

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD CITIES DAY

31 October 2022

On this World Cities Day, we recognize the critical role of urban areas in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Next year marks the mid-point to the deadline to reach the SDGs.

Yet an honest look reveals a bleak picture.

Across a range of critical goals – from poverty and hunger to gender equality and education – we are not seeing progress, but backsliding.

The consequences are dramatic: escalating climate chaos, growing poverty, rising inequalities, and more.

We must change course – and we can.

This year’s theme of World Cities Day highlights how: ‘Act Local to Go Global.’

The goals are global in scope, but implementation is local.

And that means implementation happens largely in cities:

Today, more than half of all people live in urban areas – by 2050, over two-thirds will do so.

Cities generate over 80 per cent of global GDP – and account for over 70 per cent of carbon emissions.

Many cities are already leading the transition to renewable energy, setting credible net-zero targets and building climate-resilient infrastructure.

I encourage them to work with their governments and sister cities across the world to share experiences and help raise ambition.

The actions cities take locally to create a sustainable world will reverberate globally.

And the transformative policies they pioneer today can catalyze change that will save lives and livelihoods everywhere tomorrow.

On World Cities Day, let us resolve to work with cities to build a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient world for all.
