

## WUF11 SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

### Trade Union and Workers Roundtable

*Sustainable and Fair Cities for All: Quality Local Public Services, Decent Jobs and a Just Transition*

#### 1. List of Partners Contributing to the Session:

Public Services International (PSI)  
International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)  
Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)

#### 2. Key Words:

Public services, local and regional government (LRG), municipal, construction, public transport, decent work, just transition, labour rights

#### 3. Objectives of the Session:

- Share and record experiences of how workers and trade unions work to advance the NUA daily, in dialogue and partnership with local authorities and civil society.
- Provide opportunities to offer trade union and worker expertise and mobilisation power to advance progressive urban policy, to scale up existing collaboration, and to strengthen and build new alliances and partnerships.
- Showcase how to beat territorial inequality by enhancing equitable access to local public services, sustainable urban planning, and transformative LRG public policies.
- Highlight the need for democratic and participatory approaches to sustainable urban planning, including the intersection between social, economic and environmental justice.
- Continue to build a record of best practices to share in the months and years after WUF11 towards the implementation of the NUA.

#### 4. Summary:

If SDG11 and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) transformative commitments are to be realised – and cities and local communities are to be sustainable and fair – they must be built on principles of social, economic and environmental justice.

Sustainable urban planning and inclusive urban policies can only come about when they are built from the bottom up, encompassing the interests and expertise of the residents and workers whose daily lives shape and are shaped by the urban environment. These goals have become even more urgent during the Covid-19 pandemic, which has particularly affected the ability of cities, towns and rural territories to provide vital services and implement much-needed transformative public policies.

The worst forms of urbanisation occur when policies are imposed by external, vested interests, either global corporations or unaccountable authorities. The cities we need are underpinned by inclusive local development, equitable access to local quality public services, policies which generate decent work and socio-economic inclusion, as well as forms of participatory urban planning rooted in the lived experiences of those who bring cities to life.

Workers and unions are active shapers of progressive urban development and policymaking and should be included from the outset of any process. Workers build cities, operate the local public administration, deliver vital public services to residents, and bring the communities and the local economies to life.

This Roundtable will gather workers and union representatives to highlight how we can implement SDG11 and the NUA in a post-Covid-19 environment. It will discuss the challenges and opportunities to beat territorial inequality by enhancing equitable access to local public services, sustainable urban planning, and transformative policy measures. It will incorporate related key issues including gender equality, diversity and the worker-led formalisation of informal employment.

#### **5. Guiding Questions for Discussions:**

- How have workers and trade unions advanced the NUA and the localization of SDG11?
- What are the challenges they continue to face and what needs to be done?
- What sort of policies can help us build sustainable and fair cities for all?
- What role does equitable access to quality public services play in overcoming territorial inequality?
- Why are decent jobs and a just transition central to implementing SDG11 and the New Urban Agenda?
- What sort of democratic and participatory processes can help ensure that urban policies act in the interests of residents, workers and local community stakeholders?
- What progressive alliances, dialogue and partnerships need to be established or strengthened for workers and trade unions to be enabled and empowered in urban environments?

#### **6. Expected Outcomes and Impact:**

Unions and allied stakeholders emerge from WUF11 with a renewed sense of their role and extraordinary potential in implementing SDG11 the NUA. Further progress at the local level is reported back to the Trade Union and Workers Assembly at WUF12.

#### **7. Session Format:**

13:30-14:00 – Welcome; Overview of workers' and trade union's role towards implementing the NUA and localising SDG11 (Daria Cibrario, James Bartholomeusz, Linnea Wikström)

14:00-14:45 – Workers and trade unions voices from the city: perspectives from local public services, urban public transport and construction (15 minutes each from PSI, ITF and BWI affiliate speakers)

14:45-15:00 – Expert response (Edmundo De Werna Magalhaes)

15:00-15:20 – Q&A and discussion among participants

15:20-15:30 – Closing remarks (David Boys)