

## Aide Memoire



### **High-level Symposium on Sustainable Cities: Connecting People, Environment and Technology, Co-convened by the United Nations and Toyota City**

**15-16 January 2015, Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture, Japan**

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through its Division for Sustainable Development (DSD/DESA), in collaboration with Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, will co-convene a High-level Symposium on Sustainable Cities: Connecting People, Environment and Technology, in Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, on 15-16 January 2015.

#### **Background**

Cities face multiple challenges. In developing countries, it is estimated that one billion people live in urban slums. They often lack basic social services, such as health care, education, and their neighbourhoods are often without safe drinking water supplies, basic sanitation or public transport.

Globally, cities are fast becoming sources of growing environmental degradation. An estimated 70 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions come from cities and more than 70 per cent of energy is consumed in urban areas. This places cities at the forefront of the climate change agenda. In both developed and developing countries, cities are also responsible for increased water consumption, air pollution, congestion and wastes. Looking ahead, according to the 2014 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects published by the United Nations Population Division, continuing population growth and urbanization are projected to add 2.5 billion people to the world's urban population by 2050, with nearly 90 per cent of the increase concentrated in Asia and Africa.

These challenges notwithstanding, cities are centres of commerce, education and scientific and technological innovation, driving economic growth, creating jobs, and enriching our social and cultural fabric. Promoting sustainable cities and sustainable urbanization will therefore be essential to poverty reduction and to a sustainable future.

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in 2012, in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20), world leaders recognized the importance of sustainable cities and sustainable urbanization. They reaffirmed that cities, if well planned and developed, including through integrated planning and management approaches, can promote economically, socially and environmentally sustainable societies. In this regard, they recognized the need for a holistic approach to urban development and human settlements that provides for affordable housing and infrastructure and prioritizes slum upgrading and urban regeneration mobility. They further recognized the need for conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of cities, as well as the importance of the revitalization of historic districts and the rehabilitation of city centres.

At Rio+20, leaders further committed themselves to promoting sustainable development policies that support inclusive housing and social services; a safe and healthy living environment for all; affordable and sustainable transport and energy; promotion, protection and restoration of safe and green urban spaces; safe and clean drinking water and

sanitation; healthy air quality; generation of decent jobs; and improved urban planning and slum upgrading. They underlined the importance of considering disaster risk reduction, resilience and climate risks in urban planning and the efforts of cities to balance development with rural regions. In the ongoing work on the United Nations post-2015 development agenda, the issue of sustainable cities is being addressed across a number of focus areas highlighting the critical role of cities in creating the future we want.

## **Objectives**

The aim of the High-Level Symposium on Sustainable Cities: Connecting People, Environment and Technology, is to engage government experts, urban planners, mayors and decision-makers in a dialogue on how to improve decision-making that moves us toward sustainable cities and sustainable urbanization. It will provide a timely opportunity for senior decision-makers of both developed and developing countries to have an open and in-depth discussion on challenges in advancing sustainable cities. Specially, it will facilitate sharing experiences and best practice in advancing integrated planning, use of technology and innovation in building sustainable cities that are resilient and green.

## **Participants**

It is expected that the symposium will be attended by up to 200 participants of which about 60 are expected to be from outside Japan. This will include government officials, mayors, the private sector and civil society representatives, as well as experts and representatives from academia and the United Nations system.

## **Venue and dates**

The High-Level Symposium will be held in in Toyota City, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, on 15-16 January 2015.

## **Expected outputs**

A summary of main recommendations of the Symposium will be published after the event as the Toyota Statement.

All meeting materials, including presentations, will be made available from the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform of the United Nations: [sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org).

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## High-level Symposium on Sustainable Cities:

### Connecting People, Environment and Technology, Co-convened by the United Nations and Toyota City

Meitetsu Toyota Hotel, Japan, 15-16 January 2015

#### Programme Outline

##### Day 1: Thursday, 15 January 2015

9:00 –9:30 am	<a href="#">Arrival and Registration at Venue</a>
9:30–10:30 am	<a href="#">PLENARY SESSION: WELCOME STATEMENTS</a>
9:30 –10:30 am	Welcome Remarks by the host and co-organizers
10:30-11:00 am	<a href="#">GROUP PHOTO</a> Coffee/Tea Break
11:00 –12:00 am	<a href="#">PLENARY SESSION: KEYNOTE STATEMENTS</a>
12:00 - 1:30 pm	Lunch Side Event
1:30 – 2:50 pm	<a href="#">THEMATIC SESSION I : SUSTAINABLE CITIES IN THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT Post-2015</a>
2:50 – 3:10 pm	Coffee/Tea Break
3:10 – 4:30 pm	<a href="#">THEMATIC SESSION II : HUMAN CENTERED STRATEGIES TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT: THE ADAPTIVE CITY</a>
4:30-4:50 pm	Coffee/Tea Break
4:50-6:30 pm	<a href="#">THEMATIC SESSION III : CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE SUSTAINABLE CITY</a>
6:30 – 9:00 pm	Reception hosted by the City of Toyota

##### Day 2: Friday, 16 January 2015

9:15-10:40 am	<a href="#">THEMATIC SESSION IV: THE SMART CITY APPROACH</a>
10:40-11:00 am	Coffee/Tea Break
11:00am – 12:20 pm	<a href="#">THEMATIC SESSION V : RESILIENT CITIES: GOOD PRACTICE AND LESSONS LEARNED</a>
12:20 – 1:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 –2:50 pm	<a href="#">THEMATIC SESSION VI: INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES</a>
2:50 - 3:20 pm	Coffee/Tea Break
3:20– 5:00 pm	<a href="#">CLOSING SESSION: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING</a>