

# World Urban Forum



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## Cities : Crossroads of Cultures *inclusiveness and integration?*

UN-HABITAT

13 -17 September 2004, Barcelona, Spain



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**The Second World Urban Forum** is a key United Nations event on the international calendar designed to help highlight the problems and possibilities of cities. With 50% of the world's population already living in urban areas, and the figure set to increase within the next 50 years to two thirds of humanity, the Forum is intended to help the world community meet one of the main challenges of the new millennium - Urbanization.

Today, despite the many benefits of globalisation, we are living through a period when international conflicts are being played out on every street corner. At the same time, many cities suffer from an urban historical process that segregates ethnic minorities and excludes the poor. Slums are already home to 1 billion people and, over the next 30 years, that figure could double. This is why the theme of the second World Urban Forum is Cities: Crossroads of cultures, inclusiveness and integration?

**A biennial event**, the World Urban Forum was designated by the UN General Assembly as an informal advisory body on all things urban. The first ever, World Urban Forum, on the theme of "Sustainable Urbanization", was held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2002, and was attended by over a thousand delegates. This informal gathering was an exciting opportunity for representatives of governments, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, urban professionals and academics to catch up with the latest trends in urban planning.

## Dialogue & Debate:

The World Urban Forum centres around dialogues. The aim is to provide an open forum for debate and discussion for everyone from government officials and mayors to academics and slum dwellers. Simply stated, **the World Urban Forum is a think tank** that does away with the formal rules of procedure which usually govern official UN meetings.

At this World Urban Forum there will be nine dialogues that are divided into two distinct clusters.

- Dialogue One that focuses on partnerships for improving urban governance
- Dialogue Two that focuses on thematic issues of concern to cities.



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## The Dialogues

### Dialogue One: Partnerships for improving urban governance

**Urban Cultures: Dialogue on Globalisation and Culture in an Urbanising World** . In an era of globalisation and rapid urbanization, cities are the crossroads of cultures. This dialogue will focus on ways in which cities have responded to the internationalisation of culture. Discussions will be held on how civil society and civic engagement is influenced by political ideas such as democratisation and the rights and responsibilities of citizens; How ethnicity has led to the historical segregation of urban space; How local authorities have encouraged the fusion of cultures leading to urban renewal and the marketing of cities as dynamic tourist destinations. The central message is one of urban cultural integration and inclusion.

**Urban Realities: Dialogue on Innovations and New Urban Policies.** Our planet is being transformed from a largely rural to an urban world. In the developed world, city sprawls into city and industries cause ever more pollution. In the developing world, slums represent the worst of urban poverty and inequality. These challenges require a dynamic approach to urban management: Innovative policies make all the difference. This dialogue will review trends in national policy formulation and urban development. Experiences will be shared of innovative laws and policies in the areas of social inclusion; land; housing and basic services; water and sanitation; local economic development and the role of local authorities.

**Urban Renaissance: Dialogue on the Evolving City.** As engines of growth, cities are surpassing the position once held by national economies. But, despite improvements in the levels of productivity and urban incomes through globalisation, cities are witnessing growing levels of corruption, poverty and social conflict. Unaddressed, these threats could undermine the future of citizens everywhere. This dialogue will chart the evolving role of the city and identify how decentralization can improve accountability, efficiency and equity. It will also explore the role of local governments in meeting the socio-economic and cultural aspirations of communities. The aim of the dialogue is to find ways to empower city authorities within the local, national and international context.

**Urban Governance: Dialogue on Involving Civil Society to Improve Local Governance.** There is growing global consensus on the need to involve civil society in governance, particularly at the local level. This has been supported by increased democratisation and decentralization. This dialogue will look at emerging trends in the engagement of civil society from around the world. Participants will discuss innovative approaches; investigate barriers encountered and successful examples of partnership between governments, local authorities and civil society. The aim is to encourage greater involvement of civil society in city management and urban development.



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## Dialogue Two: Thematic Issues

### **Urban Poor: Dialogue on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers.**

Of the several Millennium Development Goals committed to alleviating poverty, UN-HABITAT is the focal point for Goal 7, Target 11, which aims to achieve, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. This dialogue will provide an opportunity to assess existing tools, programmes and policies to make this goal a reality. The presentations will look at the progress made in the implementation of these targets including the current status of available resources. Ongoing policies, including processes for monitoring and evaluation will be reviewed. The aim is to identify improvements and agree on the way forward.

### **Urban Resources: Dialogue on Financing and Mobilizing Domestic Capital for Slum Upgrading.**

The cost of meeting the Millennium Development Goal of improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers is estimated to be in the region of US\$ 70 billion to US\$ 100 billion. At present international donor support is less than US\$ 300 million a year. While there is an urgent need for more aid targeted at slum upgrading, it is also important to design innovative strategies to mobilize domestic capital. This includes strengthening local housing finance and micro-finance institutions. This dialogue will present the experience of public, private and community sectors in raising funds for slum upgrading and discuss issues such as affordability, risk mitigation, and the need for secure titles for mortgage finance. The aim is to provide guidelines on how to establish strategic partnerships in order to stimulate pro-poor investment in human settlements.

### **Urban Sustainability: Dialogue on Ecology, Economy and Society.**

"Sustainable Urbanization" is a dynamic process that includes environmental, socio-economic and political-institutional dimensions. This dialogue looks at the challenges confronting local authorities and other partners in achieving social and environmental sustainability through better 'urban governance'. This includes assessing the effectiveness of tools such as social inclusion, decentralization, municipal empowerment and the mobilization of local resources through stakeholder cooperation. The aim is to encourage partnerships at every level: at the local level for social inclusion and better environmental governance; at the national level for up-scaling demonstration projects like Localising Agenda 21; finally, at the global level to support implementation of commitments like the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Urban Services: Dialogue on Making the Private Sector Work for the Poor.**

How can the private sector work for the poor? Should the role of large multi-national companies be expanded or suppressed? Unfortunately, the evidence suggests that increasing the share of the urban water market supplied by private operators does not necessarily represent progress towards the Millennium Development Goal committed to halving the number of people without clean water and adequate sanitation by 2015. This dialogue will revisit the debate on privatisation and investigate how key actors in the water sector, including international agencies, public sector regulators and utilities, civil society organizations and deprived residents themselves, can work with private companies. The aim is to find innovative ways to make the private sector more responsive to the needs of the urban poor.

### **Urban Disasters: Dialogue on Sustainable Relief Efforts in**

**Post-Disaster Environments.** Disasters can provide opportunities for sustainable development. But sustainable relief requires that rehabilitation efforts should be integrated into long-term development strategies. This dialogue will revolve around the theme of mobilizing sustainable relief - transforming disasters into opportunities for development. Problems and possibilities will be explored including vulnerability, risk mitigation, planning and response. The aim is develop guidelines for sustainable relief from the perspective of different actors - civil society, local/national authorities and international agencies - in order to provide a framework for future development oriented sustainable relief activities.



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## Networking Events

Apart from the dialogues, over 80 networking events have been planned. The networking events are smaller venues that support the dialogues. They are designed to provide additional opportunities for Habitat Agenda Partners and other organisations to organize specialized events about urban development.

## Exhibition

At the 3000 m<sup>2</sup> exhibition area partners, international, nongovernmental and governmental organisations, universities etc will exhibit their work on displays and video presentations with focus on the future of cities. Several installations will be built for example a 130 m<sup>2</sup> ecological village. There will be presentations and displays for the next World Urban Forum in Vancouver 2006. An internet café will be provided for the delegates. An area of the exhibition is completely assigned for the Urban Youth with a stage for youth events and displays.

## Chairs & Co-Chairs

During the World Urban Forum, a Senior Representative of the Government of Spain will share the responsibilities of the chair with the following distinguished dignitaries:



*Mayor Joan Clos* is the host of the Second World Urban Forum. He has been mayor of Barcelona Spain since September 1997 and is also President of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities of the United Nations.



*Hon. Olivio Dutra*, Minister of Cities of the Government of Brazil. From 1988 to 1992, he was the Mayor of Porto Alegre and was instrumental in initiating a series of reforms including participatory budgeting.

## Participants

The World Urban Forum is an open-ended gathering that welcomes the participation of government representatives, mayors, local authority officials, the private sector, members of non-governmental organisations, civil society, academics, professionals and all those interested in the future of cities.

**Participants can register by contacting UN-HABITAT or on-line at: [www.unhabitat.org/wuf](http://www.unhabitat.org/wuf)**

## Organisation

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## Universal Forum of Cultures

The 2nd World Urban Forum is part of the glittering Universal Forum of Cultures that is being hosted by the city of Barcelona from 9 May to 26 September 2004. It aims to encourage dialogue and reflection around the three central themes of cultural diversity, sustainable development and the conditions necessary for peace.

Jointly organised by the Barcelona City Council, the Catalan Autonomous Government, the Spanish Government, the Universal Forum of Cultures encompass a series of exhibitions, meetings and shows, covering a range of urban experiences including art, design, music and markets throughout the city. Held over 141 days, the Universal Forum of Cultures is expected to attract over a million visitors.

One of the culminating events of the Universal Forum of Cultures will be the World Urban Forum and Barcelona is ready to receive delegates representing governments, local authorities, non-governmental organisations and other experts on urban issues from around the world.

[www.barcelona2004.org](http://www.barcelona2004.org)



## Special Events & Exhibitions

**Do You Have a Solution? A Best Practices Exhibition about the Millennium Development Goals.**

**East African Women's Handicrafts:** Women from East Africa will demonstrate their craft-making skills and sell their products.

**Graffiti Exhibition:** Youth from five cities from around the world will produce street art celebrating urban culture.

**Hip-Hop Concert:** Featuring rap artists and musicians from slums and inner cities in order to raise funds for urban youth initiatives.

**Launch of The State of the World's Cities Report:** UN-HABITAT's flagship publication will focus on globalisation and urban culture.

**My Favela - My Home:** Children will reconstruct a model of their slum as part of the Peace Camp of the Universal Forum on Cultures.

**Water Talks - Are You Listening?** UN-HABITAT and the International Water Secretariat join forces for an exhibition on water.



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## Invitation by Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT

Our greatest cities create joy through diversity. They are meeting places for cultures - places, large or small, that encourage different peoples to come together for trade, work, and intellectual exchange. This is why the theme of the Second World Urban Forum is Cities: Crossroads of Cultures, inclusiveness and integration?

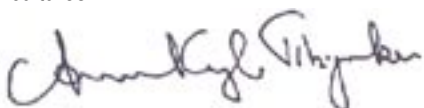
This theme is posed as a question. In these difficult times, how often is civil conflict caused by misunderstandings between peoples who live in the same city, peoples with different beliefs and histories? When there is prejudice and violence of group against group, how often is it the result of using cultural or class difference as a basis for exclusion?

There is no more important task facing a globalising world than to prepare us for living in a multi-cultural society. As the barriers to travel are removed, citizens come face-to-face with their own fears and ignorance. These are almost always baseless. Those with tolerance find that their own lives are enriched by the cultures of others.

Finding ways to live together is what cities are all about, and UN-HABITAT, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, takes pride in supporting and learning from a World Urban Forum that shares this goal. The World Urban Forum is an informal partners' forum that brings together governments, local authorities, civil society, NGOs, researchers, youth and all those who champion the city.

By staging the Universal Forum of Cultures, Barcelona, the seat of a rich Catalonian culture, has shown the world that it is committed to cultural diversity. And by integrating the World Urban Forum into the Universal Forum of Cultures, Barcelona offers the cities and citizens of the world a venue for learning - about cultural inclusion and cultural integration.

With this short message, I invite everyone to join us in Barcelona, for the Second World Urban Forum - a global crossroads of cities and cultures.



Under Secretary-General of the United Nations



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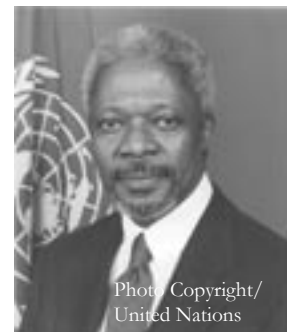


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"Rapid urbanization is fast becoming one of the major challenges facing the international community, and the World Urban Forum offers an opportunity to discuss both the problems and the possibilities of the phenomenon. In a world beset by conflict and intolerance, the theme of the second World Urban Forum -- "Cities: Crossroads of culture, inclusiveness and integration?" -- could not be more relevant. It is critical the world's cities, now home to a majority of the world's population, are safe places where all people can benefit from urban development".

**Mr. Kofi Annan Secretary-General of the United Nations**





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