



**WELCOMING REMARKS BY HE MR NASSER KAMEL,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UfM,
AT THE INFORMAL ONLINE UfM MEETING ON
EMERGENCY HOUSING RESPONSES TO COVID-19
IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION
(Barcelona, 29 April 2020, 14h30 hrs CEST)**

As the Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean, I would like to welcome you all to our meeting on emergency housing during the current pandemic.

Thank you for making an effort in joining us today.

I know how busy housing authorities are in the current circumstances.

It is also Ramadan or a public holiday in some UfM countries.

My special thanks to our guest of honour, Ms Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, for being with us today.

I am grateful to the UfM Co-presidency, represented by the European Commission and Jordan, for guiding and directing our overall work in the urban sector.

I deeply appreciate the Delft University of Technology and its brilliant scholars for taking the lead in devising a state of the art, science-led and integrated UfM urban development action plan.

We shall finalise this strategic guidance document in the coming months, in view of your much appreciated contributions to the process.





I would also thank the housing experts from the European Commission, OECD and the German Institute for Economic Research, who have so kindly accepted to kick-off our discussion.

In view of the current pandemic, as well as the climate emergency in the region, I believe our houses are fast becoming shelters for our survival.

Housing will no doubt continue to be a corner stone of sustainable, resilient and inclusive cities and communities in the Mediterranean.

I am confident that this meeting would contribute to taking stock of lessons learned and deficiencies identified during the pandemic, that it would facilitate exchange of best practices and encourage policy transfers, and that it would indicate the possible way forward in adequate, sustainable and resilient housing in our region.

Thank you.

