



Cities

W: Sarah, did you know that the world is near a historic turning point? By 2020, more than half of the world's population will be urban.

S: I know, the urban population of developing countries is projected to double in the next thirty years.

W: it's a fact that large cities have existed for centuries. For instance Xi'an, China, had eight hundred thousand inhabitants as long ago as seven hundred fifty AD.

Sarah: Actually I read that this year, in 2015, there are five hundred fifty four cities in the world with one million or more residents. Isn't it amazing? And it's still growing because I heard that they have put substantial funds into upgrading one of the most run-down inner cities in England, so they expect more people to settle there I guess.

W: Yes, my sister told me. The mayor has asked developers to rehabilitate districts that have been going to rack and ruin for a long time.

Sarah: generally they renovate these neighbourhoods in shopping centres or business districts. Have you noticed how office blocks are sprouting up everywhere in the city?

W: yes I did. Personally, I sometimes need to get away from the hustle and bustle of downtown Paris, like many city dwellers in search of a quieter life who dream of fleeing the city.

Sarah: I grew up playing with the other kids on the block in the suburb of Marseille for many years, and I admit that city life has definitely changed. I wouldn't do that with my kids today.

W: that's why we are building a house on the outskirts of the city, for our kids to play in a real garden, and to escape urban sprawl.



GLOSSARY:

Cities	The urban population
To project	Developing countries
To double	Centuries
To exist	One million or more
To grow	Residents
To put	Substantial funds
To upgrade	Run-down
To expect	Inner cities
To settle	The mayor
To rehabilitate	Developers
To go rack and ruin	Districts
To renovate	A long time
To notice	Neighbourhoods
To sprout up	Shopping centres
To get away	Business districts
To be in search	Office blocks
To dream	the hustle and bustle
To flee : fuir	Downtown
To grow up	City dwellers
To change	A quieter life
To build	The other kids on the block
To play	The suburb
To escape	The outskirts
The world	Urban
A historic turning point	A garden
The world's population	Seven hundred fifty AD : 750 after JC



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