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PRESS RELEASE

NGA KOR MING CALLS FOR GLOBAL ACTION TO TACKLE HOUSING CRISIS AT UN WORLD CITIES DAY 2026

FUZHOU, 31 October 2026 – President of the UN-Habitat Assembly Nga Kor Ming today has called for stronger international cooperation to address the global housing crisis and ensure access to adequate and affordable housing for all.

Nga, who is Malaysia's Housing and Local Government Minister, made the call during his keynote address at the opening of Global Observance of World Cities Day 2026 in Fuzhou, China, today.

In his address, Nga highlighted the severity of the global housing crisis, revealing that approximately 3.4 billion people worldwide experience some form of housing inadequacy, and more than 1.16 billion people live in informal settlements including slums. Meanwhile, 44% of urban renters worldwide spend an unsustainable proportion of their income on rent, reflecting the growing pressure of rising housing costs and widening social inequalities.

"Housing is the foundational soil from which all human capability grows. It is where our children form their earliest ambitions, where working parents recharge their spirit, and where our senior citizens enjoy the honour they have earned over a lifetime. When a household enjoys a secure roof, every aspect of life stabilises. Health improves, educational outcomes soar, and economic confidence takes root," he said.

Nga stressed that addressing the housing crisis requires more than simply constructing additional homes. "Governments must ensure that housing is affordable, safe, well-connected to public transport and employment opportunities, and supported by essential public amenities."

Held under the theme "Regenerating the City: Adequate Housing for All", the event is jointly organised by UN-Habitat, China's Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the Fujian Provincial People's Government and the Fuzhou Municipal People's Government.

Malaysia Targets One Million Affordable Homes by 2035

Sharing Malaysia's experience, Nga highlighted the Malaysia MADANI vision, the country's Housing Reform Agenda and the National Housing Policy 2026–2035 as key initiatives to improve housing accessibility and promote sustainable urban development.

The MADANI Government has set a target of delivering one million affordable homes between 2026 and 2035, reflecting its commitment to expanding homeownership opportunities and improving the quality of life for Malaysians, with the aspiration of positioning Malaysia among the world's top 10 countries with the highest homeownership rates by 2035.

He also shared about the RM60 billion Housing Credit Guarantee Scheme (SJKP), which aims to facilitate access to home financing for 150,000 individuals without conventional proof of income, alongside efforts to promote transit-oriented development and climate-resilient urban renewal.

He emphasised that the success of a city should not be measured merely by the height of its skyline or the scale of its construction, but by the liveability of its neighbourhoods, the quality of its public spaces, environmental protection and the opportunities created for its residents.

Nga further stressed that housing must remain people-centred, from early childhood to elderly care, and that urban regeneration must drive climate action by using energy-efficient technologies and expanding green spaces.

He called on governments, international organisations and the private sector to strengthen partnerships in advancing affordable housing, green development and sustainable urban regeneration. “Policy without execution is merely good intention; vision without action is only a dream,” he remarked.

The opening ceremony of World Cities Day 2026 was officiated by Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng. Five cities were honoured with the 2026 Global Award for Sustainable Development in Cities (Shanghai Award) in recognition of their contributions to sustainable urban development. The award recipients were Istanbul, Türkiye; Santiago de Cali, Chile; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Jingdezhen, China; and Katowice, Poland.

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