MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
AND
CITYNET

Article 1: Introduction

1.1 The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and CityNet reaffirm their desire to work together in areas of mutual interest, specifically to promote sustainable urban development, through the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

1.2 ESCAP and CityNet have a long-standing partnership. CityNet (hereinafter referred to as “Partner” was established under the auspices of ESCAP and UN-Habitat at the Second Congress of Local Authorities for Development of Human Settlements in Asia and the Pacific held in Nagoya Japan.

1.3 ESCAP is the regional development arm of the United Nations for the Asia and Pacific region. ESCAP is committed to a resilient Asia and the Pacific founded on shared prosperity, social equity, and sustainability. Its vision is to be the most comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation among member States to achieve inclusive sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific.

1.4 CityNet is an association of urban stakeholders committed to sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region. Established in 1987 with the support of ESCAP, UNDP and UN-Habitat, the Network of cities has grown to include over 150 municipalities, NGOs, private companies and research centers. CityNet’s charter indicates that “The Network shall establish and maintain a close consultative, co-operative and working relationship with ESCAP” and “may seek ESCAP assistance in formulating its work programme and project proposals and in implementing such activities designed to achieve the objectives common to ESCAP and the Network”.

Article 2: Purpose of ESCAP - CityNet Cooperation

2. As both ESCAP and CityNet (collectively known as the “Parties”) have been established with mandates to promote sustainable development and both have been supporting countries and local authorities to ensure sustainable urban development in the Asia Pacific region as a primary goal, ESCAP and CityNet plan to work together:
(a) Building the capacities of national and subnational/local authorities to localize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through implementation of sustainable urban solutions.

(b) Support the exchange of best practices and knowledge sharing to improve cooperation on sustainable urbanization at the regional and subregional levels.

Article 3. General Principles for ESCAP - CityNet Cooperation

3. The Parties will be guided by the following general principles:

(a) evidence-based policies for inclusive, sustainable, smart and resilient cities.

(b) stakeholder participation in national and local urban planning processes.

(c) results-oriented programmes and activities.

(d) sound research and analysis and fostering of urban innovations.

Article 4. Focus of ESCAP-CityNet Joint Activities

4. The priority areas for joint activities, which are further elaborated in the Appendix to this MoU and may be amended from time to time with the mutual written consent of the Parties, include:

(a) Expansion of the capabilities of the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform, including gathering and publishing case studies from respective networks.

(b) Organization of programme(s) recognizing best practices in sustainable urban development.

(c) Joint trainings and capacity building activities, including but not limited to:
   
   i. Utilizing the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform in support of the Asia Pacific Mayors Academy

   ii. Organization of joint study tours for city officials

   iii. Cooperation with local/subnational authorities on localization of Sustainable Development Goals and development of Voluntary Local Reviews/Voluntary Subnational Reviews within respective networks

   iv. Stocktaking of Sustainable Development Goal 11 progress in cities and national governments in region
v. Other project activities or capacity buildings/training sessions as feasible, including at the Asia Pacific Urban Forums and CityNet events

Article 5. Focal Points for Management of the MoU

5. The Parties agree to designate as focal points for the activities under this MoU:
   (a) For ESCAP: Director, Environment and Development Division
   (b) For CityNet: Chief Executive Officer, CityNet

Article 6. Intellectual Property

6. In the event that the Parties foresee that intellectual property that can be protected shall be created in relation to any activity to be carried out under this MoU, the Parties shall negotiate and agree on the terms of its ownership and use in a separate agreement.

Article 7. Reciprocal Invitations

7. The Parties recognize that appropriate representation is important for the purpose of joint positioning and advocacy. They agree that invitations to meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops relevant to cooperation in the priority areas set out in the Appendix to this MoU will be sent, where appropriate.

Article 8. Monitoring and Reporting of the MoU

8.1 The Focal Points of both Parties shall consult with one another, prepare, and submit to the executive heads of both Parties joint progress reports on the status of implementation of the cooperation activities, including an assessment of results achieved.

8.2 The Parties recognize that it is important to convene periodic consultations to review what is being planned, what is being implemented, and what is being achieved in terms of results as well as to discuss new challenges, opportunities and problems. They agree to hold such consultations periodically as required and at the midpoint and the end of the term of this MoU.

Article 9. Acknowledgements and Use of Institutional Emblems

9.1 The Parties recognize that the involvement of both organizations in joint cooperation activities needs to be publicized. They agree that:
(a) there will be public acknowledgment of the role and contribution of each organization to cooperation projects in all public information documentation related to such cooperation; and
(b) the use of emblems of each organization in documentation related to cooperation will be in accord with the current policies of each organization concerning such usage.

Article 10. Final Provisions

10.1 This MoU may be amended by mutual written consent of the Parties.

10.2 This MoU may be terminated by either Party on six months’ notice in writing.

10.3 Nothing in this MoU is intended to be a waiver, expressly or implied of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations, ESCAP, and its subsidiary offices.

10.4 In no event shall this MoU or any amendment hereto operate to create financial, administrative or legal obligations on the part of either Party, nor does it prevent the parties from pursuing the objectives set forth in this MoU on their own or with other third parties.

10.5 The Parties commit themselves to settling by good faith negotiation any dispute or controversy arising out of the implementation and/or the interpretation of the present MoU.

10.6 Any specific activities under this MoU will be covered by a project document or written agreement.

10.7 The term of this MoU will be from the date of signature by both Parties until 31 October 2027.
Signed on 23 October 2023 at the 8th Asia Pacific Urban Forum, Suwon, Republic of Korea

For the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

For CityNet

Vijay Jagannathan
Secretary General
APPENDIX

Priority Areas and Modalities for ESCAP – CityNet Cooperation

I. Priority Areas

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a focus on:
   a. Urban-related elements of all Sustainable Development Goals
   b. Supporting Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the promotion of Voluntary Local Reviews
   c. Knowledge sharing of best practices related to local climate, resilience and sustainability strategies

2. Building capacities of local authorities and officials, including urban and territorial planning, urban resilience and low-carbon development; smart city solutions, and urban finance through:
   a. Asia Pacific Mayor Academy
   b. Joint capacity development initiatives and projects, including the regional ESCAP-implemented ‘Integrated Urban Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities (UrbanACT)’ project.

3. Fostering regional knowledge sharing and cooperation
   a. Urban SDG Knowledge Platform
   b. Peer-to-peer and city exchanges
   c. Regional forums and events
   d. CityNet-ESCAP SDG Awards

II. Modalities: roles and responsibilities of partners on selected activities

CityNet:

a) Maintain the Urban SDG Knowledge Platform, including posting, where appropriate, ESCAP-produced publications, tools and resources
b) Promote the Asia Pacific Mayors Academy within its network, and host Academy learning modules, as agreed by both parties
c) Invite ESCAP to participate in CityNet-organized conferences and seminars, and co-organize conferences, seminars and forums, as appropriate
d) Exchange information with ESCAP on best practices and case studies that can be promoted across the Asia Pacific region
e) Support implementation of joint capacity development initiatives related to SDG 11 action planning and SDG localization strategies more broadly in the region; and
f) Co-develop activities to be jointly implemented by ESCAP and CityNet, and undertake joint resource mobilization
g) Provide annual report to ESCAP on the activities of CityNet
ESCAP:

a) Serve as permanent observer to CityNet’s annual Executive Committee meeting
b) Contribute substantive materials to Urban SDG Knowledge Platform, including relevant ESCAP-produced publications, case studies, and lessons/tools from project activities, and for curriculum for Asia Pacific Mayors Academy
c) Invite CityNet to participate in ESCAP-organized conferences and seminars, and co-organize conferences, seminars, and forums, as appropriate
d) Develop joint capacity development initiatives related to SDG 11 action planning and SDG localization strategies more broadly in the region; and
e) Co-develop activities to be jointly implemented by ESCAP and CityNet and undertake joint resource mobilization.