Record attendance expected at World Urban Forum

21,000 register for world’s leading urban event

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil will today open the world’s biggest global meeting on cities with a record number of delegates expected in Rio de Janeiro.

The fifth session of the World Urban Forum has attracted over 21,000 registrants including high profile attendees such as President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifah of Bahrain, Prime Minister Saad Hariri of Lebanon, Vice-President Noli de Castro of the Philippines, and US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Shaun Donovan.

High on the agenda this year will be the rebuilding of Haiti in the wake of a devastating earthquake in January that claimed more than 230,000 lives.

The broad theme of the World Urban Forum, *Bridging the Urban Divide*, is aimed at narrowing the gaps in many areas of everyday city life including the gulf between rich and poor; the gulf between governments and city authorities; and the gulf between government, local authorities and the law when it comes to gender and youth matters.

“The emerging picture of the 21st century city fits many descriptions. Some are centres of rapid industrial growth and wealth creation, often accompanied by harmful waste and pollution. Others are characterized by stagnation, urban decay and rising social exclusion and intolerance,” said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in a foreword to the new report from UN-HABITAT’s Global Urban Observatory. The views of over 700 young people in five representative cities were collected through a survey and local discussion groups, to identify the factors behind unequal opportunities in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres. The cities featured in the survey were; Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Mumbai (India), Kingston (Jamaica), Nairobi (Kenya) and Lagos (Nigeria).

The principal author of the report, Professor Oyebanji Oyeyinka, Director of UN-HABITAT’s Monitoring and Research Division, said it was important that research was conducted with youths themselves to gain their perspectives on different aspects of life. “Young people need to be engaged in the governance of our own country, while also having the options of both formal and informal education,” said Professor Oyeyinka.

Erik Berg, Senior Advisor at the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs Norway, whose support and dedication for many years has provided extensive funds for UN-HABITAT in particular for the Partners and Youth Section, emphasized the importance of the report in its scrutinizing of the problems relating to youth inequality and poverty.

“Young people today are increasingly the leaders of today,” said Mr. Berg. “The youth around the world recognize the problems and challenges they have to face, and in many cases know the solutions.”
**Rio Highlights**

**SIGHTS**

Sugar Loaf Mountain
One of Rio’s dazzling icons, Pão de Açúcar (Sugarloaf) offers a vision of Rio at its most disarming. Following a steep ascent up the mountain, you’ll be rewarded with superb views of Rio’s gorgeous shoreline, and the city planted among the green peaks. For prime views of the cidade maravilhosa, go around sunset on a clear day.

AlbaMar
Perched over the water, this old favourite offers excellent views of the Baía de Guanabara and Niterói and serves up tasty seafood dishes. Favourites include shrimp curry.

**CULTURE**

Museu do Arte Contemporânea (MAC)
Designed by Brazil’s most famous architect, Oscar Niemeyer, the MAC has a wild curvilinear design that blooms like a flower (or more prosaically, a flying saucer) against sweeping bay views. Unfortunately, the exhibits inside the museum are somewhat less inspiring. To get to the MAC from the Niterói ferry terminal, turn right as you leave and walk about 50m across to the bus terminal in the middle of the road; a 47B minibus will drop you at the museum door.

Museum of Art (MAC)  
Museu de Arte Contemporânea (MAC)  
Photo © Flavio Scarpa

Beco do Rato
One of Lapa’s classic samba spots, this tiny bar has excellent live groups playing to a cheerful crowd. The outdoor seating and informal setting are an unbeatable mix. Marcio, the friendly owner, hails from Minas Gerais; to get the night started, ask him for a tasty cachaca (cane liquor) from his home state. Friday nights are particularly good to catch live samba.

**FOOD**

Aquim
This new neighbourhood favourite sells beautifully designed chocolates out of its picture-book store. The artisanal truffles, chocolate cakes and mini tarts look too good to eat - though not doing so would be a serious mistake.

*Av. Atlântica de Pássaros 1321, Lapa. T. +55 21 2508 9574*

**DRINK**

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**Today’s Schedule**

08:00 - 08:30  
Caucus meetings

08:30 - 09:00  
Opening Ceremony and Introduction of Debate

09:00 - 09:30  
Consultation:

09:30 - 10:00  
Panel: 

10:00 - 10:30  
Panel: 

10:30 - 11:00  
Panel: 

11:00 - 11:30  
Panel:

11:30 - 12:00  
Panel: 

12:00 - 12:30  
Panel:

12:30 - 13:00  
Lunch

13:00 - 13:30  
Roundtable Ministers

13:30 - 14:00  
Roundtable Mayors

14:00 - 14:30  
Roundtable Events

14:30 - 15:00  
Roundtable Events

15:00 - 15:30  
Roundtable Events

15:30 - 16:00  
Roundtable Events

16:00 - 16:30  
Roundtable Events

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17:30 - 18:00  
Roundtable Events

18:00 - 18:30  
Roundtable Events

18:30 - 19:00  
Roundtable Events

19:00 - 20:00  
Government of Brazil Reception for all participants

**PICK OF THE DAY**

**MAYORS’ ROUNDTABLE**

The panel will discuss how social inclusion and urban infrastructure can improve access and promote inclusive cities, taking into account the needs of all different urban actors. The discussion will be the continuation of the Mayors’ Roundtable at WUF 4 that discussed the role of mayors and local authorities in the search for harmonious urbanization, stressing the relevance of decentralization in promoting urban harmony and social inclusion. The session will examine criteria that define success, identify common factors, and consider opportunities for developing effective integration policies and programmes that lead to inclusive cities. It will also give an opportunity to take stock of legislation, policies and bylaws passed, discussed, or debated in various fora on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and achieving the MDG’s.

**Confirmed speakers:**
- Moderator: Mr. Carl Mosafield, Tallberg foundation.
- Ms. Inga Bjork-Klevby, Deputy Executive Director, UN-HABITAT.
- Mr. Anders Knape, President UNACLA (EU).
- Mr. Elisabeth Gateau, President UCLG (EU).
- Eduardo Paes, mayor of Rio de Janeiro.
- Mr. Joao Filipe Scarpetelini, Peace Child International, Brazil.
- Mr. Miguel Lifschitz, Rosario, Argentina

The Mayor’s Roundtable will take place between 16:30-19:00 in room W3-11.

**PRESS**

**Official Press Conference bookings for WUF5, Rio de Janeiro**

**Please contact:**  
Sharad Shankardass, Tel: 8288 2983; Zahra Hassan, Tel: 8348 8507; Manuel Manrique, Tel: 8420 3071
Obama sends senior delegation to Rio Forum

US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan will lead a high-level delegation to the World Urban Forum.

“The US delegation to the World Urban Forum, which I’m honoured to head, relishes this chance to listen, learn and share our own lessons from the laboratories of change that are our metropolitan areas,” said Mr. Donovan.

The delegation joining Secretary Donovan here in Rio de Janeiro includes the US Housing and Urban Development Department’s Deputy Secretary Ron Sims, and Assistant Secretaries Raphael Bostic, Mercedes Marquez, and John Travisina. The White House will be represented by Adolfo Carrion, Director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs.

“I relish this chance to listen, learn and share lessons.” Secretary Donovan

Mr. Donovan said that the Obama Administration understands that the United States has an enormous stake in ensuring that countries across the globe usher in a new era of sustainable economic growth and development. As well as opening up new markets for green technology in US products, this implies reversing the development. As well as opening up new markets for green technology in US products, this implies reversing the effects of global warming and perhaps most importantly, technology in US products, this implies reversing the development.

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Gender inequality is damaging developing countries

Executive Director calls for more education for girls

The first Gender Equality Action Assembly was launched on Friday morning with an impassioned introduction from Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT where she spoke of how gender inequality in the developing world made her “blood boil”.

As she prepares to leave office, she spoke of her conviction that sustainable urbanization is the challenge of the 21st century, and that the cornerstone of that challenge is gender issues.

“It was almost a year ago at our headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, that the member countries of the UN-HABITAT Governing Council stipulated in a resolution that we must come up with a better, more focused approach to promote gender equality and to empower women,” said Mrs. Tibaijuka.

The Executive Director spoke of the damaging effects of gender inequality throughout the developing world and said that the need for tracking progress on gender equality in towns and cities could not be more urgent or relevant. “Gender inequalities are a dimension of urban inequality that restricts economic progress and prevents citizens from enjoying equitable opportunities to health, safety and well-being,” said Mrs. Tibaijuka.

Citing a 2006 survey from Bangladesh, which showed that approximately 20 percent of families in urban areas had water piped to their homes, she said that in the vast majority of cases women were the ones tasked with water collection.

“In the slums of Dhaka, for instance, women have to collect water in 89 percent of households, compared to men in only 5 percent,” said Mrs. Tibaijuka. “And when children collect water, it was still more often girls than boys. And when girls are fetching and carrying water, they’re not in school.”

Another UN-HABITAT study from Bolivia suggested that women living in slums had much less knowledge about sexual health, compared to women outside the slums. According to Mrs. Tibaijuka, in slums women were only about half as likely to be aware of basic ways to avoid AIDS, compared to women living in non-slum areas.

The Executive Director reminded delegates that with less than five years to the 2015 target of achieving the Millennium Development Goals there was no doubt that the success in attaining the Goals would depend on how well women’s needs are addressed and how women are empowered.

As well as action to promote equality and women’s rights, the Gender Equality Action Assembly is seeking to establish a network of women ministers, mayors and parliamentarians working in the areas of housing, urban development and local government.

“Our Gender Equality Action Plan is the result of a collaborative effort with you, our partners,” said Mrs. Tibaijuka. “It is forged in our shared vision of gender equality as a pillar of sustainable urbanization and our efforts here, during this two-day assembly on the Gender Equality Action Plan, are helping to narrow the urban divide.”
LEARN HOW TO CREATE SAFE, VIBRANT, AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, (CMHC) is offering two sessions at the World Urban Forum 5 (WUF5) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:

**Monday, March 22, 2:00PM – 4:00PM, Room W3 – 1**
Mitigating Urbanization through Integrated Urban and Rural Strategies (Networking Session)

Canadian strategies that mitigate urbanization stresses by strengthening smaller and/or rural communities

For more information on how CMHC International can develop customized sustainable community planning training for you and for information on other services in housing and housing finance contact Carmen Foglietta at cfogliet@cmhc.ca 613 748 2124 or visit the CMHC website at www.cmhc.ca/International.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation is Canada’s national housing agency.

Useful information

**Onsite accreditation**
Delegates are requested to collect their badges, on arrival, at the registration desk in Warehouse 2 Entrance of the World Urban Forum Venue. Onsite accreditation is open at these times:

- 07:00 - 17:00 from Wednesday 17 March – Saturday 20 March
- 07:00 - 19:00 on Sunday 21 March and Monday 22 March;
- 07:00 - 17:00 from Tuesday 23 – Thursday 25 March; and
- 07:00 – 12:00 on Friday 26 March.

Badges will be issued to delegates upon presentation of their identification. For security reasons, delegates are requested to wear their badges at all times while in the venue.

**List of participants**
A list of participants will be posted on the World Urban Forum website www.unhabitat.org/wuf after the Forum. Delegates are requested to check the information on the list pertaining to them and notify wufregistration@unhabitat.org of any corrections.

**Important information for speakers and presenters**
To check that your presentations will work on the equipment used in the meeting rooms and to screen files for viruses, please go to the Speakers Lounge in Warehouse 2, Room W2-18 at least 30 minutes before the time of the presentation.

**Press conferences**
The Media Centre in Warehouse 5 will be open during meeting hours. For more information on press materials and on how to organize press conferences and interviews with delegates to the World Urban Forum, please contact:

habitat.press@unhabitat.org

or Mr. S. Shankardass, cell: +254 733 760 332, e-mail: sharad.shankardass@unhabitat.org,
or Ms. Z. Hassan, cell: +55 21 8348 8587, e-mail: zahira.hassan@unhabitat.org
or Jeanette Elsworth, email: jeanette.elsworth@unhabitat.org,
or Manuel Manrique, Tel: +55 21 8420 3071, e-mail: manrique@unhabitat.org
or Jeanette Elsworth

**Video viewings**
Delegates who wish to show videos at the Forum Cinema should contact Ms. Anne Wachera, e-mail:Anne.Wachera@unhabitat.org

**Languages**
The Opening Ceremony will be held in English, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Arabic, Russian and Chinese. The Closing Ceremony will be held in English, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Arabic, and Russian. Dialogues, Thematic Open Debates and most Special Sessions will be held in English, Portuguese, Spanish and French. Other sessions are in English unless otherwise indicated.

**Internet Access**
Free wireless internet access is available throughout the venue. Please select the “WUF” wireless network. No password is required.

**Transport for delegates**
A free metro pass is available in delegates’ bags for the duration of the World Urban Forum. A shuttle bus will take delegates from the Cinelândia metro station to the venue from Monday 22 March.

**First aid**
Medical Centres can be found in Warehouses 2 and 5, and the Annex between Warehouse 4 and 5.

**DSA Payments**
Daily Subsistence Allowance payments for delegates who received assistance to attend the Forum are payable in Warehouse 5, Room W5-31. DSA will be paid upon submission of an original passport, ticket and boarding passes and presentation of the sponsorship letter from UN-HABITAT. For more information, contact Karina Rossi on +55 21 8288-2905.

**Restaurant**
The restaurant is in Annex 2/3, between Warehouse 2 and 3.

**Information**
The main information desk is at the main entrance of the venue. Additional information desks can be found along the main walkway.

**Bilateral meetings with the UN-HABITAT Executive Director**
To make an appointment for a bilateral meeting with the UN-HABITAT Executive Director at the Forum, please call +55 21 3514-2834 or contact Ms. Portia Machancoses at: portia.machancoses@unhabitat.org

**Bilateral meetings with the UN-HABITAT Deputy Executive Director**
To make an appointment for a bilateral meeting with the UN-HABITAT Deputy Executive Director at the Forum, please call +55 21 3514-2829 or contact Ms. Jaana Mioch at: jaana.mioch@unhabitat.org
VOX POP: The Delegates’ View
Why are you attending the World Urban Forum?

Regina Pritchett, graduate student, Chicago, USA
There is a lot of discussion on gender and land, and that is what I am focusing my research on, so I wanted to be a part of that conversation. I wanted to hear the most current debates on gender and land, and I think that the World Urban Forum did a great job of bringing all sorts of people together. I know that there are people here from grassroots all the way up to national governments, so to get those people in the same room was really important. In yesterday’s assembly they talked a lot about network building, telling each other about what’s going on, and so people can talk to people who can help tackle issues. Collaboratively, they can address anything much better than any one group possible could.

Alvaro Uribe, Urban Planner, International Centre for Development, Panama
To meet friends and network. I’m participating in a networking event, Central American Public Policies. We’ll be comparing different experiences in our cities. In Panama we’re starting a new wave of urban planning within a new legal environment that has just been created.

Rita Rachele Dandavino, Coordinator of Metropolis Women International Network, Montreal, Canada
We want to make people aware that women have to be in all decision-making processes within city administrations and governments.

“We want to make people aware that women have to be in all decision-making processes within city administrations and governments.”

Rita Rachele Dandavino, Canada

Make a date for “Business Caucus, Greening Cities”
Wednesday 24 March
Thursday 25 March
9am to 12noon
Room W3 - 14

What role do Megacities play on our way to a climate-neutral society?
How can a research programme contribute to a “marketplace of experiences”?
How can new alliances for sustainable development be forged?

These and other questions will be tackled during the International Conference on Future Megacities in Balance
New Alliances for Energy- and Climate-efficient Solutions
October 11-13, 2010
at the World Heritage Site Zeche Zollverein
Essen, Germany

For more information please visit www.future-megacities-2010.org or the German pavilion (E91-92, E99-100)

Alfredo Rodriguez, Director, NGO Sur, Chile
To exchange points of view with colleagues, and share experience and knowledge. I will try and get to as many sessions as possible, it’s not that there are one or two that particularly interest me, they all help.

Lam Tungwar, Messenger of Truth to represent Kenya and Sudan, hip-hop artist
I am an invited speaker at the Urban Youth Forum that will begin on the 22nd, and today I have a session to talk about the arts and social change in cities, and what art and music can do to change people’s lives; that is what I will be speaking about, I want to put across that message, that is part of my role. Music is about passion and it about telling people about things through a different medium.
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it takes more than technology.

Petrobras aligns its activities with the UN Global Compact’s ten principles, and for the last four years has been listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index.
Petrobras projects are selected by public bid, with equal conditions to all bidders and broad social participation.
These concrete initiatives value mainly the cultural diversity, children’s rights and marine biodiversity. If the future is a challenge, Petrobras is ready.
Executive Director Anna Tibaijuka describes her vision of a world with equal access to urban services and opportunities. The urban divide is the theme of this week’s forum and is one of the reasons behind the launch of the World Urban Campaign in Rio.

The theme for this 5th Session of the World Urban Forum focuses on the urban divide. It stands out as one of the major paradoxes – some would say scandals – of this early 21st century.

After all, cities concentrate on what has become known as the ‘urban advantage’, namely, a bundle of opportunities which, from basic services to health, education, amenities and gainful employment, have never been so favourable to human development. Yet all too frequently, cities also concentrate high, unacceptable degrees of inequality as these opportunities elude major segments of the population.

Equal access to urban services and opportunities is often restricted by all kinds of invisible barriers, but the outcome is so visible. Look, for example, at the growing number of gated communities in many countries that continue to shut the have-nots out. Walk along a street in the capital of a developing country, and you can see the back of the well-serviced, well-appointed local headquarters of a worldwide business consultancy facing a row of tiny, ramshackle shops catering to the needs of low-income residents.

More often than not, the bumpy stretch of mud that passes for a street will lead to a slum—the cruellest form of urban divide. The other paradox—or scandal—of early 21st century cities is that the opportunities that come with the ‘urban advantage’ are often closed to women, children and young people with vital roles to play in our collective future. Beyond livelihoods, health and personal development, the whole continuum of deprivations that characterizes the wrong side of the urban divide has a tangible impact on bodies and minds, stunting the physical and intellectual potential of millions among present and future generations.

Even from a purely economic perspective, the stark inequalities making the urban divide look paradoxical, too. Business and affluent residential areas typically thrive on the many cross-border linkages that ultimately connect them to the tight network of ‘global’ cities dominating the world economy. The resulting prosperity is what drives the rural poor and immigrants into urban areas, in the hope of securing their own fair share.

The irony is that for lack of qualifications or opportunities, they remain largely confined to a slum-based informal sector that looks like an inverted image of the glowing formal economy in terms of productivity, technology and business connections.

Nearly 10 years into the 21st century, the urban divide has become so acute that its main determinants have, in turn, become easier to identify. Just as slums and sub-standard housing stand as the by-products of inadequate land and housing policies, the informal economy stands as an offspring of inadequate regulation.

Today’s urban divide is largely an outcome of the biases and inadequacies of the three main tiers of government—central, local and municipal.

The international survey at the core of UN-HABITAT’s forthcoming State of the World Cities Report 2010 – Closing the Urban Divide does more than identify the factors behind the economic, social, political and cultural inequalities that continue to plague so many urban areas across the world. Survey respondents and analysts answer the challenges of the urban divide with a number of pointed recommendations.

I believe that the way public authorities perform their duties is just as important as the nature of what they achieve. Governments must strengthen existing institutions, or create new ones. Effectiveness also requires new linkages and alliances to be established between the three tiers of government as a matter of daily routine, for the sake of sustained, enhanced coordination and sharing of resources across any political gaps or shifts.

A realistic assessment of specific assets and potential opportunities must give rise to a sustained, comprehensive ‘vision’ for any given city, and one that speaks to the aspirations of the whole population. The gradual realization of this vision entails the broader, more equitable redistribution needed to close the urban divide.

Such sustained redistribution cannot be just of an economic nature: integrating the poor and marginalized into mainstream urban life calls for a redistribution of broader opportunities as well. This brings improved quality of life, human capital as well as enhanced political and cultural inclusion. It also brings cleaner, greener cities, and places that are good for business for everyone.

Experience shows that lack of inclusionary planning is only planning for trouble. Any sustainable vision for the future of any city can only be of an inclusive, not divisive nature.

These are just some of the reasons why we have chosen to launch a new global campaign at this Fifth Session of the World Urban Forum here in Rio de Janeiro. We see Rio as the beginning of something new – the World Urban Campaign. We are launching the campaign to keep up the momentum of the forum, to heed the messages of our partners inside and outside government, the private sector, and of course our survey respondents.

The idea is to start with 100 best cities in the world and then trumpet their ideas to spread the word to more and more cities so that we can multiply to 1,000 cities and beyond. This is how UN-HABITAT and our partners will lobby to bridge the urban divide.
Leading by example

On Tuesday 23rd March, the fifth session of the World Urban Forum will see the launch of the 100 Cities Initiative, a new programme to enable cities to share and exchange best practices on sustainable development. The city of Alicante in Spain has been chosen as one of 21 pioneering cities to take part in the Initiative. Jonathan Andrews talked to the Mayor of Alicante, Sonia Castedo, about the innovative practices Alicante has introduced to develop the city and what she expects to gain from her city’s participation in the 100 Cities Initiative.

Alicante has been chosen as one of the pilot cities for the 100 Cities initiative organized by UN-HABITAT. Can you tell me what this means for the city?

Well it means that other cities will centre their attention on Alicante precisely for having been chosen as the pilot model. Alicante has stood out for having undertaken a series of sustainable programmes, with the aim of improving the city and the life of its citizens.

What can Alicante offer by sharing its knowledge with other cities?

I think it can offer, above all, a future, which for me is very important. Alicante is a city that has never stood still. It has always known how to move forward. In spite of being in continuous growth, it has known how to define its future. It is a city that has grown a lot in the last number of years, but this hasn’t led to an increase in bad practices as can happen in some cities that are similarly in a continuous process of growth.

Alicante is blessed with a warm and sunny climate throughout the whole year, but this factor impacts on its limited water resources, especially in a city that is becoming increasingly larger. What programmes have been implemented to safeguard these water resources?

We have carried out a complete treatment of the water cycle, which allows us to make responsible use of a resource in such scarcity as drinking water; for example, irrigating public parks and the city’s green zones with treated water, or cleaning the streets with water from underground wells. The re-use of water in Alicante has made us into an international example. In fact, other countries with water supply problems have visited us to find out about our system.

With a population of 335,000, Alicante isn’t one of the largest cities in the world, but even still it has a sizeable immigrant population. What schemes has the city undertaken to ensure integration and respect?

Today within the city of Alicante there are 130 different nationalities living together. In spite of there being cities that have double or even triple the population of Alicante, they don’t have as many different nationalities. With regards to immigration, we use the phrase ‘conocer es respetar ’ ‘knowing oneself is respecting oneself’. We believe that this is true because of the different cultures that exist in the city. Alicante’s city council is carrying out a series of special programmes precisely to achieve this objective of mutual understanding. One of these programs is called Diversalacant where all of these nationalities have the possibility of organizing conferences and obtaining greater mutual understanding with people from other countries. Not only with people who have a different culture to us, but also where we can applaud their traditions and culture and at the same time they can learn from the cultures and traditions of many other countries.

We talk a lot about integration, but this is a topic that we are very interested in, because there is respect. That is to say, the fact that your culture may be different from mine, doesn’t imply that you are different to me, but that we may be capable of enriching each other mutually with the different contributions that different cultures offer us.

At the end of the day, immigrants contribute to and create Alicante the way it is, in the same way that those who were born here do.

Due to the ageing population in many cities, large budgetary efforts are made in the areas of health and social services. Can you tell me more about the intergenerational homes project, which was started with the aim of solving this problem?

We were the pioneers on a world level of this programme and we made an important commitment to the integration of young people and to the integration of elderly people. The problem was the solitude that a lot of the time elderly people are faced with each day. In spite of having children, nephews and nieces or grandchildren, each of them have their own life to live, meaning that elderly people end up isolated. They only receive sporadic visits and therefore there is a lot of solitude in their daily lives. We have undertaken a programme (which is ongoing) that we call intergenerational homes, where young people and elderly people live together. Everyone has their own independence as everyone has their own house, and has an obligation (although not in writing but moral) to collaborate. A young person will always keep an eye on an old person in case they are sick and will look after them. If an elderly person has to go shopping and has reduced mobility, a young person will do their shopping for them.

If they want to talk to their grandchildren by internet with a webcam, a young person will show them how to use it and the elderly people can talk to their family members, because the computers that we have installed have a webcam.

The older people also, for example, teach the younger people how to cook. They teach them how to grow their own vegetables because we have also made an area in the building for growing vegetables. There are various gardens where they grow everything from tomatoes to aubergines and a lot of flowers.

In general, this system consists of creating a situation of cohabitation whereby a young person contributes to the life of an elderly person and the elderly person gives something back in return, but above all, the most important thing is that the elderly person feels useful and the young person also feels useful. This is really what we wanted to achieve with the creation of these intergenerational houses.

The Mayor of Alicante, Sonia Castedo

Photo © Ayuntamiento de Alicante
Alicante has been one of the first European cities to close roads to traffic on a regular basis and open up this space to pedestrians and cyclists. Apart from this initiative, Ciclovia, is there a push for non-motorised transport?

Alicante wasn’t one of the first but actually the first European city to implement it. We were the European pioneers in installing the model called Ciclovia which we copied from countries in Latin America. It’s a clear commitment so that pedestrians gain control of the city. We think that by not allowing motorised traffic at certain times, is an example of a sustainable city.

Ciclovia takes place each Sunday morning from 9am until 2pm, where part of the coastal area of the city is cut off to traffic and it is only used by pedestrians, bicycles and skaters or any means of non-motorized transport. It has been very successful and in fact, the first time we put it in motion was in January of this year, and almost 40,000 people took part. If it can work in this city, then it can exist in any other city. We are working specifically so that pedestrians can walk around the city in a safe way, so that it is more comfortable. It is directed more at pedestrians and less at vehicles, but without forgetting that vehicles are also important. Those who use cars and motorbikes will continue to do so, but we try to make it easier to access the city, for those who don’t want to use their cars.

Ciclovia is just the beginning of this commitment to offer people more control of the city. In Alicante there are 42 kilometres of cycle lanes and we have just proposed 140 kilometres more. That is to say, within a couple of years, Alicante will become a city where going by bicycle to whatever part of the city will be feasible and not dangerous.

Can you also tell us about the new tram system?

Our commitment is to emphasize sustainable public transport with the expansion of the tram. Although many cities have trams, Alicante uses more modern and advanced technologies, making Alicante a focal point for the rest of the European cities that come to visit us to study how we are implementing it here. Alicante had a tram years ago, but it disappeared and we want to bring it back precisely for its sustainability and for its contribution to reducing CO2 emissions. Also, the tram widens our public transport options. It will connect all of the districts in Alicante, as well as neighbouring municipalities, through a method of transport that is environmentally friendly.

Is the interest that is shown by other European cities in just the tram or in the Ciclovia, or in a bit of each?

It is for both reasons as they want to know how to adapt the tram, which isn’t a new method of transport, but something that has existed for decades, but the use of new technology makes it a means of transport that is completely environmentally friendly. When Ciclovia was implemented there were people from other large European countries that came to visit and the man who invented the Ciclovia also came over from Bogotá. He was very surprised that Alicante had the capacity and the vision to be the first to implement this programme, rather than another larger European city. For this reason, I think people come to Alicante where these models have been implemented to obtain an explanation of how they have been developed.

Every city wants to hold international flagship events. Alicante has used the Volvo Ocean Race to redevelop its port and harbour area. Why is this race sustainable whereas other events may not be seen to be so?

Possibly because Alicante is a city that has known how to use the sea in a sustainable way and the Volvo race is a clear example of this. It has not only served to take the name of Alicante to every corner of the world but it is going to continue to do so during the next three editions until 2018, as we will once again host the race. Alicante has known how to involve the sea in its events and to organize sailing events. The problem of many cities is that instead of being beside the sea, they find themselves with their backs to the sea, and the city of Alicante has never positioned itself in that way. Alicante has integrated the city into the port and the port has been integrated into the city. Alicante is puerto al mar and puerto al mar, literally a door to the sea and a sea port because of its historic understanding of the sea.

You have said that Alicante has learned things from Bogotá regarding transport. What areas would you like to study to learn from other cities within the 100 Cities Initiative?

Well, I think there are a lot of things. I have always said that each city has something that it can offer and that can be copied. In this sense, copying is seen in a good light and I think that it is important to copy all of these good aspects that a city has. Regarding cultural aspects, respect for heritage and the history of traditions are also very important.

With regards to integration, we need to learn to implement certain programmes that focus on better cohabitation, not only between those who live in the city, but also between those who come here looking for a better life. The question of integration is one of the most important issues for us because we have to learn to live together with 130 different nationalities and we want the only difference between them to be nationality. I think in the end, each city and each country can have something that stands out that we would be delighted to copy, in the same way that we would like Alicante to be copied for everything that it does well.
Rio looks to sport to bridge the urban divide

Having landed the two greatest sporting prizes on earth—the football World Cup and the Olympics—Rio is determined to lead the 20 percent of its citizens which inhabit slums to a better quality of life. By Roman Rollnick.

João Buracão is often seen in a camping chair alongside a large pot hole in the road or sitting by a damaged water or sewerage pipe. No matter that he may be in the middle of a busy road in the heart of downtown Rio de Janeiro, he is prepared to spend hours if necessary just sitting there. Sometimes he lies down on the road as cars whiz by too close for comfort.

He considers it his calling to shame the public and public officials and anyone who will pay any attention at all to the problem, usually a dangerous pot hole that forces drivers to swerve towards oncoming traffic, a broken, stinking pipe that needs fixing, or trash abandoned on the beach or in another open space.

Some drivers deliberately aim straight at him and swerve away at the last second when it is clear he will not flinch. Others stop and get out to remonstrate with him but he just keeps quiet and stares straight ahead. Instead of a camping chair, he will even set a sofa up in the road. His latest antics feature regularly in the Rio newspapers, on television, and always on YouTube.

Marcello Gomes, a Rio city reporter who covers mainly the urban crime beat for the popular daily Extra, admits that Mr. Buracão can look like a bit of a vagabond in his dirty jacket and jeans especially if you are moving fast, or just strolling on the beach and see from a distance that he has set himself down alongside your friends. Get a little closer and it is uncomfortably clear that he is staring straight at them without averting his gaze.

“He acts as the conscience of our city and his actions are very effective,” explains Gomes. “Few people immediately realize that he is nothing more than a stuff urban rag doll, and the idea is now being replicated all over town. People call us from everywhere to have João make a point about something that needs fixing in this city.”

As in any big city, there is always something that needs fixing in Rio. But the popularity of the urban rag doll ruse means that people feel more needs to be done in Brazil’s second city. Like a flawed gem, Rio de Janeiro sparkles as far as the eye can see from atop its highest peak. Blue seas, wonderful bays with white beaches, stretches of excellent highway and cycling and walking tracks fade into a sprawling metropolis blotched with darker patches creeping up the green hillsides.

The breathtaking beauty of Rio de Janeiro and its many hills and mountains is such that it is no wonder that this city was chosen to host the 2014 football World Cup and the 2016 summer Olympics. Brazil, after all, could claim to be called the world’s greatest football country. Get down a little closer and the world famous Copacabana beach with its promenade stretches on and on – a great place for athletes to train.

But the darker parts so visible from the mountain are in fact patchworks of tumbledown houses of corrugated iron, unpainted brick and dangling dreadlocks of stolen electric wiring. These are the slums of Rio, the favelas, overcrowded places where the walls are covered in graffiti, many scarred by bullet holes, and where the narrow alleyways are often beyond the reach of cars.

Rio de Janeiro is a city with a population of just over six million in its central urban areas, of which, according to officials, an estimated 20 percent live in the favelas. These urban islands of poverty vary enormously in size and character.

Currently about 12 percent of households in Rio de Janeiro lack running water, over 30 percent are without sewerage connections, and formal electricity lines reach only 70 percent of the population. In these slums which constitute the majority of households without basic services, residents use illegal water and electricity connections, while human and household waste is often dumped straight into rivers, drainage ditches or lagoons.

The City of God

Rough men, often armed, hang out in the alleyways keeping an eye on the place, watching the comings and goings from the little shops and makeshift bars that sell beer and cachaça, a distilled sugarcane liquor better known as pínga, the drink associated with football, the carnival and samba.

In Providência, which lies behind the central station, the houses creep all the way up the morro (the hillside) far above the waterside convention centre, where UN-HABITAT’s World Urban Forum is taking place. The views of the city below are some of the best in Rio. Indeed, there are few better ways to take in the magnificent Rio-Niterói Bridge, which at 13 kilometres is the longest in the southern hemisphere and the sixth longest in the world.

The humid air smells of raw seewerage and damp household waste and no one seems to notice. Welcome to what is also called the City of God. This was the world’s first favela, a name which comes from a fast growing and unpleasant smelling weed. The slime came into being soon after the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888 when freed slaves with nowhere to go started building shacks on the steep hillsides or partially drained mangrove swamps. They were joined by unemployed former soldiers, who went to claim land the government had promised them before the Canudos War.

Today those coming in are the jobless, many of them ‘climate refugees’ unable to make a living inland because of drought.
“In most Brazilian cities the poverty is not in your face but in Rio it is — because of our topography.”

Jorge Bittar

“To get a visitor in here, one always has to negotiate with the drug dealers,” explains Noelle Resende, a young lawyer who runs a human rights centre for the local residents. “Every week there is a police raid and shootings and the place resounds with gunfire.”

Rio and its favelas are synonyms for violence. In a pattern common all over the city, Providência’s inhabitants live under the de facto authority of a private army called the Comando Vermelho (CV) which runs the drug trade. It is also in conflict with other such groups, the Terceiro Comando (Third Command) and the Amigos dos Amigos (Friends of the Friends). For many residents it is better to make do here even if they have to live in fear.

Operating from one of the highest houses, which was purchased and renovated by a secretive British benefactor known only by the initials JR, Resende and her group assist people with all kinds of problems. “Sometimes it is a birth certificate or an ID that we help them obtain, other times there are family issues, divorces, etc. But it is the children who face lots of problems.” Resende’s colleagues provide extra classes for children who attend class in either morning or afternoon shifts.

On the walls are photographs by Mauricio Hora, today a prize-winning photographer but by his own admission, the son of a 1970s drug dealer. He teaches photography to the children and youth as a way of building peace and curbing violence.

Pedro Stronzenberg, a lawyer and human rights activist who works with Resende, says: “We all know the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as the problems, and we have the solutions and we have to put these in place, and we need gun control. So long as

Homicide rates

Brazil tops the list for fear of insecurity in the 2007 UN-HABITAT Global Report on Human Settlements. According to a 2008 survey published by Rio Como Vamos (Rio How We Are Doing), 75 percent of respondents cited violence and safety as being the worst aspects of living in Rio, while 65 percent said they did not trust the police.

The biggest problems in the slums are homicides and attacks against the person, rather than against property — quite the opposite when it comes to the formal part of the city.

But the International Olympic Committee, which looked hard and critically at Rio, is satisfied that the city’s USD 14.4 billion Olympic budget will produce a great summer Olympic fest, and that it will also give a boost to the city with ambitious infrastructure projects that can be used long after the games.

IOC officials praised Brazil for reducing crime. They noted that the city’s homicide rate had dropped to 33 per 100,000 people last year from 39 per 100,000 the year before and officials have said that they expect the rate to continue falling despite a rise between April and June 2009.

Although that was much higher than the homicide rates in competing cities, last year’s homicide rate in Rio de Janeiro was the lowest in 17 years. And even though it is not uncommon for the main highways connecting the city to the airport to be closed off because of shootouts, the IOC also praised the city for introducing new community policing programmes in selected favelas, which it expects to replicate throughout the poorer neighbourhoods.

In greater Rio de Janeiro, there are about 1,000 favelas that stretch all the way into Ilha do Governador, the biggest island in a huge inland bay called Guanabara, which was named after a colonial era Portuguese governor. The island is linked to the mainland and downtown by a series of modern bridges and highways. But commuters complain that bus services into town are poor, as is the metro rail system, which does not in their view serve greater Rio properly.

The Ilha is also the home of the Galeão-Antonio Carlos Jobim International Airport, aptly named in honour of the father of Brazil’s very special bossa nova music.

Doing the fixes

Jorge Bittar, Rio de Janeiro’s Municipal Secretary, explains that the city, like all urban areas in Brazil, has seen a considerable influx from the countryside over the past decade.

“In most Brazilian cities the poverty is not in your face but in Rio it is — because of our topography,” explains Bittar, citing new plans for slum upgrading and large-scale housing construction on unused urban lands.

“The prospects of improvements are much better for us because the Brazilian economy is now forging ahead and is quite robust,” he says. “Brazil has a huge divide between the poor and those better off and among the measures we are taking to redress this are the Bolsa Familia, the cash assistance plan for 11 million families living below the poverty line.”

Bittar said Rio city authorities were also in partnership with the government to build 100,000 new homes for low-income people over the next four years. With the major global sports events coming up, he said considerable investment is going into the improving the environment and developing better public transport and new housing.

However it goes, João Buracão is sure to be watching...
CEMEX promotes sustainable communities

Programs that stand out include CPAs, Patrimonio Hoy and Mejora tu Calle.

Sustainability is what characterises CEMEX, as it allows the balanced development of the company, the communities where it is present and the country as a whole. Through training, self-employment, do-it-yourself home construction and town facility improvement programs. CEMEX has contributed to the increase in the quality of life of 3.9 million people over the past seven years.

**Patrimonio Hoy**

This program, which is in-line with the UN's Millennium Goals, offers financing to families that earn less than three minimum wages, to build or expand their homes.

CEMEX finances the cost of materials and offers assistance, which allows the program's participants to generate savings of up to one third of the cost and to reduce construction time by 60%.

In its 10 years of existence, Patrimonio Hoy has provided more than $110 million to more than 293,000 families, with a recovery percentage greater than 99%. The program currently has 85 beneficiary-care centres in 45 cities throughout the country. The program's successful business model has enabled it to extend its presence to Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

**Centros Productivos de Autoempleo (CPA)**

There are currently 8 CPAs in operation in various cities across the country, whereby families that earn less than two minimum wages, produce basic materials intended for the construction or expansion of their homes.

At present, more than 2,900 families have participated in the program, which has allowed them to build a similar number of houses of 10 metres squared.

For this scheme, the local council contributes land with electricity, water, services and installations, while CEMEX provides the necessary machinery, tools and consumables for the manufacture of bricks. Participants receive 50% of the production as payment; while the rest is given to CEMEX to sell to cover operation costs.

**Mejora tu Calle**

This program includes the participation of CEMEX, local authorities and members of the community.

It allows work to be carried out on paved roads, town facilities and basic infrastructure, with the aim of improving the quality of life and increasing the value of family estates.