U20
2023

URBAN20
CITY SHERPA
MEETING

Event Report

February 2023
Context

About the Urban20 Engagement Group

Urban20 or U20 is a city diplomacy initiative, comprising of cities from G20 countries. It strives to establish a lasting practice of engagement among cities to develop a collective message that emphasizes the role of cities in taking forward the sustainable development agenda. The U20 engagement group plays a vital role in contributing perspectives, concerns, and ideas from cities to inform and enrich the overall G20 negotiations.

The U20 was instituted in 2017 under the leadership of Mayors of Buenos Aires and Paris to bring together city representatives and leaders from U20 cities to deliberate on specific concerns of cities. Since then, there have been five editions of the U20 chaired by Buenos Aires and Paris (2018), Tokyo (2019), Riyadh (2020), Milan and Rome (2021), and Jakarta and West Java (2022). Every U20 brings together a group of participating cities from G20 countries represented by a city Sherpa and Mayor in two key events: the Sherpa meeting and the Mayoral Summit. Representatives from the non-G20 capital cities and secondary cities also join as Observer Cities. The C40 Cities (C40) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) are the convenors of the U20.

One of the primary outcomes of the U20 process is the Urban20 Communiqué, which encompasses the deliberations and recommendations of city representatives on various priority issues. This communiqué is shared with the G20 Presidency and Heads of State during the annual U20 Summit, held before the G20 Leaders’ Summit. The past Communiqués have explicitly underscored the urgency with which the cities have to act to ensure sustainable environments, healthy communities, and social cohesion.

About sixth Urban20 Cycle

The U20 Engagement Group is an opportunity for Indian cities to demonstrate that policies and practices adopted and propagated by its cities have powerful implications for achieving global agendas of development. Resonating with India’s G20 theme of ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’, U20 will emphasise that actions at the city level can drive lasting positive outcomes for the world, underscoring the interconnectedness of the world and our shared future.

The effort of the sixth U20 is to continue moving from intention to action and to draft a roadmap for global change that cities will drive close the gaps between policy and practice at all levels of governance. It is highlighted that cities must be empowered to achieve the right balance between economic prosperity and environmental impact; increasing densities and sprawl; diversity and social cohesion; technological advancements and digital divide; and multiple other urban contradictions. The United Nations recognises this decade as the ‘Decade for Action’ to achieve the SDGs. In addition, the global economy, climate, human settlements, health, and multiple other crises are also issues in urban areas. Given the contribution of cities to the productivity of nations and the world, they must play a pivotal role in developing practical solutions to pressing and interlinked global issues.

Ahmedabad, one of India’s fastest-growing metropolitan cities, is the Chair for the 6th edition of U20. Resonating with India’s G20 theme of ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’, U20 Ahmedabad emphasise that actions at the city level can drive lasting positive global outcomes, underscoring the world’s interconnectedness and our shared future. The city of Ahmedabad is supported by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the Nodal Ministry, and the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), the Technical Secretariat for U20 and technical guidance by Global Conveners – UCLG and C40 Cities.
Executive Summary

The inaugural Urban20 City Sherpa meeting was held in Ahmedabad on February 9th & 10th, 2023. It was attended by more than 200 participants from across the world. The City Sherpa Meeting was attended by representatives and Sherpas from 42 cities, which is the largest recorded in-person participation from U20 Participating and Observer Cities since the inception of the U20 Engagement Group.

The event was inaugurated by a number of high-level dignitaries. In his opening remarks, Mr Kiritkumar J Parmar, Hon’ble Mayor of Ahmedabad, stated that U20 is crucial for Ahmedabad’s global presence, providing the city with an opportunity to showcase its key initiatives that create a livable and sustainable environment. He further emphasized that U20 will assist cities in enhancing their developmental planning and implementation processes through peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing. Mr Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa delivered the keynote address and gave a clarion call to all the delegates to become ambassadors for a world focused on de-globalizing, decarbonizing, and digitizing cities and urged the U20 Engagement Group to provide clear, precise, and actionable recommendations that can be considered by G20 leaders. He assured that the G20 agenda will reflect the importance of cities in bringing about impactful transformation.

Mr Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon’ble Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India, in his virtual address highlighted India’s role in leading the discourse and action on important issues of global governance. He posited the U20 group as an opportunity for global peer learning and creating a visionary roadmap that can steer the G20 agenda. Hon’ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, Mr Bhupendrabhai Patel highlighted the importance of the Sherpa meeting for deliberating and developing a consensus on the key priorities that need to be put forth to the G20 leaders. Mr Manoj Joshi, Secretary MoHUA, Government of India, called for reforms in urban planning frameworks and stressed on the need for infrastructure finance for sustainable public transport, climate change transitions, and sustainable water & waste management.

The U20 conveners, Ms Shruti Narayan, C40 and Mr Pablo Fernández, UCLG echoed the above sentiments. She highlighted that the U20 prioritizes tackling the climate crisis through the principle of “one earth, one family, and one future” and supports just economic recovery and investment in the green economy. Adding to this, Mr Pablo Fernández emphasized the significance of the current U20 cycle amidst overlapping crises and urged City Sherpas of U20 cities to brainstorm and prioritize bold, present-focused initiatives for sustainable urbanization.

A special session on G20 priorities, advocacy, and way forward focused on G20 priorities and its alignment with the U20 agenda along with various working groups under G20, namely the Infrastructure Working Group, Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group and Digital Economy Working Group.

During the session, representatives of the three working groups conducted discussions about the convergence between G20 and U20 working areas. Mr Solomon Arokiraj, Chair, Infrastructure Working Group (IWG), focused on potential areas of convergence between the groups, including building inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities, climate financing, enabling inclusive urban service delivery through digital transformation, water resource preservation, attracting private finance for urban infrastructure development, and effective urban planning.

Mr Kamal Kishore, Chair, Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group (DRRWG), emphasized the role of cities in achieving Sendai targets and the need for accessible early warning systems, long-term resilient infrastructure, financing disaster risk reduction frameworks, overhauling global disaster systems, and ecosystem-based disaster risk solutions. The
potential areas of convergence with U20 were direct engagement with cities in disaster risk reduction, building resilient infrastructure, and creating financing frameworks for disaster risk reduction.

Dr. Sandip Chatterjee, Senior Director, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology - Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG), highlighted the need for smart interconnected technology in creating global common goods, bridging the digital divide, and improving citizens’ lives. The potential areas of convergence identified were unleashing the potential of the digital economy, using ICT to enhance productivity and optimize economic structure, creating smart cities for energy, environment, inequality, governance, security, transportation, healthcare, and waste management, enabling efficient use of available assets, resources, and infrastructure, robust digitization, improved productivity, and services, and energy efficiency.

Day 2 hosted the session designed as a detailed deliberation amongst the participating and observer cities regarding the ‘Zero Draft Communiqué and the six priority areas of U20. In the closed-door session ‘U20 2023 Cycle: Priorities and Communiqué, the U20 Sherpa of Ahmedabad, Mr Praveen Chaudhary presented six priority areas proposed by the chair city and discussed the zero-draft communiqué. He acknowledged the work done under previous U20 cycles and stressed on the need to move from ‘intention to action’ during the 6th cycle. The priority areas are (i) Encouraging environmentally responsible behaviors, (ii) Ensuring water security, (iii) Accelerating climate finance, (iv) Championing ‘local’ identity, (v) Reinventing frameworks for urban governance and planning, and (vi) Catalysing digital urban futures. Following which the floor was opened for discussions among the city delegates from the various Participating and Observer Cities. They expressed an overwhelming support for all the six priority areas and showed solidarity in taking a collaborative agenda ahead as part of the Ahmedabad U20 cycle. The City Sherpas also commended the conveners for creating an itinerary that allowed for bilateral meetings to take place between the different city representatives.

The session on ‘U20 Advocacy: Convergence with other engagement groups’ explored the areas of convergence between U20 and other engagement groups of the G20, particularly the role cities can play in engaging the youth and creating opportunities for them, facilitating a robust startup ecosystem, and fostering innovative strategies in the areas of environment, climate finance. water security and digital governance were discussed with the Chair of Startup 20 and representatives from Youth20 and Think20.

During the session, Mr Akash Jha from the Youth20 engagement group stressed the importance of developing action-oriented plans that prioritise mental and physical health for future generations. He also discussed the need for convergence between Youth20 and Urban20.

Mr Chintan Vaishnav from Startup20 discussed how the convergence of spatial urban aspects and startups can lead to innovation hubs, and the importance of Urban20 and Startup20 coming together meaningfully.

Ms Jhanvi Tripathi from Think20 talked about the various overlaps between the T20 task forces and the U20 priority areas.

Ms Mona Khandhar, the Principal Secretary, Economic Affairs, Government of Gujarat & Gujarat coordinator in charge of G20, discussed the convergence and synergy between the G20 and Urban20 events in Gujarat. She emphasised the significance of highlighting India’s youth power and green growth as a central theme across different engagement groups and the need for a holistic approach to urban development in Gujarat.

Finally, in the closing ceremony, the U20 Chair City announced that the Mayoral Summit will be held in July 2023. The final communiqué will be presented to the G20 leaders.
India's U20 Team

Ahmedabad
(Gujarat, India)
Chair City

Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs
Nodal Ministry

National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi
U20 Technical Secretariat

C40 & UCLG
U20 Global Conveners

About U20 Inception Meeting

The inception meeting was hosted by the Chair City of Ahmedabad on 9th & 10th February 2023 to kickstart the sixth U20 cycle. Participating Cities and Observer Cities were invited to carry out preliminary discussions around the priority areas which will focus on transforming cities to change the world. During the inception meeting, Participating Cities and Observer Cities were represented by the nominated City Sherpas. They engaged in a brainstorming session on the priority areas identified under the ‘Zero Draft Communiqué’.

The following six priority areas have been identified:

- Encouraging Environmentally Responsible Behaviours
- Ensuring Water Security
- Accelerating Climate Finance
- Championing ‘Local’ Identity
- Reinventing Frameworks for Urban Governance and Planning
- Catalysing Digital Urban Futures
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# U20 Sherpa Meeting

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*Urban20 delegation at Atal Bridge, Ahmedabad with city Sherpa Mr Praveen Choudhary*
Observer cities

Bangladesh
- Narayanganj
- North Dhaka
- Rajshahi
- South Dhaka

Ecuador
- Quito

India
- Agartala
- Amritsar
- Bhubaneshwar
- Chandigarh
- Dehradun
- Gandhinagar
- Guwahati
- Indore
- Kolkata
- Pune
- Raipur
- Ranchi
- Srinagar
- Surat
- Varanasi
- Visakhapatnam

Mauritius
- Port Louis

Nigeria
- Lagos

Sri Lanka
- Matale

Urban20 delegation at Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad
Summary of Proceedings

i  Session 1 | Inaugural Session

The City Sherpa Meeting was inaugurated with a lamp lighting ceremony and special address by the Chief Guest and Key Dignitaries. The Hon’ble Mayor of Ahmedabad welcomed all the delegates to carry out discussion on the priority areas of the Communiqué. It was an open door session for the U20 Cities and Partner institutions.

ii  Session 2 | G20 India: Discussion on Priorities, Advocacy and Way Forward

The session focused on disseminating information about India’s G20 agenda and discussing the priorities set out by different Working Groups and Engagement Groups. It was an open door session for the U20 Cities and Partner institutions.

iii  Session 3 | U20 2023 Cycle: Context Setting

In this session, the City Sherpas of the U20 Cities got an opportunity to prioritise urban issues and discuss opportunities to make cities ready for the future. It was an open door session for the U20 Cities and Partner institutions.

iv  Session 4 | The Gujarat Urban Story

Experts showcased the innovative work being carried out in Gujarat, with Ahmedabad leading the way in affordable housing, riverfront development, and sustainable urban transport.
Inaugural Session

Speakers for the Session:

- Mr Kiritkumar J Parmar, Hon'ble Mayor of Ahmedabad
- Mr Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa
- Mr Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon'ble Minister, MoHUA
- Mr Bhupendrabhai Patel, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat
- Ms Shruti Narayan, Regional Director, South and West Asia, C40
- Mr Pablo Fernández, Chief of Staff, UCLG

The session was inaugurated by a welcome address by the Hon'ble Mayor of Ahmedabad, Mr Kiritkumar J Parmar. The session included a special address by Mr Amitabh Kant, the G20 Sherpa, who emphasised the importance of sustainable urbanisation as a means to drive economic growth and stressed the need for planned and scientifically-driven growth. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, Mr Bhupendrabhai Patel highlighted the importance of the Sherpa meeting for deliberating and developing a consensus on the key priorities that need to be put forth to the G20 leaders. Mr Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon'ble Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, in his virtual address highlighted India’s role in leading the discourse and action on important issues of global governance. He posited the U20 group as an opportunity for global peer learning and creating a visionary roadmap that can steer the G20 agenda.

Representing the conveners of U20, Mr Pablo Fernández from United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and Ms Shruti Narayan from C40 Cities provided an overview of the U20, highlighting the progress and key focus areas of the previous cycles. Mr Fernandez emphasised that the presence of Mr Kant conveyed the heartening message that G20 is listening to cities while Ms Narayan emphasised the U20 as an opportunity to tackle the climate crisis and create an equitable and just future fueled by the economic recovery.
Mr Kiritkumar J Parmar

U20 is important for Ahmedabad’s global presence and it gives it an opportunity to showcase city’s key initiatives that makes it livable and sustainable. Urban20 will also help the cities in further improving their development planning and implementing process through peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing. Ultimately, making our human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, sustainable and our cities and planet safe for future generations.

- Welcomed all dignitaries and delegates and expressed pride at hosting the event in Ahmedabad
- Highlighted U20 as an important event in underscoring for Ahmedabad’s global presence
- Emphasized that U20 will facilitate the exchange of ideas and information among cities subsequently enhancing their capacity to plan and carry out development projects.
- Knowledge sharing can aid in the development of human settlements that prioritize sustainability, resilience, safety, and inclusivity, resulting in safe cities for future generations.
Mr Amitabh Kant

The world’s challenges can be an opportunity for inclusive and sustainable growth through planned urbanization, with scientific master plans, transit-oriented development, good governance, and smart cities.

- The world is facing a range of challenges, including war, geo-political crisis, global recession, debt crisis, climate change, scarcity of resources, and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in poverty and job losses for millions of people.
- Every crisis presents itself with an opportunity for driving economic growth, inclusive and resilient development, and sustainable progress in the global economy.
- To drive global growth through planned and sustained urbanisation, there is a need for scientific master plans, transit-oriented development, densification of cities, water management, good governance, light-touch innovation, and connected cities.
- U20 has the potential to be the primary catalyst for achieving inclusive, resilient, and sustainable growth.

Mr Hardeep Singh Puri

U20 is well aligned with the theme of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”. India is gradually assuming a leading role in global governance, and other nations can learn from its inspirational story of urban rejuvenation. To achieve desired socioeconomic results, it is necessary to encourage rethinking of conventional planning methods.

- Aligned U20 with India’s G20 theme of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” and the development of a framework for international economic cooperation.
- Recognised India’s increasing leadership in global governance and highlighted the transformative story of India’s urban rejuvenation as a blueprint for other countries to learn from, particularly in the global South.
- Acknowledged the urgent need to enhance urban resilience and ensuring water security through better planning policies and governance, especially in the face of rapid urbanization and global stresses and shocks.
- Encouraged rethinking traditional planning models to deliver desired socio-economic outcomes, including comprehensive infrastructure development and innovative financial instruments to accelerate climate finance.
- Recognised U20 as a great opportunity for global peer learning and hoped that attendees’ collective experiences and lessons learned in the meeting will help to build a bold visionary roadmap that can be shared with G20 leaders.
Mr Bhupendrabhai Patel

Rapid urbanisation has the potential for growth in economic, social, and cultural aspects. However, transportation, overcrowding, and environmental issues are the primary challenges that need to be addressed. U20 should strive for inclusivity and sustainability.

- Rapid urbanisation is an opportunity for economic, social and cultural growth.
- The most significant challenges that need to be addressed are related to transportation, overcrowding, and environmental issues.
- U20 should aim to be inclusive and sustainable.

Showcased Ahmedabad’s best practices such as being a Heritage City, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS), Net zero goal of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), Sabarmati riverfront, Land pooling and regeneration model, Innovation via e-governance, citizen-centric services, Online Development Permission System, etc.

Ms Shruti Narayan

The U20 emphasises the need to tackle the climate crisis by embracing the principle of “one earth, one family, and one future.” It promotes fair economic recovery and investment in green economy. The U20 also serves as a platform for Sherpas to collaborate and work with governments and private bodies in addressing this global issue.

- Talked about the climate crisis and the need to embrace “one earth, one family and one future”.
- Highlighted that the U20 serves as a significant platform for Sherpas to deliberate urban issues and cooperate in their efforts to combat the climate crisis.
- Emphasised the importance of an equitable and just future fueled by economic recovery and cited research shows that investment in the green economy can create 6 times more jobs.
- Expressed interest in working with government and private bodies.
Amidst overlapping crises, the current U20 cycle holds great significance as it provides a platform for high-impact cities to work towards a common future based on solidarity and local democracy. The City Sherpas of U20 cities must brainstorm and prioritize bold, focused initiatives for sustainable urbanization, which can contribute to shaping the future and take center stage at the upcoming World Social Summit in 2025.

- The sixth U20 cycle is an excellent opportunity, especially since it falls during a time of overlapping crises when it is highly significant that the G20 is actively paying attention to cities.

- Resonated with the G20 Sherpa of India that the U20 serves as a platform for cities, which are a high-impact constituency of the G20 ecosystem, and aims to achieve a common future for humanity based on solidarity and the establishment of a strong foundation of local democracy.

- As the global convener for U20 under UCLG, he emphasised how the U20 cities have committed to ambitious agendas outlined in the U20 communiqué. He urged the G20 presidency and its leaders to carefully consider and collectively act on these agendas, which include initiatives such as the Paris agreement, climate change, sustainable economic growth, resilience building, and just recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

- Since the G20 presidency in Jakarta, India has been advocating for a strong emphasis on sustainable urbanization, in addition to health, housing, energy transition, and education.

- Highlighted various milestones achieved by U20 initiatives within the G20 and the strong link between U20 and sustainable development goals (SDGs), which is one of the priority areas for the current U20 cycle under India’s G20 presidency.

- Called out the City Sherpas of U20 cities to come up with bold and present-focused priorities, while ensuring the importance of urban cities in the global context. Further requested the U20 cities to create a compelling case to draw global attention towards sustainable urbanization, as cities have the potential to shape the future and take center stage at the upcoming ‘World Social Summit in 2025’.
Session 2
Discussion on Priorities, Advocacy, and Way Forward

Speakers for the Session:

- Mr Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa
- Mr Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- Mr Solomon Arokiraj, Chair - Infrastructure Working Group
- Mr Kamal Kishore, Chair - Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group
- Dr Sandip Chatterjee, Senior. Director - MeitY - Digital Economy Working Group

The session focussed on India’s urban narrative under its G20 Presidency, the challenges and the way ahead with a focus on convergence between U20 and various working groups.

Mr Amitabh Kant commenced the session with his opening remarks, in which he reiterated India’s achievements and the role of U20 in the G20 presidency, urging delegates to become ambassadors of de-globalisation, decarbonisation, and digitisation of cities. Mr Manoj Joshi discussed the challenges of urban governance and planning, calling for reforms in urban planning frameworks and infrastructure finance for sustainable public transport, climate change transitions, sustainable water and waste management.

During the session, representatives of the three working groups led discussions about the convergence between G20 and U20 working areas. Mr Arokiraj from the Infrastructure Working Group focused on potential areas of convergence between the groups, including building inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities, climate financing, enabling inclusive urban service delivery through digital transformation, water resource preservation, attracting private finance for urban infrastructure development, and effective urban planning.

Mr Kamal Kishore from the Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group emphasised the role of cities in achieving Sendai targets and the need for accessible early warning systems, long-term resilient infrastructure, financing disaster risk reduction frameworks, overhauling global disaster systems, and ecosystem-based disaster risk solutions. The potential areas of convergence with U20 were direct engagement with cities in disaster risk reduction, building resilient infrastructure, and creating financing frameworks for disaster risk reduction.

Dr Sandip Chatterjee highlighted the need for smart interconnected technology in creating global common goods, bridging the digital divide, and improving citizens’ lives. The potential areas of convergence identified was use of ICT to enhance productivity and optimize economic structure. Deploying the elements of smart cities will help in optimising energy consumption, conserving environment, addressing inequality, achieving security, and efficient management of transportation, healthcare & solid wastes.
India’s G20 presidency is taking place amid several crises, and its priorities reflect the aspirations of the G20 partners and the global south, focusing on inclusive and resilient growth. As the fastest-growing economy and leader in climate action & startup ecosystems, India has implemented several large-scale reforms:

- G20 accounts for 85% of global GDP and 75% of global trade and is more potent than UN due to its size and ability to make decisions more efficiently.
- India’s G20 presidency is happening amidst several crises, including climate, SDG, COVID, debt, geopolitical, food, and energy crises.
- India’s priorities reflect the aspirations of the G20 partners and the global south, focusing on inclusive and resilient growth.
- India is the fastest-growing economy and leader in climate action & startup ecosystems.
- The government has implemented several large-scale reforms, including digital payments, housing, sanitation, clean drinking water, highways, and health insurance.
- The Presidency is done through a whole-of-government approach, with every ministry involved.
Urbanisation drives prosperity in developing countries, but poses challenges such as climate change and sustainability. India’s urban shift requires infrastructure investment and transformation of governance. The U20 and G20 could address global urban issues.

Mr Manoj Joshi

- Urbanisation has steadily increased from 3% in the 18th century to 85% in 2100. Demographics and urbanisation are driving changes and prosperity in developing countries.
- Challenges to the cities include climate change, urban governance and planning, sustainability, and transportation systems.
- In India, there has been a transition from large cities to urban corridors.
- $6 trillion investment in urban infrastructure is required in India in the next 25 years.
- Transformation of urban governance, access to basic amenities and sustainability are some of the major issues.
- Three types of urban populations: developed cities, less prosperous cities with low productivity and civic infrastructure, and growing cities with increasing populations.
- Infrastructure finance availability, water and waste management, and sustainability are important issues for cities worldwide, and the U20 and G20 could address these challenges.

Mr Solomon Arokiaraj

- Rapid urbanisation brings complex challenges such as climate change and requires more financing and capacity building. More than 50% of the world’s population lives in cities, and they contribute 80% of the global GDP.
- The Infrastructure Working Group aims to create inclusive, sustainable urban environments through principles, financing, enablers of inclusive urban service delivery, and capacity building.
- The Infrastructure Working Group has four key deliverables: G20 principles for building inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities, private sector financing, enablers for inclusive urban service delivery, and building capacity for urban administrators.
- The IWG is partnering with OECD, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank on financing, enablers of service delivery, and capacity building respectively.
A new working group on disaster risk reduction has been created and is chaired by India’s National Disaster Management Authority.

Engaging with cities in disaster risk reduction is essential, as over 80% of the risk is concentrated in urban areas.

To make progress in risk reduction and build resilience, it is crucial to prioritize five strategic areas, including ensuring early warning access, developing resilient infrastructure, creating financing frameworks, upgrading the disaster response system, and strengthening partnerships with the private sector.

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**Mr Kamal Kishore**

India’s National Disaster Management Authority chairs the new working group on disaster risk reduction, focusing on prioritizing action in five strategic areas to build resilience.

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**Mr Sandeep Chatterjee**

The G20 is using the digital economy to promote digital inclusion, entrepreneurship, and development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME). Smart cities use ICT to enhance economic growth and improved quality of life. They require expertise in various components such as governance, security, transportation, healthcare, and waste management to operate efficiently and pursue a sustainable urban future.

- G20 leaders aim to use digital economy for enhancing digital inclusion, promoting entrepreneurship, and development of MSME.
- The digital economy involves various technologies such as internet, cloud computing, big data, fintech, etc. to enhance productivity and economic activity.
- Digital technologies provide efficient means for stakeholders to engage in economic activities and can help address global challenges.
- Global distribution of digital resources is uneven, posing challenges to extending benefits equally to all regions and groups.
- Smart cities gather and analyze various components through ICT for better quality of life and economic growth.
- Smart cities require ICT expertise to efficiently use available assets, resources, and infrastructure.
- Components of smart cities include energy, governance, security, transportation, water, healthcare, waste management, and ICT education.
- ICT can enable people, systems, and devices to be connected for creating better solutions, operating efficiently, and pursuing a sustainable urban future.
- Smart cities can open up multiple growth opportunities across all industries and lead India towards becoming a developed nation.
Session 3
Context Setting

Speakers for the Session:
- Dr Sri Hayati, Jakarta Sherpa on ‘Looking back at Jakarta’
- Mr Praveen Chaudhary, City Sherpa for Ahmedabad
- Ms Agathe Cavicchioli, Head of Advocacy, C40
- Mr Albert Llado, Policy Office, UCLG
- Mr Pablo Fernández, Chief of Staff, UCLG

The session created a dialogue among City Sherpas to prioritise the urban issues and opportunities they want to raise with their respective G20 national governments.

Mr Pablo Fernández, the convener from UCLG, delivered the opening remarks. He emphasized on the digital agenda with a focus on technological transformation and digital public infrastructure. He also acknowledged the challenge of promoting women-led development and highlighted the key focus areas from Jakarta U20 cycle, including health, education, and multilateral connections. He also pointed out the importance of accelerating inclusive and resilient growth and improving public service delivery in cities.

Dr Sri Hayati, showcased the impact of U20 by presenting evidence that the U20 recommendations regarding infrastructure financing during Jakarta’s cycle were endorsed by the G20 Leader’s Bali Declaration. She emphasised the world’s major challenges, including recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency, and increasing structural inequalities.

The communiqué from the Jakarta summit called for action on the following:
- Invest in health and housing as a cornerstone to an economic and social recovery for all.
- Foster a sustainable energy transition and equal access to sustainable mobility.
- Provide education and training on the future of work to give all people equitable access to the job market.

She also highlighted the objective of implementing climate action, promoting city-to-city collaboration, embracing sustainable development in line with the new urban agenda and promoting smart choices in combating climate change was incorporated with global support from G20 countries. This shows a tangible outcome that could also be achieved from this year’s cycle.

Mr Praveen Chaudhary, presented a comprehensive road map leading up to the communiqué for the 2023 cycle. He stated that a focused development of cities not only provides opportunities to live, work and play, but also facilitates innovation and cultural production. Given their demographic and economic significance, he emphasised that cities are beginning to play an important role in international diplomacy and gaining spotlight in international forums.

Ms Agathe Cavicchioli, C40 appreciated the strength of collective discussion among G20 and U20 members. She asked cities to identify their advocacy priorities, key stakeholders, and activities to solidify Ahmedabad’s
legacy of U20 and carry it forward to Brazil next year. The external objectives of U20 must target national-level decisions and identify advocacy for the U20 agenda. On the other hand, the internal objectives must focus on influencing their respective national governments for action-oriented outcomes.

Mr Albert Llado highlighted the importance of the communiqué and city-to-city diplomacy involving the U20 chair and cities leading up to the Mayoral summit in July 2023. He also emphasised that the work on U20 is an ongoing process and cities must continue their diligent efforts towards the same.

During the open floor session, over 20 city representatives discussed the importance of joint action and effort to achieve U20 priorities and how cooperation between inter-governmental organisations, and national and international governments is a key factor. Other important topics during the discussion included disaster risk prevention financing, SDGs, capacity building, and the implementation of global policies.
A special session was held to showcase the innovative work being carried out by Ahmedabad and other cities in Gujarat. The speakers, namely Mr Mukesh Kumar, Mr Keshav Varma, and Prof. H. M. Shivanand Swamy, showcased successful case studies on affordable housing, riverfront development, sustainable urban transport, and other related subjects.

Mr Kumar highlighted the urban sector’s work in the context of innovation in Gujarat and the way forward showcasing the Town Planning Schemes, affordable housing for all, heritage conservation through transferable development rights (TDR), green and renewable energy initiatives in Ahmedabad, Surat, Gandhinagar, and various other cities in Gujarat. Additionally, he emphasized the significance of transparent governance and the use of innovative technologies such as Online Development Permission System (ODPS), Geographical Information System (GIS), etc.

Mr Varma elaborated upon Ahmedabad’s economic geography and carefully planned social urban development to illustrate Ahmedabad’s journey towards transformational urbanism. He initiated by pointing out that Ahmedabad has always been a sanctuary for great thinkers and that UNESCO designated the city as the first heritage city of India. He foregrounded thoughtful urban planning as a foundation for economic prosperity and thoughtful urban planning as a foundation for economic prosperity. He reiterated how all great cities had undergone transformations due to careful urban planning and infrastructure investments, citing example of the Sabarmati Riverfront’s development stimulating economic growth in Ahmedabad. According to him, the Sabarmati River is an icon of urban transformation and rejuvenation through physical, environmental, cultural, aesthetic, and economic development.

Prof. H. M. Shivanand Swamy presented the findings of the research carried out by CEPT Research & Development Foundation (CRDF) in Green Mobility - Climate Financing. He covered topics related to the promotion of green mobility, particularly through the increased adoption of electric vehicles, innovative financing mechanisms for carbon monetization, an integrated public transportation system, Local Area Plans, value capture mechanisms, etc.
Summary of Proceedings

i  U20 2023 Cycle: Priorities and Communiqué
The session was a detailed deliberation amongst the Participating and Observer Cities regarding the Zero Draft Communiqué and the six priority areas identified.

ii  U20 Advocacy: Convergence with other Engagement Groups
The session focused on possible convergence between the U20 Engagement Group and other G20 Engagement Groups. The representatives from Startup20, Think20, and Youth20 shared their thoughts on possible convergence with Urban20.

iii  Closing Ceremony
The City Sherpa of Ahmedabad concluded the two-day event with a vote of thanks.
D A Y  2
U20 2023 Cycle: Closed Door Session
Closed Door Session
Closed Session
Closed Door Session
DAY 2
U20 Advocacy: Closed Door Session
Closed Door Session
Closed Door Session
Closed Door Session
The Municipal Commissioner of Ahmedabad, Mr. M. Thennarasan presided over the closing ceremony and discussed the city’s plans for development. He emphasized the crucial role of budget allocation in areas like green mobility, public transport, and climate financing, and emphasized the importance of the city and municipal administration in achieving these goals. He invited questions and recommendations from city representatives regarding the ongoing projects in Ahmedabad and provided insightful responses to inquiries from participating and observer cities.

To maintain sustainability standards in old and new developments, Ahmedabad generates revenue from transit-oriented development to fund sustainable development model. This involves circular economy through waste segregation, recycling, and setting up waste management facilities like waste-to-energy and compost plants. Additionally, the city plans to establish water plants to provide recycled water for industrial use and irrigation.

Ahmedabad aims for zero-waste with 600 GPS-equipped waste collection vehicles separating dry and wet waste, then converting the remaining waste into refused-derived fuel or waste to energy.

Currently, Ahmedabad has two types of buses, BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) and AMTS (Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Services), with over 250 electric buses. The goal is to convert all 1,050 buses to electric within five years using a self-financing model. Additionally, the city plans to add 100 more electric buses in this year’s budget.

Last year, Ahmedabad experienced water-logging due to insufficient storm-water facilities. Currently, only 20-30% of the area has dedicated stormwater facilities, and the rest relies on drainage networks during rainfall. To address this, the government plans to construct larger trunk lines that connect lakes and ponds, allowing for water collection and conveyance to the river. Additionally, the city plans to create sponge parks, eco-blocks, and water plazas for multipurpose use, such as water storage during rainfall, immersion tanks for festivals, and social infrastructure for the rest of the year.
Numerous awareness programs are being conducted to promote environmentally responsible behaviour among communities. These programs include campaigns on waste segregation and water conservation and awareness messages conveyed through children in municipal schools with the involvement of nearly 40,000 individuals. Regarding international collaborations, the commissioner responded by stating that alliances with other cities can be formed after approval from the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

The session concluded with Mr Praveen Chaudhary, City Sherpa of Ahmedabad delivering a Vote of Thanks to Dignitaries, Delegates, India’s U20 Support Team - MoHUA and NIUA, U20 Global Conveners, AMC, Consultants, and Hospitality Partners.
Cultural Events

ADALAJ NI VAV
City Excursion - Feb 8, 2023 | 16.00 – 18.00 hrs.

The delegates visited Adalaj ni vav, an essential part of Ahmedabad’s history with intricate architecture and amazing craftsmanship by skilled artisans. The stepwell was built in 1499 to hold water, provide refuge to travelers and locals, and offer spiritual sustenance.

GALA DINNER
Taj Skyline - Feb 8, 2023 | 19.00 – 21.00 hrs.

Mr Praveen Chaudhary, City Sherpa of Ahmedabad, welcomed the delegates followed by a meet-and-greet networking dinner. The delegates enjoyed the rich Indian live music show.
**MORNING YOGA**

Gotila Garden, Thaltej - Feb 9, 2023 | 06.00 – 09.00 hrs.

The delegates enjoyed morning yoga session in the vibrant green garden at Thaltej.

**SABARMATI ASHRAM AND ATAL BRIDGE**

City Excursion - Feb 9, 2023 | 16.15 – 19.00 hrs.

The delegates visited the Sabarmati Ashram (a museum showcasing the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi) and the Atal Foot Over Bridge (a pedestrian truss bridge built over the Sabarmati river).
Cultural Events

RATRI BHOJ PAR CHARCHA
Sabarmati Riverfront - Feb 9, 2023 | 19.00 – 22.00 hrs.

A cultural event reflecting Indian art performances was organised for the delegates followed by a gala dinner with the Gujarat Chief Minister at the Sabarmati Riverfront.

HERITAGE WALK
Ahmedabad old city - Feb 10, 2023 | 06.30 – 08.30 hrs.

The delegates walked through the old city of Ahmedabad, appreciating and celebrating the diversity in culture carried over generations.
The Heritage walk was followed by a breakfast at the House of MG, a premier boutique heritage hotel and one of the oldest buildings in the city, wonderfully representing the colonial heritage architecture of the early 20th century.

**HOUSE OF 'MG'**

Breakfast - Feb 10, 2023 | 08.30 – 09.30 hrs.

The summit concluded with a farewell dinner hosted by the Mayor of Ahmedabad for the delegates at the Kankaria lake.

**KANKARIA LAKE**

Farewell Dinner - Feb 10, 2023 | 17.15 – 21.00 hrs.

The summit concluded with a farewell dinner hosted by the Mayor of Ahmedabad for the delegates at the Kankaria lake.
APPENDIX
Event Schedule

**Day 00**  
Feb 8, 2023  
GALA DINNER | Taj Skyline (19.00 – 21.00 hrs.)

**Day 01**  
Feb 9, 2023  
PLENARY SESSION | Monte Cristo Hall (10:30 – 11:30 hrs.)
(Open to all Delegates & Participants)
- Lamp Lighting and Welcome
- Opening Remarks by Mayor, Mr Kiritkumar J. Parmar
- Special Address on ‘G20 - Call for Action’ by Mr Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa
- Virtual address by Mr Hardeep Singh Puri, Hon’ble Minister, HUA
- Keynote address by Mr Bhupendrabhai Patel, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Gujarat
- Welcome Note by U20 Conveners
- Introductions by city sherpas moderated by U20 Conveners
- Vote of thanks

G20 India: DISCUSSION ON PRIORITIES, ADVOCACY AND WAY FORWARD | Monte Cristo Hall (12:00 – 13:00 hrs.)
(Open to all Delegates & Participants)
- Opening Remarks by Mr Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa
- Special Address on ‘India’s Urban Imperative’ by Mr Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- Presentation by Mr Solomon Arokiraj, Chair - Infrastructure Working Group
- Presentation by Mr Kamal Kishore, Chair - Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group
- Presentation by Dr Sandip Chatterjee, Senior Director, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology - Digital Economy Working Group
- Open Floor for discussions

Lunch | Taj Skyline – Shamiana (13.00 – 14.00 hrs.)
U20 2023 CYCLE: CONTEXT SETTING | Taj Skyline: Crystal Hall 1 and Crystal Hall 2 (14:00 - 15:30 hrs.)
(Open to Delegates in Crystal Hall 1. Other participants may view the proceedings in Crystal Hall 2)

Session 1 | 14:00 - 15:00 hrs.
- Welcome, introducing the session and speakers by U20 Conveners
- Presentation by Dr Sri Hayati, Jakarta Sherpa on ‘Looking back at Jakarta’
- Presentation on U20 priorities and expectations by Mr Praveen Chaudhary, Ahmedabad Sherpa
- Presentation on the sixth cycle’s milestones by U20 Conveners
- Open floor facilitated by U20 Conveners
- Summing up by U20 Conveners

Session 2 | 15:00 - 15:30 hrs.
- Special Address on ‘Urban Innovations in Gujarat and Way Forward’ by Mr Mukesh Kumar, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Gujarat
- ‘Urban planning and Environmental Sustainability’ by Mr Keshav Varma, Chairperson, HLC of urban planners, urban economists and institutions
- ‘Climate Financing in Green Mobility’ Prof. H M Shivanand Swamy, Professor Emeritus, Centre of Excellence-Urban Transport (CoE-UT)

High Tea and networking | Taj Skyline: Shamiyana (15:30 – 16:00 hrs.)

City Excursion - Sabarmati Ashram (Mahatma Gandhi’s residence), Atal Bridge, and Sabarmati Riverfront | 16:15 – 19:00 hrs.

Samvad over Dinner (conversation over dinner) and Cultural Programme | Sabarmati Riverfront (19:00 – 22:00 hrs.)
DAY 02
Feb 10, 2023

CITY EXCURSION (06:30 – 9:00 hrs)
(optional - for interested delegates)
- Ahmedabad Heritage Walk
- Breakfast at 'The House of MG'

(Breakfast will be available at Taj Skyline: Shamiyana for delegates opting not to attend the walk)

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U20 2023 CYCLE: PRIORITIES AND COMMUNIQUÉ | Taj Skyline
(10:30 – 13:00 hrs.)
(Closed session only for delegates. Cities sherpas from participating and observer cities, U20 Conveners, and organizers)

- Recap of Day 1 by U20 Conveners
- Detailed presentation on U20 Priorities by Mr Praveen Chaudhary, Ahmedabad Sherpa
- City Sherpa Open Floor facilitated by U20 Conveners
  (3 min talking time for each city representative)
- Closing remarks by Ahmedabad Sherpa

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Lunch | Taj Skyline: Shamiyana (13.00 – 14.00 hrs.)
U20 ADVOCACY: CONVERGENCE WITH OTHER ENGAGEMENT GROUPS
Taj Skyline (14:00 – 15:00 hrs.)
(Open to all delegates and select participants)
- Opening Remarks by Moderator, Mr Sanjeev Sanyal, Member Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister
- Special Address on ‘Gujarat’s Connect with G20’ by Ms Mona Khandhar, Principal Secretary Economic Affairs, Government of Gujarat
- Presentation by Mr Chintan Vaishnav, Chair Startup20
- Presentation by Jhanvi Tripathi, Coordinator, Think20 India Secretariat
- Presentation by Mr Akash Jha on Youth20
- Open Floor facilitated by the Moderator
- Summing up by the Moderator

CLOSING CEREMONY | Taj Skyline (15:00 – 15:30 hrs.)
(Open to all delegates and participants depending on space availability)
- Voice of Ahmedabad by Mr. M. Thennarasakan, Municipal Commissioner, Ahmedabad
- Special closing address and Way Forward by Mr Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- Vote of Thanks by Ahmedabad Sherpa

Tea/ Coffee Break | 15:30 – 16:00 hrs. | Taj Skyline: Shamiyana

Farewell Dinner for Delegates | 18:00 – 21:00 hrs. | Kankaria Lake