

AN AGENDA FOR HABITAT III:

Urban Perestroika

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AUTHORS

Robert Buckley

Lena Simet

Robert Buckley is a Senior Fellow at The Global Urban Futures Project at The New School.

Lena Simet is a doctoral student in Public and Urban Policy at The New School and the Coordinator of the Global Urban Futures Project.

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FUTURES**

Abstract:

In order to develop a constructive new urban agenda (NUA), the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) must move beyond sterile proclamations, and acknowledge what we have learned since previous Habitat meetings – that urban policy significantly influences inclusive economic growth. A new urban agenda that takes new research and understandings into account could be like investments in health in terms of the high rate of return. More than that, changes in urban regulations and in the way subsidies are targeted could allow most of the desired gains to be realized without additional resources. An NUA, in other words, could be like perestroika for cities. Indeed, it could support a “restructuring” that is both more manageable and more fundamental than other, more popular, growth strategies. By examining a number of case studies, the paper demonstrates that a central message of Habitat III should be that better urban policy is much more than just a claim on public resources, it can be an important way to achieve inclusive growth.

The full report can be accessed at:

<http://eau.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/12/17/0956247815622131>