



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nairobi, 16 July 2013

Distinguished Deputy Secretary-General,

*and dear friends*

UN-Habitat, the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, the American Institute Architects New York Chapter, and the Center for Resilient Design at New Jersey Institute of Technology are hosting a high-level discussion on Urban Resilience on 4 October 2013, as part of the World Habitat Day 2013 celebration.

More than half of the world's large cities, with populations ranging from 2 to 15 million, are located in areas of high earthquake risk. The number of people in large cities exposed to cyclones will increase from 310 to 680 million between 2000 and 2050. The cost of urban disasters during 2011 alone is estimated at over \$380 billion. The experience of New York City in the last year is particularly compelling in this regard. Many new cities exist in fragile ecosystems and economies that must be understood and protected if urban growth is to be sustainable.

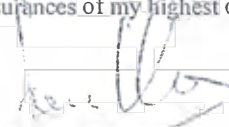
This year's World Habitat Day is focused on urban mobility. As natural disasters often result from expanding settlements in areas of risk around older urban cores, the impact of disasters on urban mobility can be severe. The alternative is a higher density sustainable urbanism, supported by urban mobility. Cities globally are examining and testing options for more resilient design, supported by appropriate urban mobility.

This event will cover key developments in the area of urban planning and design in addressing natural hazards and disasters. It will bring together high-level policy makers, experts and representatives from national and local governments, non-governmental organizations, institutes, foundations and industry.

We would like to invite you to participate in this event and deliver a welcoming message from the Secretary-General. As a former Mayor of Barcelona and now UN-Habitat Executive Director, I believe strongly in the need to strengthen and provide local administrations with tools and approaches to better protect human, economic and natural assets of our towns and cities. Your contribution to the session will be relevant for those organizations, agencies, governments and local authorities that are working on reducing risk.

We look forward to your active engagement and participation in this timely event. A draft agenda of the event is attached. Please feel free to contact UN-Habitat New York Office, through Francesca De Ferrari at [Francesca.deferrari@unhabitat.org](mailto:Francesca.deferrari@unhabitat.org), the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, Aliye P. Celik at [aliyepcelik@gmail.com](mailto:aliyepcelik@gmail.com) or Tom Dallessio, from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, at [thomas.g.dallessio@njit.edu](mailto:thomas.g.dallessio@njit.edu) for further information.

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

  
Dr. Joan Clos  
Under-Secretary-General and  
Executive Director

H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson  
Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

Enclosure

RECEIVED

JUL 24 2013

EOSG/CENTRAL

13. 06559

SCA 108. 005

2771 002



# **UN HABITAT**

**FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE**

**In celebration of**  
**World Habitat Day 2013**  
**Resilient Design for Sustainable Urbanization**  
**Sustainable Urban Mobility**  
**Friday, October 4, 2013**  
**9:00am - 5:30pm, ECOSOC Chamber**  
**UN Headquarters, New York City, New York**

The UN-Habitat, the Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, the Center for Resilient Design at New Jersey Institute of Technology, and the American Institute Architects New York join to host a high-level discussion, which will cover key developments in the area of resilient design. In the years leading to the HABITAT III Conference, and the post 2015 development agenda solutions will be sought for the challenges, in an era of ever increasing urbanization and disasters that impact urban areas. This event will bring together high-level experts and representatives from national and local governments, non-governmental organizations, institutes, foundations and industry, who will present case studies from around the world that respond to natural disasters and identify the resilient design challenges and opportunities that cities might face from disasters.

In celebration of World Habitat Day 2013, cities around the world will celebrate by organizing events addressing Sustainable Urban Mobility. As natural disasters often result from expanding settlements in areas of risk around older urban cores, the alternative is a higher density sustainable urbanism supported by urban mobility. Many new cities exist in fragile ecosystems and economies that must be understood and protected if urban growth is to be sustainable. Disasters strike transportation systems causing tremendous problems regarding mobility. The expected objectives and outcomes of the meeting are:

- 1) To show the relationship between resilient design and sustainable urbanization and sustainable urban mobility;
- 2) To propose innovations and best practices in the area of resilient design, and urban mobility that can be shared among urbanized and urbanizing areas;
- 3) To highlight the need for policies as well as innovative, replicable solutions, ideas, concepts, and approaches that can be used in different contexts for resilient design; and,
- 4) To identify resilient design ideas, concepts and approaches that are replicable.

Please join us on this day to raise awareness about key human settlement and urbanization issues.

For security reasons, all participants must be pre-registered and on the official RSVP list.

**Please RSVP to [HabitatNY@un.org](mailto:HabitatNY@un.org) or call 1.212.963.4200.**

Participants without a valid UN Grounds Pass may enter the UN through the Visitor's Entrance;  
East 46<sup>th</sup> Street & 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue with a valid picture ID

## **AGENDA**

### **World Habitat Day 2013 - Friday, 4 October Resilient Design for Sustainable Urbanization**

**ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

- 9:00 a.m.      Registration
- 10:00 a.m.      Welcome Remarks:  
**H.E. John Ashe**, President UN General Assembly (tbc)  
**H.E. Jan Eliasson**, Deputy Secretary General UN SGs World Habitat Day Message (tbc)
- ECOSOC Message:  
**H.E. Nestor Osorio**, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations, President of ECOSOC
- UN-Habitat World Habitat Day Message:  
**Dr. Joan Clos**, ED UNHabitat
- 10:30 a.m.      Keynote Addresses: (to be confirmed)  
**H.E. Shaun Donovan**, HUD Secretary, Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force Chair  
**H.E. Chris Christie** N.J. Governor  
**H.E. Michael Bloomberg**, NYC Mayor
- 12:00 p.m.      **Lunch** for speakers and invited guests
- 1:30 p.m.      Reconvene:  
**Jill Lerner**, FAIA, 2013 President, AIA New York Chapter
- Introduction of Afternoon Speakers and Agenda:  
**Thomas G. Dallessio** AICP/PP, Center for Resilient Design, NJIT
- H.E. Dawn Zimmer**, Hoboken Mayor (tbc)
- High Level Structured Discussion: Resilient Design – To Build or Not To Build?**  
*Policy discussions continue over whether to rebuild in various places around the world. This panel will explore this concept as well as policies that assess risk, address urban mobility and encourage more resilient design using case studies from around the world.*
- Introduction:  
**Professor Urs Gauchat**, Dean, College of Architecture & Design, NJIT
- Moderator and Chair:  
**H.E. Mr. Mårten Grunditz**, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations, Co-Chair of the Friends of Sustainable Cities (tbc)

Speakers:

- **Hendrick Ovink**, Deputy Director General for Spatial Planning & Water Affairs, Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment
- **Laurie Johnson**, Johnson Consulting & Research
- **Alex Wilson**, Founder and Executive Director, *BuildingGreen*
- **Rick Bell**, Executive Director, AIA New York Chapter  
*The Post Sandy Initiative*

Discussion

3:30 p.m.

**High Level Structured Discussion, Resilient Design for Sustainable Urbanization**

*In a number of cases, “managed retreat” is not an option. What lessons can cities and metropolitan areas learn from places that have recovered from natural disasters? How can leaders apply resilient design principles to create more sustainable communities and improve urban mobility?*

Introduction:

**Professor Lance Jay Brown**, FAIA, ACSA Distinguished Professor, Spitzer School of Architecture, City College of New York (CCNY); President Elect, AIA New York

Moderator and Chair:

**H.E. Albert Chua**, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the UN, Co–Chair of the Friends of Sustainable Cities, (tbc)

Speakers:

- **Nancy Kete**, PhD, Managing Director, Rockefeller Foundation
- **H.E. Luis Felipe Puente Espinosa**, Coordinator for Civil Protection, Mexico (tbc)
- **Fiona Cousins**, Principal, ARUP New York
- **Craig Schwitter**, Principal, Buro Happold, New York

Discussion

5:00pm

Conference Conclusion:

**James McCullar**, FAIA, Co-Chair Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, James McCullar Architecture; Past President, AIA New York

5:15pm

**Aliye Pekin Celik**, PhD., Co-Chair Consortium for Sustainable Urbanization, United Cities and Local Governments, NY

5:20pm

Adjourn