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FOLLOW UP TO TECHNICAL EXPERT MEETINGS  
THURSDAY, 23 OCTOBER, 3 – 6 PM

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**UN-HABITAT UPDATE TO PARTIES ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE  
AREA OF SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION, INCLUDING AN UPDATE ON  
THE CITIES ACTION AREA AT THE 2014 UN CLIMATE SUMMIT.**

22 Oct 2014

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**Dear Mr. Co-Chairs,  
Esteemed Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I am honored to present this statement on behalf of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and update Parties on the progress made in our area of work: sustainable urbanization. We also wish to update parties on the Initiatives and Announcements under the Cities Action Area at the 23 September 2014 UN Climate Summit in New York, convened by the UN Secretary General, H.E. Ban Ki-Moon.

Allow me please to begin by congratulating the co-chairs and the especially the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change for having repeatedly underscored the importance of the urban dimension of climate change by having organized various thematic events over the years which have culminated in this technical dialogue on the urban environment.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Member States have entrusted UN-Habitat with the mandate on Sustainable Urbanization – a mandate which we believe to be closely linked to Climate Change. We took note of the recommendations and considerations brought forward by parties during the Forum and Technical Expert Meeting in June, these considerations will enrich our own work and we try to address these aspects in our work.

During the past several months, we achieved key successes together with our global, national and local partners:

**At the city level**, through our flagship Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI), we are working in secondary cities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and we have recently completed and published various specific city level vulnerability assessments and climate change plans. This work is continuing in more than 40 cities in over 22 countries. For more information, please consult [www.unhabitat.org/ccci](http://www.unhabitat.org/ccci).

Through our pilot project on Urban Low Emission Development Strategies, Urban LEDS, we are piloting the development of climate friendly urban development strategies in cities in 4 emerging economies (Brazil, India, Indonesia and South Africa) together with our implementing partner ICLEI. We assist cities in exploring innovative and sustainable low carbon development in order to leapfrog high-emission development models and avoid long term lock-in of emission trajectories.

Concrete, measurable, reportable and verifiable Greenhouse Gas Emissions reductions and avoidance of future emission are the results of this work, contributing to the impressive emission reduction figures from cities, that our partners from the organized local government sector ICLEI, C40, UCLG and others have reported before.

Together with our partners, unfortunately, we have also identified a critical gap: that today only a small single-digit percentage of cities globally have developed climate change plans. Moreover, the quality of these plans varies – some will lead more directly to financing climate action, and some will not. This gap we are starting to address by launching a multi-partner process towards the development of “international minimum guidelines on city climate change plans”. Our aim is to conclude guidelines by the end of next year.

Through our city level work, we have gained valuable experience for advising city and national governments.

**At the national level:** We advise member states on how to integrate climate change into national urban policies and on how to address urban issues in national climate change policies. UN-Habitat launched a policy note at the Conference of Parties in Warsaw on addressing urban issues in national climate policies, based on the experiences in over 20 countries gained during the last years. These findings serve as the basis for our advisory support to individual member states, including peer review of draft policies. The latest update in this regard is our contribution to the recently approved Papua New Guinea Climate Change Policy.

Another recent example comes from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Funded by the European Commission, UN-Habitat together with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are supporting the national government in engaging with provincial and local governments on developing a coherent and ambitious climate change policy for the country and to capitalize the mutually reinforcing relationship that exists between national governments and cities – the Myanmar Climate Change Alliance.

**On Adaptation:** UN-Habitat was invited to join the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). We contributed to the Guidelines on National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and in May took part in process simulation exercise. Responding to a demand by member states, UN-Habitat joined the NAP Global support program to advise Least Developed Countries on how to include urban issues into the National Adaptation Plan Processes, and we started developing supplements to the official guidelines to this effect. In just under two weeks, a regional workshop for Asia-Pacific will take place in Vanuatu to offer advice to the Pacific governments on the application of the guidelines.

We try to glean knowledge from our work on the ground and feed that into widely used knowledge products. UN-Habitat was cited more than 40 times in ‘urban chapters’ of the latest IPCC Assessment Report, released earlier this year; a success in contributing to research on cities and climate change. We also have begun to publish all our tools and guidelines on cities and climate change at the UN Climate Change Learning Platform – UN CC Learn – a prime repository for governments, professionals and academia.

**Our global efforts** during the past months directed towards the successful delivery of ambitious announcements under the 'Cities Action Area' at the UNSG Climate Summit – 'cities' were one of the handful selected action areas and the UNSG asked UN-Habitat to lead together with UN Special Envoy on Cities and Climate Change.

UN-Habitat actively supported the development of 3 Initiatives. The two initiatives under the cities action area were the Compact of Mayors and the City Climate Finance Leadership Alliance. Another 'urban focused' Initiative was supported under the Transport Action Area: the Urban Electric Mobility Initiative. UN-Habitat understood its role primarily as an integrator and to form and forge broad and innovative partnerships between public, private and non-governmental actors, and global institutions.

**The Compact of Mayors**, is a coalition by the three major global networks representing cities and local governments, C40, ICLEI and UCLG. Other global, regional and national networks of cities are also joining. The compact is an Agreement by City Networks, and then by their members to undertake a transparent and supportive approach to reduce city-level emissions, to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience to climate change, in a consistent and complimentary manner, intending to mirror national level climate protection efforts. These ambitious voluntary city climate commitments will be reported publicly, applying rigorous and consistent reporting standards. Outreach to additional cities and city networks is ongoing and endorsing membership is expected to grow steadily.

The second Initiative, **the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance**, is a partnership between public and private financial institutions, investors, development agencies, and NGOs to remove barriers to urban climate financing and catalyze and accelerate additional capital flows to cities. The Alliance intends to support investment in urban low-carbon climate-resilient infrastructure in low- and middle-income countries; a gap that is estimated by the World Economic Forum and others to amount to 1 trillion USD annually. To our knowledge, it is the first time that such an Alliance with this broad range of private and public actors from different fields of practice come together.

The third Initiative, **the Urban Electric Mobility Initiative** seeks to promote the widespread adoption of electric vehicles in cities, with the partners from the private and public sector having set themselves an ambitious target of 30% by 2030. The Initiative will target at least 100 cities globally.

First follow up meetings to these initiatives have already taken place and operationalization is currently underway. We are confident to report more developments, including initial milestones and work plans by the 20<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties in Lima, Peru.

We of course stand ready to answer related questions. We also seek guidance from Parties on how these Initiatives could be more closely aligned with UNFCCC processes.

**Dear Mr. Co-Chairs,  
Esteemed Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

I sincerely thank you for the opportunity given to UN-Habitat to report back to this illustrative forum. Thank you very much for your attention.