



Permanent Mission of the
Federal Republic of
Germany to the United
Nations



CITIES THAT WORK FOR PEOPLE: CONNECTING SOCIAL POLICY AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

1:15 – 2:30 PM, 13 July 2026

ECOSOC CHAMBER, UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

OBJECTIVES

Canada's official side event at the 2026 HLPF will highlight the value of place-based solutions that integrate social policies and interventions with the built environment – including housing, infrastructure and community design. Recognizing the intersection of these social and physical dimensions of community is at the heart of achieving SDG 11.

The session will feature a discussion on how community resilience depends on social and structural features of communities, with remarks from panelists delving into the ways in which global issues are also reflected at the local level.

It is intended to explore strategies and solutions for confronting various challenges related to mounting pressures and risks facing communities globally, with a focus on ensuring that physical infrastructure investments and social outcomes like inclusion, accessibility, equity and housing stability are considered together. Building resilient communities requires infrastructure planning that takes account of community needs and local realities from the very beginning.

The event will demonstrate that:

- Infrastructure delivers SDG 11 outcomes most effectively when paired with strong social policies and community-based approaches; and
- Social programs, in turn, depend on accessible, well-designed infrastructure to succeed.

By convening national and local governments, un agencies, and community level practitioners, the session will showcase people-centred, place-based approaches that integrate housing, transit, accessibility, community services, and social inclusion. It will offer lessons that are transferable across national contexts and applicable to SDG reporting processes.

PROGRAMME

Moderator: **Jon Beale**, Local Futures

Opening Remarks

- **Honourable Gregor Robertson**, Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada

Co-sponsor Remarks

- **Dr Bärbel Kofler**, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany
- **Ms. Lily Vásquez Dávila**, Minister of Development and Social Inclusion, Peru

Panel Discussion

- **Kamal Kishore**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- **Aaron Kienle**, Mayor of Yorkton, Saskatchewan, (Canada)
- **Barbara Meyer**, Mayor and Head of the Department for Finance and Sustainability of the City of Saarbrücken, Germany, and representative of the Lord Mayor.

Q&A, Wrap-up and Key Messages

- Moderator

Closing Remarks

- **Annie Koutrakis**, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Jobs and Families, Government of Canada