

71ST WORLD TOWN PLANNING DAY STATEMENT

**A PLURALITY OF VOICES
WITH DIVERSE AND RELEVANT
EXPERIENCE TO ADVOCATE
FOR EFFECTIVE PLANNING**

World Town Planning Day takes place every November 8th, bringing planners and communities together to celebrate how good planning improves the lives of people and benefits society at large, creating places to live, work and play. Argentinian professor Carlos María della Paolera started World Town Planning Day in Buenos Aires in 1949, and today, planners from over 30 countries celebrate the occasion with lectures, school competitions, fundraising, charity events, planning awards and street festivals.

Every person and community in the world today is impacted by a deepening climate and biodiversity crisis. If we do not dramatically accelerate climate action, the irreversible degradation of much of the natural world and impact on communities and economies globally are unparalleled catastrophes in the making. This backdrop has been gravely compounded by the current health, economic and social crises since the outbreak of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Planning can and will help us to respond to our changing economies and lifestyles. It will support communities to adapt, thrive and build resilience for a truly sustainable future.

Urban and territorial planning serves to balance the competing demands and needs of all people and of the built and natural environment.

That is why planning is central to humanity's efforts to safeguard our land, homes, economies and natural habitats so that future generations might enjoy the same benefits as the present ones. So that we may confidently advance towards global, inclusive, fair and sustainable prosperity, as outlined by the New Urban Agenda and the more holistic Sustainable Development Goals - within the ability of our planet to regenerate the excess of resources we have consumed over the past decades.

Following our Abu Dhabi Declaration in February 2020, we assert that there can be no sustainable development without sustainable urbanisation and no sustainable urbanisation without effective planning. Political support, financial backing and human capacity is required for effective planning.

Today, on the 71st anniversary of World Town Planning Day, and with less than a year to go the COP26 summit in Glasgow, we look forward to global planners coming together to discuss our collective response for bold national climate ambitions and effective and localised climate action. The COVID-19 global pandemic has reeked devastating impacts around the world. However, it has also shone a light on potential pathways towards sustainable development. We must not waste this opportunity of a clean, green and inclusive recovery from this global pandemic.

This year World Town Planning Day marks the end of the first year of the "Decade of Action". We must continue to provide leadership to our communities and empower them to engage in climate action and planning for the world we need and can sustain. We also need to be looking out for and supporting each other as the global pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of our colleagues and communities.