



In Focus: SDG11

Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities require sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture

3 October 2022, 9.30- 12.30

San Marino and Geneva (Hybrid)



SAN MARINO 20
83rd UNECE meeting **22**

Committee on Urban Development,
Housing and Land Management



In Focus: SDG 11¹

Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities require sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture

3 October 2022, 9.30-12.30

Held simultaneously in room H-207, Palais des Nations, Geneva and the Kursaal Congress Centre, San Marino with online connection

Co-organized by UNECE, and the Geneva Cities Hub

Back-to-back with the 83rd session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (3-7 October 2022)

1. Introduction

Cities play a crucial role in the implementation of international frameworks such as the New Urban Agenda and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (2030 Agenda). They are essential to the achievement of the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, including SDG 11: “Sustainable cities and communities”. Cities constitute the immediate arena for translating the 2030 Agenda into action and the New Urban Agenda, even as they do not possess all the policy tools at the disposal of the national governments.

The influence of cities stems from their practical, people-centred decision-making, namely, through their spatial and urban-planning processes, which are grounded in a multi-stakeholder approach and, by design, integrates the three pillars of sustainability. Spatial and urban planning focus on defining the physical layout of cities; the allocation of land among social, cultural and economic activities; land use policies and associated regulatory requirements (zoning); urban infrastructure development (including transport and basic utility services); and catering to all aspects of the day-to-day life of inhabitants across communities and age groups. The critical role of cities for ensuring the safety, health and socio-economic welfare of the population across the globe cannot be over-emphasized.

This objective has become increasingly difficult to achieve in light of the growing challenges resulting from among others, rapid urbanisation and climate change. These challenges have further complicated urban planning, requiring city leaders to bolster the role of practitioners, including, architects, engineers, surveyors, urban planners and designers in implementing the 2030 Agenda. By virtue of conceptualizing and building the public and private spaces as well as homes and the array of health, social, economic and cultural facilities and urban infrastructure, practitioners hold the key for ensuring sustainable, safe, healthy, socially inclusive, climate neutral and circular cities.

¹In Focus: SDG 11 event is a platform for a refreshing dialogue on how cities and their networks as a well as relevant organizations and stakeholders address global challenges that are traditionally discussed by States in multilateral fora. In Focus: SDG 11 aims at better linking intergovernmental debates on issues related to SDG11 with what cities and their networks, and other stakeholders are doing on the ground. The event has been organized each year by UNECE since 2018 and the Geneva Cities Hub has partnered with UNECE on this event since 2019.

To provide a concrete tool for bolstering the role of practitioners in implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Bureau of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM) has developed, with the support of the secretariat, the draft “[San Marino Declaration on principles for sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture in support of sustainable, safe, healthy, socially inclusive, climate neutral and circular homes, urban infrastructure and cities](#)”.

The draft declaration contributes to the realization of the vision of the UN General Secretary of “*a stronger, more networked and inclusive multilateral system, anchored within the United Nations*”. It also responds to the call of the President of the General Assembly Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization, stressing that “*implementing the New Urban Agenda requires [...] the large-scale mobilization of millions of architects, planners, surveyors and valuers, and real estate professionals*”².

The draft declaration puts forward several guiding principles to serve as a pledge to sustainability. The principles cover, among others, people-centrality, social responsibility, inclusivity, resource efficiency and circularity, respect for nature, affordability and accessibility and inter-disciplinary cooperation.

UNECE member States will be invited to debate and adopt the draft declaration during the first day of the [CUDHLM 83rd session](#) (3 October 2022). In addition, leading practitioners present in San Marino, including Lord Norman Foster, will sign the declaration and invite practitioners in the ECE region and beyond to join them in signing, implementing and promoting it worldwide. Other stakeholders, including local and regional governments and their networks as well as other UN Regional Economic Commissions participating at the CUDHLM session will also be invited to promote the declaration.

2. Objectives

The event aims at soliciting the views of practitioners, cities, city networks, UN entities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other relevant stakeholders on the draft San Marino Declaration, including their perspectives on the requisites for ensuring its successful implementation. In particular, they will share their views on existing challenges to sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture and how they could contribute to achieve sustainable, safe, healthy, socially inclusive, climate neutral and circular homes, urban infrastructure and cities.

The event will address the following questions:

- What are the existing challenges to sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture (e.g., in relation to bidding processes or municipal financing)?

² First Meeting of the President of the General Assembly’s Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization, 2 December 2021. Available at <https://www.un.org/pga/76/wp-content/uploads/sites/101/2021/12/PGAs-Advisory-Committee-on-Sustainable-Urbanization-Meeting-Summary.pdf>.

- What are the innovative practices in the areas of sustainable urban design and architecture that enable homes, urban infrastructure and cities to become sustainable, safe, healthy, socially inclusive, climate neutral and circular?
- How to secure political will and resources to implement the San Marino declaration?
- What recommendations would you like to make to States attending the 83rd session of the Committee on Housing, Urban Development and Land Management?

3. Outcome

The outcome of the event will be reported to the 83rd CUDHLM session to inform discussions on promoting the effective implementation of SDG11 and the New Urban Agenda.

4. Format

The event will be held simultaneously in Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room H-207 and in San Marino, Kursaal Congress Centre, in a hybrid format with online connection via Zoom.

5. Language

English

Programme

Co-moderation:

- **Ms. Anh Thu Duong**, Co-Director, Geneva Cities Hub
- **Mr. Andras Szorenyi**, Senior Policy Adviser, Geneva Cities hub

Opening

- **Dmitry Mariyasin**, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECE
- **Ms. Doris Andoni**, Chair, Committee on urban development, housing and land management (CUDHLM)
- **Ms. Beatrice Ferrari**, Vice-President, Geneva Cities Hub

Keynote speeches

- **Ms. Martha Thorne**, Dean, IE School of Architecture and Design in Madrid/Segovia and Former Executive Director, Pritzker Architecture Prize.
- **Ms. Shipra Narang Suri**, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, UN Habitat

Views from architects, urban planners and other experts

- **Mr. José Luis Cortés**, President, International Union of Architects (by video-message)
- **Mr. Daniel Alsina Torra**, Coordinador, Oficina Tècnica Superilla, City of Barcelona, Spain
- **Mr. Laurent Badoux**, Architect/Urbanist, City of Carouge, Switzerland
- **Mr. Jorge Perez Jaramillo**, Architect, former Chief Planner of the City of Medellin, Colombia (by video-message)
- **International Society of City and Regional Planners** (TBC)
- **Mr. Brian Evans**, Professor of urbanism, Mackintosh School of Architecture, Glasgow
- **Mr. Panos Mantziaras**, Director, Fondation Brailard
- **Ms. Olga Chepelenskia**, Founding Director, UNICITI (Uniqueness in cities)
- **Mr. Alexandre Hedjazi**, Director, Global Environment Policy Programme, University of Geneva

Views from cities and city networks

- **Ms. Helene Chartier**, Director, Urban planning and design, C40
- **Mr. Frederic Boyer**, Head of European Office, EU Covenant for Climate & Energy
- **Mr. Vasileios Latino**, Coordinator, Urban Resilience & Climate Adaptation, ICLEI
- **Ms. Eva Baños de Guisasola**, Adviser - Global agendas, Sustainable Development Goals and Climate, Plataforma-CEMR

Views from housing policy experts

- **Ms. Sorcha Edwards**, Secretary General, Housing Europe
- UNECE Real Estate Market Advisory Group (TBC)
- **Ms. Amanda Buchnea**, Manager, UNECE Toronto Centre of Excellence on youth homelessness prevention
- **Mr. Gyorgy Sumeghy**, Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy, Europe and the Middle East, Habitat for Humanity International

Views from the UN entities and closing remarks:

- **Ms. Nathalie Roebbel**, Head of Unit, Urban health, WHO
- **Mr. Gunnar Theissen**, Human Rights Officer, OHCHR
- **Ms. Hana Daoudi**, Secretary to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, UNECE