



MALAYSIA LOOKS TO STRENGTHEN THREE KEY AREAS OF COOPERATION WITH UN-HABITAT AMID GLOBAL GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTY

BAKU, 16 May 2026 – Malaysia is looking forward to strengthen cooperation with UN-Habitat in three key areas namely urban liveability, digital urbanisation and local council Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), as part of its continued commitment to advancing resilient and inclusive cities amid growing geopolitical uncertainties.

The Minister of Housing and Local Government, Nga Kor Ming, arrived in Baku today to commence his official working visit, marking Malaysia’s continued engagement at the highest level in global urban diplomacy, particularly as countries navigate complex global challenges affecting cities and communities worldwide.

In his capacity as President of the UN-Habitat Assembly, Nga began his mission with a bilateral meeting with the UN-Habitat Executive Director, Anacláudia Rossbach, to exchange views on strengthening global collaboration in advancing the implementation of the 2026-2029 UN-Habitat Strategic Plan.

The discussion further explored potential areas of collaboration, including the strengthening of institutional partnerships and Malaysia’s readiness to contribute towards global urban innovation through proposed initiatives including the establishment of a “Global Centre of Excellence for Urban Liveability” in Malaysia, the launch of a “UN-Habitat Digital Urbanisation Lab” focusing on AI and Big Data in local governance, as well as a proposed “Global VLR Solidarity Fund” to support peer-to-peer mentoring among developing nations in implementing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs).

The meeting focused on the need for practical, people-centred urban solutions, with Malaysia emphasising its approach of integrating affordable housing, smart city initiatives and community wellbeing to address the evolving challenges of urbanisation.

Malaysia also reiterated its commitment to advancing the New Urban Agenda (NUA) through stronger multilateral cooperation, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building efforts, particularly within the Asia-Pacific region.

As a long-standing advocate of sustainable urbanisation, Malaysia highlighted its continued focus on delivering affordable housing under national development priorities, alongside policies that promote low-carbon cities, improved local governance, and digital transformation of urban services.

“Malaysia remains fully committed to working closely with UN-Habitat and international partners to ensure cities are more resilient, inclusive and future fit. This includes

strengthening cities and communities to enable them to withstand global uncertainties, extreme climate events and the cost of living crisis. We are steadfast in our commitment to deliver a better quality of life for all,” he highlighted.

The 13th Session of the World Urban Forum 13, co-organized by UN-Habitat and the Government of Azerbaijan, themed “Housing the world: Safe and resilient cities and communities”, held in Baku from 17 to 22 May 2026, is attended by 30,000 participants from 180 countries to exchange knowledge, share best practices, and strengthen global cooperation in addressing urban challenges.

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