

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**VIDEO MESSAGE - UN HABITAT ASSEMBLY
Nairobi, 5 June 2023**

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Excellencies, friends.

The UN Habitat Assembly meets amidst a world in crisis.

Inequalities are increasing.

Global temperatures are rising, with catastrophic effects.

Debt is straining developing countries' economies to the limit.

And halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we are slipping into reverse, leaving more than half the world behind.

UN-Habitat tells us that one billion people still live in slums;

And that the COVID-19 pandemic was projected to push around 150 million people into poverty in 2021.

There is still time to reverse these trends.

But to do so we must fight for the future we want. The future envisaged in the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

Cities are critical battlegrounds.

They generate 70 percent of global emissions.

Already, they house half of humanity.

And by 2050, over two billion more people will call cities home.

We need a strong, inclusive multilateralism to help cities to play their part;

To ensure we have the finance and information, the systems and support needed for them to do so.

My report, Our Common Agenda, calls for a more inclusive multilateralism – recognizing the pivotal role of cities to addressing the challenges we face.

I am confident that this UN Habitat Assembly will advance these aims, including through your ministerial declaration.

Together, we can achieve the sustainable urban future we need to build a peaceful, prosperous and healthy world for all.

Thank you.
