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Opening Speech

by

Ms. Tatiana Molcean

United Nations Under-Secretary-General

Executive Secretary

of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

at

Exhibition UN4UkrainianCities "Rebuilding Futures in Kharkiv and Mykolaiv"

Geneva, 30 September 2024

Distinguished guests,

Mayor Oleksandr Senkevych,

Architect Norman Foster,

Architect. Giulio De Carli,

Esteemed colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the opening of the UN4UkrainianCities exhibition "Rebuilding Futures in Kharkiv and Mykolaiv" at the 2024 Forum of Mayors.

The UN4UkrainianCities project embodies UNECE's commitment to sustainable urban development and our support to the reconstruction and revitalization of Ukrainian cities. In the face of unprecedented challenges, we have partnered with visionary architects, dedicated local experts, and committed international organizations to reimagine a brighter, more resilient future for Kharkiv and Mykolaiv.

This exhibition showcases the innovative concept master plans developed for these two historic cities. These plans go beyond mere reconstruction - they represent a holistic vision for transformation. By integrating principles of sustainability, resilience, and human-centered design, we aim to build back better and create truly livable cities for the 21st century.

The concept master plans you will see here are the result of extensive collaboration and community engagement. They incorporate cutting-edge approaches to urban planning while respecting the unique heritage and identity of each city. From revitalizing riverfront areas to creating new innovation districts, from modernizing housing to enhancing public spaces - these plans lay the foundation for vibrant, inclusive urban environments.

I want to express UNECE's deepest gratitude to Lord Foster and Architect De Carli, as well as to the local authorities and citizens of Kharkiv and Mykolaiv, here represented by Mayor Senkevych. Your combined expertise, creativity and resilience have been invaluable in shaping these visions for the future.

As we stand here today, we are not just witnessing plans for rebuilding cities - we are seeing the rebuilding of hope, community, and opportunity. The UN4UkrainianCities project exemplifies how international cooperation and innovative urban planning can pave the way for sustainable development even in the most challenging circumstances.

I encourage you all to explore this exhibition, to engage with the ideas presented, and to draw inspiration for your own urban development efforts. Together, we can create cities that are not just rebuilt, but reborn - more sustainable, more resilient, and more livable than ever before.