

## Think City Managing Director Receives UN-Habitat Special Citation Award

**George Town, 20 November 2023** – In recognition of his visionary leadership and ground-breaking contributions to urban regeneration, Hamdan Abdul Majeed, Managing Director of Think City, has been awarded a prestigious Special Citation from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). This acknowledgement marks a pivotal moment for not only Hamdan and Think City but also for the landscape of sustainable urban development in Malaysia, particularly in Penang.

The momentous ceremony, held at Think City's headquarters, Wisma UAB, George Town, on November 20, witnessed the presence of Chief Minister of Penang, YAB Tuan Chow Kon Yeow, who delivered his opening remark. "Today, we recognise not just an individual but the transformative force behind collaborative initiatives that shape our urban future, sparking a new wave of growth, and transforming it into a thriving, culturally rich hub. This progression has garnered acclaim, boosted tourism, revitalised the economy, and influenced how people perceive and embrace the historic area," remarked Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow.

Her Excellency Dato' Seri Paduka Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN-Habitat presented the Special Citation, praising Hamdan's impactful contributions. She remarked, "Hamdan embodies the essence of UN-Habitat's mission to foster socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns embedded in the New Urban Agenda. This aims to optimise cities for sustainable development and outlines steps crucial for ensuring that cities and human settlements drive the implementation of SDGs. I am proud to honour his impactful contributions to the field."

Each year, UN-Habitat acknowledges outstanding contributions to human settlements with the Special Citation, a certificate handed out by the Executive Director. Notable past recipients include Emine Erdoğan, First Lady of Türkiye, and the United Cities for Local Governments, an umbrella institution for cities and local and regional governments. This year the Special Citation was presented to Jean Todt, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Road Safety, Yücel Yılmaz, President of the Union of Municipalities of Türkiye, and Rohey Malick Lowe, Mayor of Banjul, Gambia.

Reflecting on the recognition, Hamdan expressed his gratitude, stating, "Transitioning from an investment banker to a venture builder, and now working with Think City has allowed me to further my commitment to shaping urban policies, fostering civil society development, and advocating for impact investments. This achievement is not just a personal milestone; it embodies the collective dedication of Think City and our shared aspiration for sustainable urban development."

He added, "Think City's journey is a story of collaboration, of people coming together to shape the future of our cities. This award is a tribute to every contributor across society who has played a role in enhancing our urban spaces, making them more liveable, sustainable, and fostering a sense of community. This Special Citation is dedicated to everyone involved in making this transformation possible."



Born in Penang, Hamdan was instrumental in reversing the decline of his hometown, George Town. In 2009, he shaped Think City, an impact organisation focused on creating more liveable, resilient and people-friendly cities. Under Hamdan's leadership, Think City has successfully executed more than 250 projects, breathing new life into the city. They encompass the restoration of historic buildings, the enhancement of public spaces, and the development of programmes to support local businesses and communities.

Key initiatives by Think City that have played a pivotal role in the transformation of Penang include the George Town Transformation Programme, the rejuvenation of the historic Esplanade Seawall, the Fort Cornwallis Revitalisation Project, and the Nature-based Climate Adaptation Programme for the Urban Areas of Penang Island (PNBCAP). As a result, George Town has changed significantly since it became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2008.

Think City's impactful initiatives have not only revitalised George Town, putting it on the international list of 10 Best Places to Visit, but have also set a benchmark for urban regeneration nationwide. Hamdan's vision has extended to other cities, including Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and the Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia.

Today, George Town stands as more than just a thriving global cultural destination and a model for sustainable urban development; it serves as a testament to the power of heritage conservation and community pride, fostered through Hamdan's inspiring leadership and vision.

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#### **About Think City**

Think City is an impact organisation established in 2009 to create more sustainable and equitable places for the benefit of all. Our knowledge, skills and strategies focus on urban solutions, the environment, social communities, and the cultural economy. Think City is a wholly owned subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad (the sovereign wealth fund of the Government of Malaysia). For more information, log on to [thinkcity.com.my](http://thinkcity.com.my).

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