

THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN STATEMENT

H.E Basim Bin Yacob Al Hamer
Minister of Housing

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Special Meeting
Sustainable Urbanization and the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda
21 April 2022

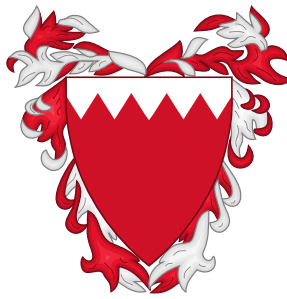
Round Table II:

To discuss the UN systemwide strategy on sustainable urban development and review global and regional coordination mechanisms as well as initiatives at country level to advance the New Urban Agenda

- Your Excellencies:
 - Mr. President of the Economic and Social Council
 - Mr. President of the UN General Assembly
 - Madam Deputy Secretary General.
- Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am grateful for the opportunity to join this roundtable virtually and share the experience of the Kingdom of Bahrain in implementing the New Urban Agenda in the context of the UN reform.

Bahrain's National Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda - submitted in November 2021 - demonstrates



the level of efforts made by Bahrain, - despite major challenges due to the Coronavirus.

To uphold the achievements of the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs during the pandemic - an extensive financial package exceeding 11.9 billion USD was provided to Bahrain's citizens.

This package, - implemented in a flexible manner as a true testimony to the essence of the New Urban Agenda, - not only supported Bahrain's economy - but also directly safeguarded Bahrain's harmonious social fabric during this challenging period.

Your Excellencies,

Bahrain signed its Strategic and Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework with the United Nations in June 2021 and this significant milestone strengthens ongoing and future cooperation between Bahrain and the UN system - in support of the New Urban Agenda and the SDG's.

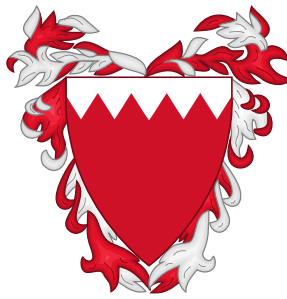


The government of Bahrain has early on recognized that sustainable urbanization is key to accelerating progress towards the social, environmental and economic dimensions for the SDG's and has successfully made sustainable urban development a matter of policy and priority - as witnessed by numerous initiatives including in areas of social housing, urban infrastructure, public spaces, and energy consumption.

In this context let me highlight a few examples.

Firstly, the provision of access to adequate housing in safe and attractive neighborhoods has benefitted more than 150,000 people in the past 4 years - and this proved to be critical in mitigating the spread of the virus during the pandemic.

The ongoing housing programme - not only provides sustainable homes and neighborhoods to citizens, - contributing to a safe and healthy living environment conducive for individual growth and prosperity, but - through its innovative Social Loan and Public Private Partnership approach - also supports the growth of essential sectors in the economy,



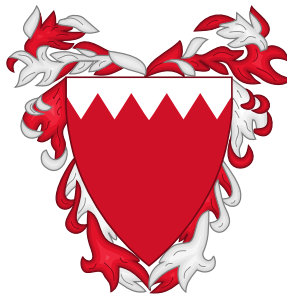
including the financial and construction sector. Where needed lower income citizens are extra supported.

The Housing programme is reinforced through sustained investment in public spaces and green areas to achieve more inclusive, sustainable, and resilient urban areas - and the universal provision of water and sewage in Bahrain has both contributed to improving living conditions and strengthened the resilience to climate change.

Bahrain has enhanced its capacity in urban planning and urban development through the establishment of the Urban Planning and Development Authority in 2017 - and in parallel Government is currently working to strengthening urban data systems to further monitor the impact of our policies and programmes.

Looking ahead, the Kingdom of Bahrain is increasing the use of clean and renewable energy - as part of our commitment to the Global Climate Goals.

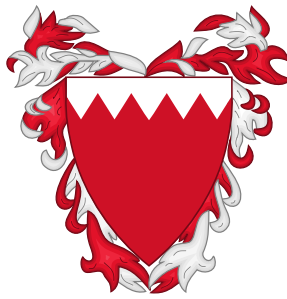
Your Excellencies,



Placing sustainable urban development at the core of the Bahrain-UN Cooperation Framework - demonstrates both the relevance and added value of the UN in assisting Bahrain in implementing the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs.

Lastly, let me acknowledge and express my appreciation for the cooperation and support provided by the United Nations and the UN-Habitat - both globally and in Bahrain - and I like to reaffirm Bahrain's support to international action and cooperation in achieving the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda.

Thank you.



[FINAL MESSAGE]

I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, President of the Economic and Social Council again for the invitation to join this roundtable today.

This has been a fruitful exchange of experiences and a timely contribution to the upcoming High-Level meeting on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Together, and in the spirit of the reform, the Government of Bahrain is committed to supporting the Secretary General's ambitious vision for multilateral cooperation towards sustainable development and will continue to channel urbanization to achieve social and economic development, environmental sustainability, and resilience.

Thank you very much.