



**- Observance of Urban October 2019 -**

**The 14th Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS 2019)**

**Draft Outline Updated on 13<sup>rd</sup> May**

**Date:** September 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Venue:** The United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa (UNCC-AA)

**Theme:** Sustainable Development of Cities and Human Settlements in the Digital Era

The 14th Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS 2019) is being planned to be held on September 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in the United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa (UNCC-AA). As one of the most important global congresses on the urban agenda, sustainable cities and human settlements, as well as an observance of Urban October, GFHS 2019 will focus on the theme, “Sustainable Development of Cities and Human Settlements in the Digital Era”, and will be supporting campaigns on smart city and the use of digital technology for inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.

**Background**

Sustainable Development Goal 11 of the United Nations is committed to making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. As part of an integrated agenda, cities and human settlements have an important role to play across the 17-goal spectrum of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The New Urban Agenda sets out a shared vision for the future of the city and provides a systematic implementation plan, realistic methodology and pragmatic ideas for achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 11.

According to an International Telecommunication Union (ITU) report, 51.2 percent of the global population, or 3.9 billion people, were using the Internet at the end of 2018. Countries around the world are making great strides toward building a more inclusive global information society. The digital revolution, led by information technology characterized by mobile internet, big data, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and blockchain technology, is on the rise. While promoting economic and social transformation, information technology and the digital economy have also triggered comprehensive and profound changes for urban development and human settlements, which is reshaping our cities and communities. Article 66 of the New Urban Agenda states that “we commit ourselves to adopting a smart-city approach that makes use of opportunities from digitalization, clean energy and technologies, as well as innovative transport technologies, thus providing

options for inhabitants to make more environmentally friendly choices and boost sustainable economic growth and enabling cities to improve their service delivery.”

Against this background, the **14th Global Forum on Human Settlements** is scheduled to take place on September 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in the United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa (UNCC-AA). Centered around the theme “Sustainable Development of Cities and Human Settlements in the Digital Era”, the Forum will explore in-depth how to harness the huge opportunities arising from the digital revolution, to upgrade the planning, construction and management of cities and human settlements and make them greener, smarter and more sustainable. This would promote enhanced green growth, poverty alleviation, urban resilience, ecosystem conservation, livability and inclusiveness as well as respond more effectively to climate change especially in Africa region, and build stronger, enhanced, and lasting partnerships for sustainability, thereby realizing SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda. Concerned national dignitaries, senior officials from UN and other international organizations, mayors, heads of multinational corporations, well-known experts and scholars will attend the conference and contribute to its deliberations and outcome.



The United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa (UNCC-AA)

## Objectives

GFHS 2019 aims to provide a valuable platform for high-level dialogue among participating stakeholders from around the world especially from Africa region to look for leapfrogging opportunities that digital revolution is bringing for sustainable cities and human settlements, and to share innovative policies, strategies, technologies and examples on sustainable cities and human settlements.

It also commits to strengthen advocacy, capacity building, foster new partnerships, boost urban innovation, accelerate effective actions, and support various parts of Africa and beyond, to develop inclusive green sustainable economy, to promote pragmatic cooperation in the context of the “Belt and Road Initiative” and to drive progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda.

Furthermore, GFHS 2019 will provide inputs to the World Urban Campaign activities and through it substantively contribute to the outcomes of World Urban Forum 2020 in Abu Dhabi in February 2020.

## Co-organizers

Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS)

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

World Urban Campaign (WUC)

## In cooperation with

Universal Peace Federation (UPF)

Global One Belt One Road Association (GOBA)

Global Blockchain Alliance (GBA)

World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO)

China Research Society of Urban Development (CRSUD)

## Proposed main topics

The Forum will address the key issues including:

1. Smart sustainable city
2. WUC: connecting global sustainability agendas and private sector local actions
3. Digital technology, innovation, and sustainability in Africa
4. Smart planning and design & sustainable human settlements
5. Financing for sustainable urban infrastructure
6. Renewable energy, climate actions and urban resilience
7. International Green Model City Initiative - urban innovation and green growth
8. Blockchain technology and smart city governance
9. Prefabricated building and green smart community
10. Family values and happiness in cities

## Provisional Agenda at a glance

### September 5, Thursday

Time	Main Activity	Venue
09:00 - 09:30	<b>Registration</b>	UNCC-AA
09:30 - 10:30	<b>Opening Ceremony &amp; Observance of Urban October 2019</b>	(SI E/C)
10:30 - 11:00	Break and Exhibition	

11:00 - 12:00	<b>Plenary Session 1</b> Keynote speech: digital revolution challenges and opportunities for sustainable cities and human settlements
13:30 - 15:15	<b>Plenary Session 2</b> High-level dialogue: Safe, Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable City – policies, technologies and practices
15:15 – 15: 45	Break and Exhibition
15:45 - 17:15	<b>Parallel Session 3a</b> <b>Digital technology, innovation, and sustainability in Africa</b>
	<b>Parallel Session 3b</b> <b>Smart sustainable city</b>

### September 6, Friday

Time	Main Activity	Venue
09:00 - 10:30	<b>Parallel Session 4a</b> The World Urban Campaign: connecting global sustainability agendas and private sector local actions	UNCC-AA (SI E/C)
	<b>Parallel Session 4b</b> Renewable energy, climate actions and urban resilience / Prefabricated building and green smart community	
10:30 - 11:00	Break	
11:00 - 12:30	<b>Parallel Session 5a</b> Smart planning and design & sustainable human settlements / International Green Model City Initiative	
	<b>Parallel Session 5b</b> Financing for sustainable urban infrastructure	
13:50 - 15:20	<b>Parallel Session 6a</b> Blockchain technology and smart city governance	
	<b>Parallel Session 6b</b> Family values and happiness in cities	
15:20 - 15:50	Break	
15:50 - 16:50	<b>Closing Session</b> Fostering innovation and partnerships for better quality of life in cities and communities – The Way Forward	
18:30 - 20:30	<b>Reception &amp; Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements Awards Ceremony 2019</b>	

## **Associated activities**

### ***1. Awards Ceremony***

The “Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements Awards Ceremony 2019” (SCAHS 2019) will be held in an appropriately befitting way to recognize excellence in sustainable development practices and innovations. SCAHS is a worldwide prize annually awarded by Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS). It is focused on promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development especially SDG 11.

The SCAHS has been successfully held on thirteen previous occasions with award winners belonging to all regions of the world, and has created a high-level interactive platform for insiders to share and spread knowledge and experience, exerting significant demonstration effects. GFHS Secretariat accepts award applications all year round, from cities, scenic spots, communities, buildings, planning and design, green and smart technology, transport projects as well as individuals including children.

### ***2. Closed-door consultation***

The closed-door consultation will be organized under the auspices of GFHS to provide an opportunity for substantial discussion on practical cooperation. The meeting is by invitation only, and will be attended by mayors, investors, developers and leaders from private sector. It is aimed at facilitating project cooperation among cities, international organizations and the private sector.

### ***3. Exhibition***

Small-scale exhibition will be held at the conference venue to showcase the initiatives, programs, technologies, and practices that promote sustainable urban development and contribute to the implementation of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. The form of exhibition includes booths, display panels and roll up banners. The exhibitors are mainly comprised of forum sponsors, organizers, and partners.

### ***4. Study visit***

The city tour and study visit will be arranged. The main purpose is to combine the technical discussions at the forum with site visit to some innovative and sustainable projects and cases. More detailed information will be provided separately.

## **Participation**

The general registration to the main forum is free of charge, but participants are responsible for the payment of their travel related expenses. Simultaneous interpretation between English and Chinese will be provided throughout the Forum.

## **Targeted participants**

The Forum is planned to bring together around 500 participants including senior officials from the United Nations and other international organizations, dignitaries and diplomatic envoys from relevant countries, government representatives and city mayors, local administrators, business leaders, investors and officers from financial institutes, recognized experts and scholars, NGO principals, practitioners from the field of planning and design, architecture, energy, transport, tourism, digital information technology, real estate development and environmental protection, as well as well-known women and children representatives.





Group photo of participants at the opening session, GFHS 2018, October 30, UNCC in Bangkok

## Contact

For more information please explore the website: [www.gfhsforum.org](http://www.gfhsforum.org) or feel free to contact Ms. Christine He at e-mail: [christine.he@gfhsforum.org](mailto:christine.he@gfhsforum.org); Ms. Sabrina He at e-mail: [Sabrina.he@gfhsforum.org](mailto:Sabrina.he@gfhsforum.org).

## Appendix

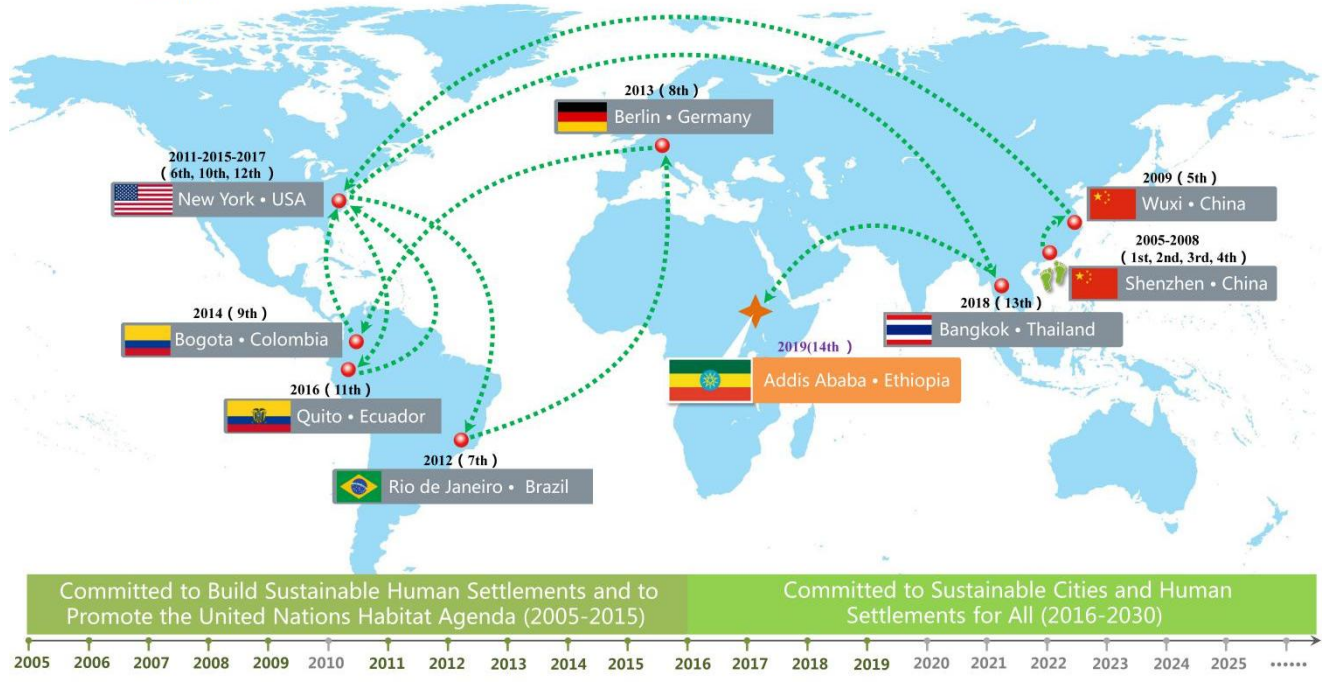
### ***Briefing note of Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS)***

*Global Forum on Human Settlements (GFHS) is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit international organization, legally chartered in the State of New York, USA. GFHS has been granted the Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC and associated with UNDP, and is an Associate Partner of World Urban Campaign which is coordinated by UN-Habitat. Also GFHS is a member of UNEP-SBCI and Global Alliance of Buildings and Construction coordinated by UN Environment. GFHS is committed to sustainable cities and human settlements for all, and acts as a world platform for high-level dialogue on sustainable cities and human settlements.*

*GFHS has successfully organized a number of events in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and other UN agencies. The annual conference of Global Forum on Human Settlements has been productively held in China, the United States, Brazil, Germany, Colombia, Ecuador and Thailand for 13 consecutive years, which has contributed to the implementation of MDGs, UN Habitat Agenda, SDGs, Paris Agreement and New Urban Agenda. More than 14,000 representatives from all sectors of society have attended the Forums and the distinguished guests present include state leaders, UN senior officials, ministers, mayors, business leaders, heads of international organizations, well-known experts, and principals of NGOs, among others.*



## The Roadmap of Annual Sessions of Global Forum on Human Settlements ( 2005-2019 )



## Diagram of Outcomes & Contributions of the Annual Sessions of Global Forum on Human Settlements (2005-2019)

