

**In Focus SDG 11:  
Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities require  
sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture**

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Opening remarks by Beatrice Ferrari  
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Mr. Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNECE,

Ms. Chair of the Committee on urban development, housing and land management

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here today and to take part in this meeting dedicated to [SDG 11](#) which focuses on sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture.

It's the 3rd edition of SDG11 event co-organized by UNECE and the Geneva Cities Hub. **GCH appreciates the close collaboration with UNECE**, one of our main partners in Geneva, given its valuable work with mayors and its focus on sustainable urban development.

**SDG 11** [*make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*] is an ambitious goal that requires **all relevant stakeholders to closely cooperate with one each other**. It is as much about political power exercised by mayors and their administrations, as it is about the knowledge of experts, technicians, as well as city residents. SDG11 is a UN meeting that seeks to gather different kinds of communities around the table to join efforts in making cities safer, more inclusive, resilient and sustainable. Hence, I am especially pleased to see such a diverse cohort of stakeholders taking part in today's discussion.

Given the breadth of its scope, each year the SDG 11 event has a different focus which relates to the work of the UNECE Committee on urban development, housing and land management. As an urbanist by training, I appreciate that **this year the event focuses on urban design and architecture** which determine how we live, move, work and play, how we relate to one another in public space, how our homes, buildings and urban infrastructure can become sustainable and also how the urban ecosystem can become circular.

The [draft San Marino Declaration](#) which shall be adopted this week is an excellent initiative. Architects, engineers, urban planners, designers, surveyors hold the key to a more sustainable and inclusive urban future. Integrating them into the debates on SDG11 resonates with the call of the UN Secretary-General Guterres to foster a more inclusive and effective multilateralism.

**A more inclusive and effective multilateralism is precisely what the GCH has been striving for since its creation.** Our mission is to better connect cities to the international Geneva ecosystem and ensure that local and regional governments are included in multilateral debates, given their proximity to the people, their knowledge of the local context and the solutions they craft at local level to address global challenges.

To that end, we support cities' participation to Geneva-based multilateral processes, we organize meetings, like this one, to shed more light on urban issues and urban actors and we also publish an **online Directory of international city networks** to assist all our interested partners. The Directory gathers information on international and regional city networks and their key projects. Our objective is to facilitate connections, dialogue and partnerships between cities, city networks and all International Geneva stakeholders. So, I invite you all to visit our website and take a look at the directory which is updated annually.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We hope that today will permit a frank discussion about the challenges faced in the field of urban design and architecture, but also about the creative solutions that may be found both individually and collectively to contribute, at our scale, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG11, to limit the adverse impact of climate change and ensure a more inclusive society.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a fruitful meeting.