



**INTERVENTION OF ICLEI – LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY
AT THE 1ST SESSION OF 2021 MEETING OF UNHABITAT EXECUTIVE BOARD**

7 April 2021

Delivered by Yunus Arikan, Director of Global Advocacy, ICLEI

(The verbal presentation of this intervention is shortened to comply with the 2-minutes time limit.)

Mr. Chair, Madame Executive Director, distinguished members of the UNHabitat Executive Board, ladies and gentlemen,

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network of more than 1,750 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 100+ countries, ICLEI influences sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development. Our Members and team of experts work together through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building to create systemic change for urban sustainability.

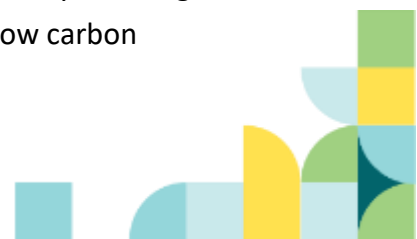
As one of the longlasting partners of UNHabitat, I would like to start by thanking the UNHabitat leadership and the Secretariat for enabling ICLEI to deliver its first intervention at a meeting of UNHabitat Executive Board since its establishment through the 1st UN Habitat Assembly in 2019.

This intervention also complements the statement delivered by our sister organization United Cities and Local Governments pursuant to our collaboration through the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Governments.

ICLEI warmly welcomes the 2020-2025 Strategic Vision of the UNHabitat that offers a more holistic approach to all elements of sustainable, integrated urban and territorial development which will offer numerous benefits to all types of towns, cities and regions across the world.

Within this scope, ICLEI wishes to highlight 2 strategic points as priorities for 2021; climate and UN-wide collaboration.

Climate action is recognized as one of the 4 priority pillars of the UNHabitat Strategic Vision. Since 1995, ICLEI has been facilitating the global advocacy roadmap of local and regional governments in the UNFCCC process as the focal point of the LGMA Constituency. Starting from 2012, ICLEI also has been collaborating with UNHabitat in developing low carbon





development strategies for more than 60 cities across 8 emerging economies through the EU funded UrbanLEDS project. ICLEI and UNHabitat also actively collaborated in the convening of Talanoa Dialogues in 2018 in support of the Fijian government's COP23 presidency. It has to be recalled that UN climate conferences are traditionally led by ministers of environment or climate change but over the past years specific dialogues have been convened with ministers of trade, finance, energy. At this year's UN climate conference in Glasgow (COP26) LGMA Roadmap advocates to convene a dialogue of climate ministers with the ministers of urbanization in order to raise the global climate ambitions by ensuring a more active engagement of local and regional governments and sustainable urban development in the national climate plans (i.e NDCs). Such an initiative can also complement the efforts of the Urban October in 2021 with a focus on climate. Thus, ICLEI and LGMA warmly invite the UN-Habitat Secretariat and the UN-Habitat Executive Board for an active collaboration and leadership in convening the first ever Climate and Urbanization Ministerial at Glasgow COP26.

ICLEI welcomes the appointment of UN-Habitat as the secretariat of the UN Task Force on Future of Cities. This appointment can offer the UN-Habitat and the global urban community new opportunities to advance the effectiveness of UN-Habitat within the UN system, building on the experiences through the HABITAT-III follow-up, 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, UNSG COVID-19 Policy Brief, UN75 and UN Development System reform related processes as well as the delivery of the UN Decade for Sustainability Action. As part of its contributions to the UN75, ICLEI developed a blueprint to enhance the collaboration of the UN system with the local and regional governments, containing a number of innovative proposals for the global, regional, national and local levels. Within this scope, ICLEI expresses its readiness to provide active contributions to support the work of the UN-Habitat Secretariat and other relevant agencies so that the UN Task Force on Future of Cities delivers ambitious outcomes to ensure the sustainability of the Urban World in the 21st century.

I thank you for your attention.