

High-Level Dialogue on Adequate Housing for All

Ministerial Segment of the HLPF, ECOSOC, 22nd July 2025, 13:15 – 14:45, ECOSOC Chamber

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Introduction

Housing is central to human development and social welfare, shaping both lives and physical environments while significantly influencing socio-economic progress. It is key to advancing SDGs such as 11, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 13. As both a basic human right and a driver of economic opportunity, health, education, and social justice, adequate housing and secure land tenure are vital for economic stability, reducing vulnerability, and promoting equity—especially in countries with developing or fragmented welfare systems. They also foster the inclusion of young people and support intergenerational equity.

Adequate housing helps mitigate climate change and strengthens disaster resilience, particularly important for marginalized groups and those in informal settlements. Energy-efficient, climate-resilient designs and the use of sustainable, affordable materials enhance thermal comfort while lowering energy use, emissions, and environmental degradation.

Adequate housing has a positive correlation with peace, security, and good governance. Insecure land tenure increases the risk of displacement and exploitation, while housing scarcity and inequality can heighten social tensions. Conflict is often marked by destruction of housing, mass evictions, and violations of housing, land, and property rights. In contrast, secure access to housing and land supports recovery, peacebuilding, and long-term stability. It also strengthens trust between communities and institutions, empowers citizen participation, and promotes good governance.

Despite longstanding policy focus, the housing crisis persists, marked by rising homelessness, expansion of informal settlements, and unaffordable housing. Many cities fail to plan urban expansion, with result in uncontrolled, fragmented, underserved urbanisation that deepens inequalities. Even economically thriving cities have failed to improve housing and services for low-income families. Addressing the housing crisis is essential for reducing poverty, improving urban resilience, and ensuring sustainable and inclusive communities. Recognising this, the United Nations Secretary-General's "Our Common Agenda" highlights universal access to adequate housing as a pillar of the Renewed Social Contract.

The High-Level Dialogue

The High-level Dialogue on Adequate Housing, co-hosted by the President of ECOSOC and the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, convenes policymakers, housing experts, development practitioners, and advocates to examine the role of housing in promoting social justice, economic stability, democratic participation, and urban resilience.

This event marks a key milestone in the lead-up to the Second World Summit on Social Development (WSSD2), underscoring housing as a foundation for renewing the social contract, reducing inequalities, and advancing sustainable urban development. It places adequate housing at the heart of global

discussions on social development, governance, and peace, while contributing to the deliberations of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All.

The Dialogue builds on the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995) which emphasizes that “in both economic and social terms, the most productive policies and investments are those that empower people to maximize their capacities, resources, and opportunities.” Adequate housing—including slum prevention and transformation—embodies this principle and directly supports several of the Declaration’s goals: reducing multidimensional poverty through better living conditions and services; promoting gender equality by securing women’s housing and land rights; fostering safe, inclusive societies by preventing evictions and enhancing tenure security; and improving governance and participation.

Objectives of the dialogue:

- Highlight the central role of adequate housing and slums transformation in eradicating poverty, reducing inequality, and promoting social integration, intergenerational equity, and community resilience.
- Reinforce Member States’ commitment to shaping the WSSD2 Declaration.
- Mobilize political and financial support for the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing.

Agenda

13:15	<p>Opening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Ambassador Robert Rae, President of the UN Economic and Social Council• Rep Representatives of Kenya, Co-chair of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (TBC)• Amina Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (TBC)• Anacláudia Rossbach, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat
13:35	<p>Panel discussion - Segment one: the role of housing in poverty eradication</p> <p>Moderator: Anacláudia Rossbach, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does adequate housing directly impact poverty and vulnerability?• What long-term policy innovations are shifting outcomes for the urban poor? <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Representative of Brazil (TBC)• Luis Felipe López-Calva, Global Director, Poverty and Equity Global Department, World Bank (TBC)• Don Iveson, Chair of Canadian Mortgage and Housing Cooperation (TBC)
14:05	<p>Panel discussion - Segment two: the role of housing in promoting social inclusion</p> <p>Moderator: Anacláudia Rossbach, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p>

- How can housing promote social inclusion, peace, and intergenerational justice?
- What governance or legal frameworks help prevent discrimination and foster social cohesion?

Panellists.

- Representative of Thailand
- Mandy Entrikin, Senior Director, Government Relations and International Policy, Habitat for Humanity International
- Representative from local authority

14:35

Closing remarks and next steps

- H.E. President-elect of the General Assembly, Annalena Baerbock (TBC)
- H.E. Ambassador Lok Bahadur Thapa, President-elect of the UN Economic and Social Council (TBC)
- Representative of Qatar, host of the World Social Summit for Development (TBC)
- Representative of France, Co-chair of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (TBC)
- Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families, Canada
- Anacláudia Rossbach, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat