



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

18 July 2017

Excellency,

In my letter dated 14 June, I informed Member States of my intention to convene, on 5 and 6 September 2017, a two-day High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the positioning of UN-Habitat in this regard, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/256.

The meeting will take place in the Trusteeship Chamber, UN Headquarters, New York. It will provide Member States and other stakeholders an opportunity to reflect on implementation of the New Urban Agenda and to discuss the forthcoming Independent Assessment Report of UN-Habitat, to be submitted by the Secretary-General in the coming period.

I take this opportunity to share herewith a concept note and provisional program for the meeting. For additional details, please contact Senior Advisor, Mr. Zhang Yi ([yiz@un.org](mailto:yiz@un.org)). Further information will be made available on my website (<http://www.un.org/pga/71/event-latest/high-level-meeting-on-new-urban-agenda-and-un-habitat/>).

It is my hope that this meeting will attract the highest possible level of participation from your Government.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

To All Permanent Representatives  
and Permanent Observers of the United Nations  
New York

# **High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the positioning of UN-Habitat in this regard.**

**UN Headquarters, New York, 5-6 September 2017**  
**Draft Concept note**

## **Context**

On 21 October 2016, UN Member States agreed the New Urban Agenda at the Habitat III Conference in Quito, Ecuador. This Agenda sets a new global standard for sustainable urban development and will help us rethink how we plan, manage and live in cities. It is roadmap for building cities that can serve as engines of prosperity and centres of cultural and social well-being while protecting the environment. It provides guidance for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and provides the underpinning for actions to address climate change.

In order to maintain momentum around the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and to reflect on the positioning of UN-Habitat in that regard, Member States decided in paragraph 173 of [General Assembly Resolution 71/256](#), to hold a two-day high-level meeting of the General Assembly, to be convened by the President of the General Assembly, during the seventy-first session.

The meeting will discuss, inter alia, best practices, success stories in relation to implementation of the New Urban Agenda. It will also address the measures contained in the Report from the Secretary General's Independent Panel to Assess, Enhance Effectiveness of UN-Habitat after Adoption of New Urban Agenda, which is expected to be published by end July 2017. The report is mandated to cover the following issues:

- a) The normative and operational mandate of UN-Habitat;
- b) The governance structure of UN-Habitat, for more effective, accountable and transparent decision-making, considering alternatives, including universalization of the membership of its Governing Council;
- c) The work of UN-Habitat with national, subnational and local governments and with relevant stakeholders in order to tap the full potential of partnerships;
- d) The financial capability of UN-Habitat

The meeting also comes at a time of broader change at the United Nations, following the adoption of [Resolution 71/243](#) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system in December 2016 as well as the recent publication of the [Secretary-](#)

[General's Report](#) entitled 'Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – Ensuring a Better Future for All'.

## **Objectives**

The two day High Level Meeting will seek to achieve the following:

- Generate ideas and build momentum to support implementation the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including by sharing best practices and success stories relating to the implementation
- Build a greater understanding of the recommendations contained in the Report from the Secretary General's Independent Panel to Assess, Enhance Effectiveness of UN-Habitat.

## **Format**

The meeting will consist of an opening segment, panel discussions and a plenary debate. Member states will have an opportunity to engage with members of the Secretary General's Independent Assessment Panel as well as representatives of local and municipal authorities, mayors, civil society, academia, members of the UN system.

## **Outcome**

A Chair's summary to be prepared by the President of the General Assembly will capture the issues discussed at the meeting.

It will serve as an input to the consideration by the General Assembly's second committee of action to be taken in the light of the recommendations contained in the above-mentioned Secretary General's Report, in its annual resolution under the relevant agenda item.

## **Further information:**

*Website:* <http://www.un.org/pga/71/event-latest/high-level-meeting-on-new-urban-agenda-and-un-habitat/>

*Office of the President:* Mr Zhang Yi ([yiz@un.org](mailto:yiz@un.org)), Mr Michael McManus ([mcmamus@un.org](mailto:mcmamus@un.org))

**High Level Meeting on the New Urban Agenda and UN-Habitat  
Trusteeship Council Chamber, 5-6 September 2017  
Provisional Program**

**September 5, Tuesday**

- 10:00-10:20            Opening Segment
- 10:20-10:30            Introduction of the evidence-based and independent assessment of UN-Habitat by the Independent Panel to Assess, Enhance Effectiveness of UN-Habitat
- Co-Chair of the Independent Assessment Panel (tbc)*
- 10:30-11:45            Interactive Panel 1: the positioning of UN-Habitat in the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda  
- The normative and operational mandate of UN-Habitat  
- The work of UN-Habitat with governments and stakeholders
- Moderated discussion between Independent Assessment Panel members and meeting participants*
- 11:45-13:00            Interactive Panel 2: the positioning of UN-Habitat in the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda  
- The governance structure of UN-Habitat  
- The financial capability of UN-Habitat
- Moderated discussion between Independent Assessment Panel members and meeting participants*
- 15:00-18:00            High Level Segment and Plenary debate: Recommendations contained in the report of the Independent Panel to Assess, Enhance Effectiveness of UN-Habitat
- Statements by member states and other meeting participants*

**September 6, Wednesday**

- 10:00-11:30            Interactive Panel 3: Implementing the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs – the role of the United Nations System
- Panel members to be determined*
- 11.30-13:00            Interactive Panel 4: Implementing the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs – the role of the multi-stakeholder collaboration
- Panel members to be determined*
- 15:00-17:45            Plenary debate 2 – best practices and success stories
- Statements by member states and other meeting participants*
- 17:45-18:00            Closing segment