

# Building cities' resilience for socio-economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and achievement of the SDGs

## Draft programme of the side event to the UN High-level Political Forum

Thursday, 8 July 2021, 1.30 - 3 p.m. CEST

The meeting will be held online via WebEx in English only

### Introduction

As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic unravelled globally with dire economic and social consequences, cities have been the main hotspots for the transmission of the virus and many of them are struggling to mitigate the impacts. At the same time, cities play a critical role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and in the recovery efforts. The United Nations Secretary General has called for an emphasis on *sustainable and inclusive recovery* while addressing the immediate health emergency impacts of COVID-19 (GA Resolution 74/270). To respond to this call, the five United Nations Regional Commissions, UN-Habitat and the UN Capital Development Fund with the support of the UN DESA UNDA Rapid Response funds initiated a global project "*Building urban economic resilience during and after COVID-19*" which addresses various dimensions of economic and financial resilience of cities. The project promotes the "recovering better" principle by including measures for planning and building resilient cities in 16 cities across the five global regions. More information on the project is available at <https://urbanresiliencehub.org/economicresilience/>.

Additionally, many cities globally have developed Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) which provide an assessment of their progress towards achieving the SDGs and are a potentially important tool to support socio-economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

This side event organized by the Government of Albania and seven United Nations agencies, in cooperation with global and regional city networks and cities engaged in the project, will discuss how the local action plans and VLRs can effectively support sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and promote sustainable urban development.

For more information on the event, see the [Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform](#)

### For more information on the meeting, please contact:

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## DRAFT AGENDA

### 13:30-13:45 Welcome and introduction

- Doris Andoni, Chair, UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management; and Head of Housing Division, Ministry of Economy and Finance of Albania
- Ms. Riina Jussila, Sustainable Development Officer, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch, Division for Sustainable Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
- Ms. Shipra Narang Suri, Chief, Urban Practices Branch, Global Solutions Division, UN-Habitat

### 13:45-14:20 Panel discussion “Tools and instruments supporting urban recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and promoting the achievement of SDGs”

#### Panellists (4 minutes interventions):

Representative of the five UN Regional Commissions and UNCDF will present their guidance documents to promote localization of SDGs and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic

Moderator: Esteban Leon, Head, City Resilience Global Programme, UN-Habitat

- Mr. Samiuddin Ahmed, Economic Commission for Asia and Pacific
- Mr. Juan Valle Robles, Economic Commission for Europe
- Mr. Marios Pournaris, Economic Commission for Africa
- Ms. Fiona Littlejohn-Carrillo, Economic Commission for Latin America
- Ms. Sukaina Al Nasrawi, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
- Mr. Dmitry Pozhidaev, Senior Advisor, UN Capital Development Fund.

#### Questions and answers

#### Discussion

### 14:20-14:50 Panel discussion “How the cooperation between the UN organizations, city governments and academia can help to accelerate the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and achieving the SDGs”

#### Panellists (4 minutes interventions):

Moderator: Prof. Spiro N. Pollalis, Professor Emeritus of Design Technology and Management, Harvard Design School, USA

- Mr. Kristian Mjøen, Advisor, Trondheim, Norway
- Mr. Matteo Tarantino, University of Geneva
- Ms. Ahn Thu Duong, Co-Director, Geneva Cities Hub, Geneva Switzerland.

#### Discussion

### 14:50-15:00 Conclusions