



GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PARTNERS

FIRST ASSEMBLY MEETING

13 APRIL 2015

UNITED NATIONS COMPOUND, GIGIRI
CONFERENCE ROOM 2

NAIROBI, KENYA

The General Assembly of Partners (GAP) is a special initiative proposed by the World Urban Campaign (WUC) to serve as a broad-based deliberative platform for non-governmental partners in order to develop a consensus for a joined outcome document and other related matters for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

This first assembly meeting will convene all interested partners to deliberate on the constitution, road map and first joined statement (*The City We Need*) of the GAP. It will be held as a parallel event one day prior to the Second session of the Preparatory Committee meeting for the Habitat III Conference.

BACKGROUND

The WUC is an advocacy and partnership platform to raise awareness about positive urban change in order to achieve green, productive, safe, healthy, inclusive, and well-planned cities. Its goal is to place the urban agenda at the highest level in development policies. It is coordinated by UN-Habitat and driven by a large number of committed partners – currently 88 partners and networks - from around the world.

The WUC builds on the main legacy of the Habitat II Conference (Istanbul, 1996). In particular, it comes as a direct response to the need for partnerships between governments and civil society organizations, local authorities, the private sector, the research community, trade unions, parliamentarians, professional organizations, youth and women groups, in order to achieve sustainable urban development. This was first concretized after the Conference by two global campaigns (1999) on the themes of *Secure Tenure* and *Good Urban Governance*. Those two campaigns merged in 2009 to form the World Urban Campaign, a single forward looking strategic campaign to mobilize networks of Habitat Agenda partners to implement a shared vision of sustainable urbanization. The WUC is part of UN-Habitat's work programme. It is governed by a steering committee, composed of UN-Habitat partner organizations, and acts as an advisory body to UN-Habitat's Executive Director. Its Secretariat is ensured by UN-Habitat.

In 2010, the World Urban Campaign was launched in Rio de Janeiro at the 5th session of the World Urban Forum, presented as a platform for public, private and civil society actors to elevate urban policies and share tools, campaigning on themes related to sustainable urbanization in order to place cities at the heart of development strategies for change.



At the sixth session of the World Urban Forum (Naples, September 2012), WUC partners endorsed and launched the 'Manifesto for Cities – The Urban Future We Want'¹ a plea statement about the urgency to address urbanization challenges and calling for an inclusive partners process for the Habitat III Conference. The Manifesto sets key principles, establishes essential paths for building a New Global Urban Agenda. By including Habitat III as a target on the WUC road map, partners have clearly outlined the need for generating knowledge and building a global consensus towards a New Urban Agenda through an inclusive participatory mechanism involving all Habitat Agenda Partners and urban stakeholders.

At its 24th session in April 2013, UN-Habitat Governing Council issued a Resolution (24/14) on 'Inputs for and support to the preparatory process of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)' requesting the Secretary General of the Habitat III Conference to strengthen the World Urban Campaign and support National Urban Campaigns. In particular, the Governing Council calls upon the Secretary General of the Conference to continue engaging all Habitat Agenda partners and new partners in the World Urban Campaign in order to identify and collect good practices that could contribute to the new urban agenda and to support national urban campaigns and their communication and outreach activities initiated to contribute to national preparations for Habitat III.

At their 11th Steering Committee Meeting held in Caserta (15 October 2014), WUC partners endorsed the concept of a General Assembly of Partners (GAP) for the Habitat III Conference, conceived as a global deliberative device for non-governmental partners, composed of twelve Constituent Groups: Local Governments, Research and Academia, Civil Society Organizations, Grass-root Organizations, Women, Parliamentarians, Children and Youth, Private Sector and Foundations, Professionals, Trade Unions, Indigenous People, Medias. Proposed by an array of partners united by the World Urban Campaign, the GAP would represent an innovative process, building on the legacy of the Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul in 1996.

The Steering Committee requested the WUC Secretariat to draft formal procedures reflecting their decisions on the purpose and organizational structure of the General Assembly of Partners and formalize a road map leading to the Habitat III Conference.

The WUC Steering Committee will review the Draft GAP Constitution through its Habitat III working group and its Steering Committee.

HABITAT III CONFERENCE

Habitat III is the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development to take place in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016.

In resolution 66/207 and in line with the bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996 and 2016), the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene the Habitat III Conference to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization, to focus on the implementation of a "New Urban Agenda", building on the Habitat Agenda of Istanbul in 1996.

The Conference welcomes the participation of all Member States and relevant stakeholders, including parliamentarians, civil society organizations, regional and local government and municipality representatives, professionals and researchers, academia, foundations, women and youth groups, trade unions, and the private sector, as well as organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental organizations.

¹ <http://www.worldurbancampaign.org/manifesto-for-cities/>



Habitat III will be the first UN global summit after the adoption of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda and, hopefully, a new climate change agreement.

OBJECTIVES

On the basis of the above, the objectives of the first GAP assembly meeting are as follows:

- A. To adopt the GAP Constitution;
- B. To elect the GAP Officers;
- C. To endorse the GAP road map towards Habitat III;
- D. To hold substantive debates on *The City We Need* Document.

PARTICIPATION

Participation and voting in the General Assembly of Partners meetings is open to all World Urban Campaign Partners and other non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC and members of Major Groups (Business and Industry, Children and Youth, Farmers, Indigenous Peoples, Local Authorities, NGOs, Science and Technology, Trade Unions, Women) that have registered to the Second Preparatory Committee. Other organizations that have registered to the Second Preparatory Committee and willing to attend will have a status of Observer.

MORE INFORMATION

www.unhabitat.org/wuc
www.habitat3.org