of COVID-19, a cost-of-living crisis, an emerging debt crisis, and an underlying climate emergency, where the global climate agenda is on life support. For the first time in 30 years, global human development has regressed for two years in a row and the world is not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

'Act Local to Go Global' has become imperative if we are to regain lost ground. **We know that the global goals cannot be achieved, if they are not materialized at the local levels. Therefore, cities are the places where new development visions and dreams**

need to become realities. From decarbonization of the economy to circular economy, to smart cities, cities are the breeding ground for innovation and societal transformation.

Shanghai is a leader in this regard:

- Shanghai has made impressive achievement in **decarbonization and in e-mobility**; it has a large and convenient metro system, it has a bus system whose new vehicles are 100% electric. Shanghai also has a rapidly expanding EV market; in fact, more than 30% of private car sales are already EVs.
- Shanghai has also made strong progress in pursuing **zero waste and a circular economy**. It has been the first city in China to implement strong waste sorting regulations from 2019 and has built an impressive ecosystem for circular economy businesses at scale.

In all these, Shanghai has taken a whole-of-society approach. What can we learn from Shanghai and many other cities around the world that have innovated and made impressive progress? How can we continue to make cities more livable and ensure that citizens can enjoy the full potentials associated with urban growth? Please allow me to focus on just one suggestion today: the Localization of the SDGs.

Often embedded in the national development plans, the SDGs is the north star of our global development effort. We need to go back to the basics of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda and mount a campaign to localize the SDGs in all cities and communities, so that we are back on track to achieve the SDGs.

The United Nations projects that the world will soon reach the 8 billion population mark later this year, and the global urban population is projected to grow to nearly 70% by 2050. This means more demand for infrastructure, housing, services, energy consumption, and waste management. It will test the ability of the governments to provide and the limits of our current development model.

The SDGs have 17 goals and 169 targets. One hundred ten of these targets require actions at local level. Therefore, it is critical that cities think about how they can ensure that their population, old and young, is familiar with the global goals and what these goals mean to them locally, how city governments can motivate their population, particularly businesses, to play their part and contribute to the achievement of the global goals in their communities.

Today, I am actually speaking from Bilbao, Spain, where I am participating in the opening ceremony of the Secretariat of the Local2030 Coalition, an effort supported by Spain for SDG localization worldwide. The Coalition will be a platform for political discussions as

well for sharing knowledge and experiences in SDG localization, creating a movement of local authorities and citizens to achieve the global goals.

The good news is that we have progresses and we have role models like Shanghai. We have also developed many tools that would allow city governments to look at development differently, going beyond single-minded pursuit of GDPs and paying attention to equity, sustainability and social justice. Many countries have made use of the **Multi-dimensional Poverty Index**, the MPIs, which measures the level of development more wholistically. UNDP has also developed the Planetary Pressure Adjusted Human Development Index that takes into account material consumption and carbon emissions to measure development successes over a longer time horizon. All these tools can be applied at the city level. In addition, there is a growing global movement to prepare Voluntary Local Reviews on the achievement of SDGs at the city level. The VLRs offer a significant opportunity for cities to engage citizens to set targets, monitor progress and report on results for local actions.

We have to unleash the power of innovation in the face of increasing complexity and uncertainty. We have worked in over 1000 cities, for example, to tackle the growing trust deficit in institutions and to unlock diverse sources of financing. I am very pleased that UNDP's BIOFIN Programme is already partnering with Shanghai to develop a Biodiversity Finance Plan for unlocking nature-positive investment for biodiversity and other SDGs in cities in the Yangtze River basin and contribute to global environment benefits.

To close, Ladies and gentlemen, we have about 7 years left to achieve the SDGs. Local actions have never been more important today. As we celebrate the World Cities Day today, let us continue to take the whole of society approach, think globally but act locally.

Thank you very much!

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