



Rio de Janeiro - Brazil  
22-26 March 2010

In the space of a few short years, the **World Urban Forum** has turned into the world's premier conference on cities. The Forum was established by the

**United Nations**

to examine one of the most pressing problems facing the world today: rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies.

Since the first meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in 2002, the Forum has grown in size and stature as it travelled to Barcelona in 2004, Vancouver 2006, and Nanjing in 2008.

With half of humanity already living in towns and cities, it is projected that in the next 50 years, two-thirds of us will be living in towns and cities. A major challenge is to minimize burgeoning poverty in cities, improve access of the urban poor to basic facilities such as shelter, clean water and sanitation and to achieve environmentally friendly, sustainable urban growth and development.



UN-HABITAT and the Government of Brazil have started preparations for the fifth session scheduled in **Rio de Janeiro 22 - 26 March 2010**. The Forum is one of the most open and inclusive gatherings of its kind on the international stage. It brings together government leaders, ministers, mayors, diplomats, members of national, regional and international associations of

local governments, non-governmental and community organizations, professionals, academics, grassroots women's organizations, youth and slum dwellers groups as partners working for better cities. The fifth session in Rio builds on the lessons and successes of the previous four events.

*"Brazil, like other countries in the world, became essentially urban during the twentieth century. Today, in Brazil, but also throughout the world, we need to rethink and renegotiate the fundamental bases of the city we want,"* said Marcos Caramuru de Paiva, the Brazilian Consul General in Shanghai. Speaking to delegates in Nanjing, he added:

*"Our home planet is only one, we change addresses but consume the same globalized products, we travel the same way, we use the same natural resources and we develop together."*

The theme for Rio 2010, *The right to the City* - "bridging the urban divide" is in harmony with UN-HABITAT's flagship report, *State of the World's Cities 2010-2011*.