



United Nations

## HABITAT III HIGH LEVEL ROUNDTABLE

### ***Ecological, Climate Change Resilient, Disaster-responsive Cities***

Tuesday, 18 October 2016

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Teatro Nacional, Casa de la Cultura

#### ***Key Words***

*(Urban Planning, Sustainability, Resilience, Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change, Transport, Energy, Water, Waste, Resources, New Urban Agenda)*

### ***Ecological, Climate Change Resilient, Disaster-responsive Cities***

This roundtable explores both the enormous challenges and opportunities for environmental sustainability and resilience in cities and human settlements, focusing on promising solutions from across the globe. Cities and human settlements are directly or indirectly the largest contributors to unsustainable consumption and production, including carbon emissions. Yet cities offer the largest potential for change, including market and impact opportunity for sustainable products and services.

At the same time, high-densities mean high exposure of large numbers of population and critical infrastructure, for example transport, to potential climate and other environmental and human impacts and threats. Hence cities are increasingly at risk of disasters and more often are recipients of spillover from humanitarian situations. Cities can serve as backbones for countries and regions in times of crisis through planning and preparedness, including health systems.

The New Urban Agenda advocates for a robust shift to environmental sustainability and resilience in urban development through a mix of measures, including nationally appropriate policies, capacity-building, technological and financing approaches. It proposes a focus on integrated resource management, taking into account the effects of consumption and production in one sector has an impact across others. Furthermore, the New Urban Agenda takes into account sustainable mobility systems, renewable energy, and resource efficiency to increase growth and achieve universal access to basic resource-related services while reducing environmental impacts and carbon emissions. The spatial and policy model proposed in the New Urban Agenda is based on compact, and integrated cities and human settlements where appropriate density and connectivity minimize land consumption and promote low-carbon development. In particular, a stronger focus on urban-rural linkages in urban and territorial planning, would ensure sustainable and efficient supply and value chains, while encouraging a progressive transition to a circular economy, and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The New Urban Agenda further puts a proactive risk based approach to resilience and disaster prevention at the core of planning, policies, programmes, actions and operation of critical infrastructure including for climate adaptation.

This High-Level Round-Table session will showcase and identify concrete actions and catalytic partnership initiatives that respond to perceived barriers and ensure realization of the New Urban Agenda's vision of environmentally sustainable and resilient cities and human settlements.

### ***Guiding Questions***

- What are the major opportunities for sustainable resource management within cities and human settlements? How are they being or could be realized, and with what means?
- What actions are driving and thwarting conservation and environmental protection within cities, human settlements, and their surrounding regions? In this regard, what are the best options to reduce dependency on public spending?
- What are the linkages and potential synergies between the New Urban Agenda and the Sendai framework on disaster risk reduction? Who are the key players and their respective roles and contributions to the resilience and disaster risk reduction agendas? What are promising examples of development strategies that shrink humanitarian need and enable cities and human settlements to “build back better?” What are the best options to mobilize non-government resources for resilience?
- What are the linkages and potential synergies between the New Urban Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change? What are the best practices of cities and human settlements that take mitigation and adaptation action – and being empowered to take them?
- What kind of partnerships offer the greatest impact for environmental sustainability and resilience? What makes them impactful, and how can they be replicated or expanded? What mechanisms for public participation are most effective?
- How can urban planning best contribute to environmental sustainability and resilience in cities and human settlements? How can infrastructure (e.g. energy, water, transport, waste) be designed, managed, and financed to be both sustainable and resilient?

