

Enquiries: Seana Nkhahle
Tel: 012 369 8000
E-mail: snkhahle@salga.org.za

CIRCULAR 02 / 2020

FROM : CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**TO : EXECUTIVE MAYORS AND MAYORS
SPEAKERS
CHIEF WHIPS
MUNICIPAL MANAGERS**

DATE : 29 JANUARY 2020

SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION AT THE WORLD URBAN FORUM IN ABU DHABI, 8-13 FEBRUARY 2020

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this circular is to apprise members of SALGA regarding South African Local Government participation at the tenth World Urban Forum (WUF10) to be held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates from 8-13 February 2020 under the theme ***“Cities of Opportunities: Connecting Culture and Innovation”***. SALGA working together with the Department of Human Settlements seek to facilitate coordination of the South African contingent at the event in order to maximize our contribution of the South African delegation and to amplify the voice of local government at this international conference.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The World Urban Forum (WUF) was established by the United Nations to examine inter alia one of the most pressing problems facing the world today - rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies, climate change and policies. Its purpose is to provide advice on key issues that should inform the work of UN Habitat and all key stakeholders in the field of human settlements and urban development. It brings together government leaders, ministers, mayors and other councillors, 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 dweller groups as partners working for better cities and human settlements.

The objectives of WUF10 are as follows:

- a. Raise awareness on sustainable urbanisation among stakeholders, constituencies and the public
- b. To build on the lessons learned of previous World Urban Forums, especially with respect to bottom up approaches to sustainable urbanization
- c. To promote innovative solutions and approaches to urban development, building on the value of cultural diversity to improve quality of life for all in cities and communities.
- d. To take stock of emerging approaches and practices in harnessing culture and innovation as a driver for sustainable urban development
- e. To provide greater insights into linkages between urbanization, culture and innovation as a basis for achieving inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements
- f. To explore the role of culture and innovation in implementing the New Urban Agenda and achieving urban dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There is a series of stakeholder engagements categorised into

- a. WUF10 Assemblies, including one on “Local and Regional Governments”
- b. High Level Roundtables, including one on “Local and Regional Governments”
- c. Stakeholder Roundtables
- d. Special Sessions
- e. Networking, Training and Side Events
- f. Dialogues

3. COORDINATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATES

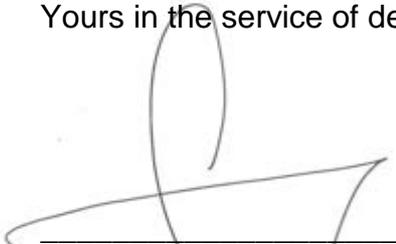
The WUF is a forum open to participation by all urban and human settlements actors, and thus any organisation and person can register to attend. The Department of Human Settlements is the lead Department on matters pertaining to UN-Habitat, and has in recent years worked with SALGA and other key partners to co-ordinate South Africans attending WUF. This seeks to facilitate a “Team South Africa” approach and to maximise the impact of South Africa’s presence at the event. It requires national departments, provincial departments, local government, civil society representatives and non-governmental organisations to agree on South Africa’s approach and key messages in support of the country’s collective agenda.

In the context above **it is therefore kindly requested that municipalities that are planning on sending participants to WUF, communicate this information to SALGA.** Please communicate via email to Mr Seana Nkhahle at snkhahle@salga.org.za by 4 February 2020 with the following information: number of delegates, their names, titles, areas of responsibility (including whether they are councilors or officials), and contact details (email address and cell phone numbers). This will enable the coordinating team to facilitate coordination amongst member municipalities and with the rest of Team SA while in Abu Dhabi. While the contribution in setting the global development agenda through participation in such multi-lateral organisations, it is equally important to exercise financial prudence in determining the extent of the delegation considering the difficult economic environment within which the country and respective municipalities are confronted with.

Municipalities are also invited to be part of the South African exhibition stand at the event where TeamSA will be showcasing and profiling South Africa's human settlements and urban development to the world. Members are encouraged to connect with us at the stand, which will also function as our centre of coordination.

We look forward to hearing from you, and to joining with you in participating in this important global event as we showcase the successes of South African local government to the world.

Yours in the service of developmental local government,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Xolile George', written over a horizontal line.

XOLILE GEORGE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER