



UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif 2023 World Habitat Day Statement

Resilient urban economies. Cities as drivers of growth and recovery

Dear global citizens,

As we gather today to celebrate World Habitat Day, set by the United Nations to reflect on the state of human settlements and human habitat, let us remember that cities are not mere collections of buildings and roads.

Cities are vibrant ecosystems of human potential and innovation. They are our future.

In our challenging times of conflicts, economic hardships, and climate disasters, cities have proven their resilience time and time again. Cities have emerged as islands of hope, where communities unite, ideas flourish, and dreams are achieved.

UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, works with cities and communities to unlock their potential and empower them to create a better urban future – with job opportunities, green spaces, and respect for diversity.

With your support, we can tell the real story about cities. Let us share examples of cities as drivers of growth and recovery.

Let us recognize that resilient urban economies are not only about financing growth and competing to be at the top. It is also about nurturing the human spirit, embracing innovation, putting technology to serve human needs, and creating inclusive societies.

Many nations recognize this and have pledged support for the sustainable development of cities and human settlements.

The second United Nations Habitat Assembly in June this year reaffirmed housing as a basic human right and mandated us to develop recommendations for affordable housing.

We will also develop international guidelines for people-centered smart cities and urban biodiversity.

Let us work together to implement these policies and recommendations.

As we embark on the journey, remember that the power to transform our cities lies within each one of us.

Together, we can build resilient urban economies that stand as beacons of hope, lighting the way toward a brighter, more inclusive, and sustainable future for all.

Happy World Habitat Day 2023!

