

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **WORLD URBAN FORUM III OPENS MONDAY, JUNE 19!**

For immediate release: June 16, 2006

Vancouver, BC – The third session of the **United Nations World Urban Forum (WUF3) Our Future: Sustainable Cities – Turning Ideas into Action**, officially opens Monday June 19<sup>th</sup> at the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre (VCEC). Over 6,000 participants from more than 160 nations are expected to attend, making this the largest World Urban Forum ever held. World Urban Forum (WUF), held every two years, was established by the United Nations to examine one of the most pressing issues facing the world today: rapid urbanization in a world where half of humanity lives in cities and where in the next 50 years that proportion is expected to reach two-thirds of the global population.

Below, find highlights of some of today's key events including a schedule of announcements.

**Please note, the initials (HB) beside an event indicates that it will be covered by the Host Broadcaster pool feed. To maintain the integrity and dignity of this event, no ENG cameras will be permitted into rooms where Host Broadcaster cameras are installed. These events will be available to all broadcasters at the Vancouver Telus TOC 604-663-5439.**

**Dialogue sessions in Ballroom B will ONLY be available for recording within the Media Centre.**

#### **MONDAY'S KEY EVENTS:**

**UN-Habitat State of the World Cities Report Media Briefing  
Location: UN Plaza Stage 8:30 am – 9:30 am**

The 2006/2007 edition of the State of the World's Cities marks two important milestones: the dawn of the urban millennium in 2007 and the 30th anniversary of the first Habitat Conference held in Vancouver in June 1976, which placed "urbanization" on the global development agenda. This publication also marks a less triumphant moment in history: thirty years ago, the world's governments first pledged to do more for cities and yet almost one third of the world's urban population still lives in slums without access to decent housing or basic services, and in neighbourhoods where disease, illiteracy and crime are rampant.

For the first time in the history of the United Nations, urban data is reported here at slum and non-slum levels, going far beyond the traditional urban-rural dichotomy.

## **Opening Ceremony (HB)**

**Location: VCEC Exhibition Hall A 10:00 am – 1:00 pm**

The World Urban Forum III opens with a welcoming ceremony followed by statements by dignitaries and key partners.

### **Master of Ceremonies:**

Eric Falt, Director of the Division of Communications & Public Information, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Kenya

### **Welcoming Remarks:**

Charles Kelly, Commissioner General, World Urban Forum III, Government of Canada

Sam Sullivan, Mayor, City of Vancouver, Canada

Gordon Campbell, Premier, Province of British Columbia, Canada

### **Message from Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan**

#### **Opening Address:**

Anna Tibaijuka, Under Secretary-General, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, Nairobi, Kenya

Noli De Castro, Vice President, Government of the Philippines

Ali Mohamed Shein, Vice President, Government of Tanzania

#### **Keynote Address:** Rt. Hon Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada

#### **Opening Plenary Chairs:**

Maria Antonia Trujillo, Minister of Housing, Government of Spain, and Chair of WUF II;

Diane Finley, Minister, Human Resources and Social Development, Government of Canada, and Chair WUF III, Canada.

#### **Plenary Speakers:**

Alphonso Jackson, Secretary of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Government of the United States of America

Naokazu Takemoto, Senior Vice Minister of Finance, Government of Japan

Smangalis Mkhathshwa, Co-President, United Cities and Local Governments, South Africa

Enrique Ortiz, Secretary General, Habitat International Coalition

## **Official WUF 3 Opening Press Conference**

**Location: VCEC Room TBD 1:00 pm**

Charles Kelly, Commissioner General, World Urban Forum, and Anna Tibaijuka, Under Secretary-General, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, will make official opening statements to media and be available for questions.

## **Women's Roundtable – Empowering the Millennium Development Goals: Grassroots Women Meet the Challenge – Women's Lives, Women's Decisions**

**Location: VCEC Ballroom C 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm**

In the interest of supporting and speeding up the achievement of Millennium Development Goals, this roundtable will discuss how to build and foster contributions by grassroots women's groups, including how to create conditions and environments to assist them in realizing their full potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, as well as how to benefit from the results.

**Chair:** Erna Witoelar, UN Special Ambassador on MDGs for Asia and the Pacific, Indonesia.

**NGOs Roundtable – Assets and Struggles: 30 Years After Vancouver Habitat Forum – Realizing the Right to Adequate Housing, Sustainable Habitat and Inclusive Cities**  
**Location: Pan Pacific Hotel – Crystal Pavilion A 2:30 pm – 5:30 pm**

The roundtable will discuss case studies on people's efforts in defending their right to live in peace and dignity (such as the Harare evictions, Katrina and the post-tsunami rehabilitation). Also, the MDG 7 – Target 11 on "Cities Without Slums" initiatives will be reviewed in the light of Vancouver 1976 and further international commitments and plans of action.

**Co-chairs:** Michael Schapcott, Senior Fellow in Residence, Wellesley Institute, Canada; Evaniza Rodrigues, Regional Representative of SERVIP, Uniao Nacional de Moradia, Brazil.

**Networking Session (for a complete list of networking sessions check your program guide) – Iran's Cities: Coping with Big Challenges**

**Location: Pan Pacific Oceanview 2 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

This session will discuss the challenges of decentralization in the Islamic Republic of Iran, specifically the shift of decision-making and spending power from central to local governments. A presentation of a recent analysis of governance and the current restructuring of government roles and functions will provide the basis for discussion.

**Speakers:** Tim Campbell, Chairman, Urban Age Institute; Hedi Larbi, Urban Projects, World Bank; Kian Tajbakhsh, Ph.D., urban planner and professor.

**Networking Session – Finance for Sustainable and Affordable Human Settlements Development**

**Location: VCEC MR17 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

This networking event aims to explore and discuss new approaches and trends in domestic finance for human settlements; sustainable financing for low income housing and infrastructure development; affordable housing finance mechanisms; primary and secondary mortgage finance development; integrating informal and formal human settlements financing; innovative financing mechanisms and capacity building; strategies for developing sustainable and affordable human settlements finance mechanisms; housing microfinance; and related case studies.

**Speakers:** L. Chiquier & Raquel Szalachman; M. Lindfield; R. Struyk; Father Josse van der Rest Emsens

**PADCO/AECOM Urban Development Timeline Launch Event**

**Location: VCEC Ballroom B 6:30 pm – 8:00 pm**

The Urban Development Timeline reflects decades of comparative international experiences and serves as a vehicle that allows us to share lessons learned as we work together and meet the challenges ahead.

**Speakers:** Opening & Closing Remarks: Duane Kissick, President, PADCO; Anna Tibaijuka, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations, and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT; Alphonso Jackson, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Government of the United States of America; Jacqueline E. Schafer, Assistant Administrator, Bureau of Economic Growth and Trade, USAID, Government of

the United States of America; Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister of Housing, Government of South Africa.

**BACKGROUND:**

The third session of the World Urban Forum (WUF3) is hosted by the Government of Canada in partnership with UN-HABITAT in Vancouver, Canada. This session will mark the 30th anniversary of the first United Nations conference on human settlements held in Vancouver in 1976, which led to the creation of UN-HABITAT.

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