



UN HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA A CALL TO ACTION ON SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

Proposal for a Side Event associated with the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

- **Name of the event:** 'Call to Action on Sustainable Urbanisation across the Commonwealth'
- **Organizer:** Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Initiative (a collaboration between the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the Commonwealth Association of Architects, the Commonwealth Association of Planners and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda and The Prince's Foundation.
- **Partners:** As above.
- **Registration link:** Zoom Webinar, link to follow.
- **Location and/or Webcast link:** This will be a virtual event. Link to follow.
- **Short Concept Note:**

With 70% of global carbon emissions attributable to cities and Commonwealth countries forecast to account for nearly 50% of the growth in cities to 2050, urbanisation is a defining issue for the Commonwealth. The Call to Action on Sustainable Urbanisation across the Commonwealth recognises the need for a cross-sector, inter-disciplinary response which will leverage the power of the Commonwealth to respond to the nature and scale of the challenge. The Call to Action is the product of an initiative developed by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA), the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) in collaboration with The Government of Rwanda and The Prince's Foundation, and aims to:

- bring a greater focus to bear on sustainable urbanisation in Commonwealth policy making,
- mobilise the power of the Commonwealth to work in a more integrated manner across its various networks toward multi-level governance and sustainable urbanisation,
- develop a programme of practical action to help deliver sustainable cities and human settlements across the Commonwealth.

The side event will bring together Commonwealth & Non-Commonwealth partners to reflect on progress to date while looking forwards to the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting taking place in Kigali Rwanda, in June and considering the ways in which the Call to Action can be transformed into a programme of practical action.

Progress to date has included:

- 1) **Fact finding:** The publication of a Survey of the Built Environment Professions in the Commonwealth which identified a critical lack of capacity in many of the Commonwealth countries which are urbanising most rapidly and are among the most vulnerable to climate change impacts
 - 2) **Advocacy:** The delivery of a comprehensive programme of events focused on awareness raising and advocacy, attracting over 2,000 organisations/participants from 44 Commonwealth and 44 non-Commonwealth countries
 - 3) **Engagement:** The development of an inter-disciplinary Commonwealth Youth Network
 - 4) **Education:** The delivery of a programme of Continuing Professional Development focused on sustainable urbanisation and climate literacy.
 - 5) **Transformative pilot programme (top down):** The implementation of the Lusaka Mapping Pilot as an enabler of better urban planning, using advanced technology to map the city of Lusaka, 65% of whose residents live in informal settlements (replicable and scalable)
 - 6) **Transformative pilot programme (bottom up):** The development and implementation of a Rapid Planning Toolkit to support communities lacking access to professional expertise
 - 7) **Publication of the Call to Action to Commonwealth Member States**
- **Focal point** Mr Peter Oborn (peter.oborn@peteroborn.com) and Ms Alice Preston-Jones (alice.preston-jones@princes-foundation.org)
 - **Themes to which this side event contributes:** fighting inequalities, sustainable urban economic development, climate action and localizing global agendas.

Mobilising the Commonwealth to advance sustainable urbanisation as a driver of development