

Comments by Executive Director UN-Habitat at the Busworld Academy Congress in Omaha, USA 13 January 2020

My greetings to CEOs and members of the American Bus Industry on the occasion on the first Busworld Academy Congress held in the USA. I take the opportunity to look back and acknowledge the growing collaboration between our organization and the Public Transport industry represented by our collaboration with the Busworld Academy.

As many of you would know, UN-Habitat works with cities to make urbanization more sustainable. Increasing the share of public transport in cities and thereby reducing traffic congestion is one of our main objectives. This also contributes to reducing Green House Gas Emissions from cities. This must not remain merely an aspiration instead we must seize the opportunities in this new decade to rededicate ourselves to commitments made to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

At the UN Climate Summit held in New York City, just this last September, UN-Habitat joined other organisations in supporting the “Action for Low Carbon Transport” or the ACT initiative. In the context of more sustainable urbanization, the ACT aims to increase the uptake of electrification for busses. I would like to convey my appreciation to the Busworld Academy in promoting the ACT initiative with the Bus Industry.

Indeed, the role of the Bus Industry and the American Bus Association is very important in curbing emissions from transport. Industry leaders in America, Europe and elsewhere have a very important role to play in demonstrating how public transport and its electrification can not only meet the increasing mobility needs of people across the world but also play a critical role in the fight against climate change.

It is also very important that cities across the world and the bus industry work together in solving the problems of traffic congestion, air pollution and emissions from transport. We hope that our collaboration with the Busworld Academy will improve such cooperation.

I would like to mention in this connection that from 8-13 February, UN-Habitat will be organizing the 10th World Urban Forum in Abu -Dhabi. Convened by UN-Habitat, the Forum is a high level, open and inclusive platform for addressing the challenges of sustainable urbanization and is the world’s premier conference on cities. WUF 10 will provide several opportunities to discuss public transport in the context of sustainable urbanization. I take this opportunity to invite you all to WUF in Abu Dhabi.

Finally, UN-Habitat strongly urge all partners to support the New Urban Agenda and let’s make 2020 truly about a new decade of action as the United Nations itself enters its 75th year.

With my best wishes for a very successful congress.

Maimunah Mohd. Shariff

Undersecretary General and Executive Director, UN-Habitat.