



**2021 Second Session of the Executive Board
of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme
15 and 16 November 2021, Hybrid**

**Agenda item 3: Reports of the Chairs of the Ad-Hoc Working Groups of the
Executive Board**

Statement by

H.E Ms. Saqlain Syedah

**Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UN-Habitat and
Chair of the Ad-Hoc working group on Programmatic Budgetary and
Administrative matters and Vice Chair of the Executive Board**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to brief the Executive Board at this session.

Excellencies,

It is my great pleasure to brief the Executive Board on the work done by the Ad-Hoc working group on Programmatic, Budgetary and Administrative matters since the first session of the Executive Board which was held on 7 and 8 April 2021. Subsequent to that session, the Ad-Hoc working group on Programmatic, Budgetary and Administrative matters has met five (5) times, on 15 September 2021, 13 October 2021, 3 November 2021, 8 November 2021 and 10 November 2021.

In line with its mandate the working group discussed the following topics:

- a. the draft work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2022

- b. alignment of UN-Habitat planning cycles with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
- c. Normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat
- d. the draft outcomes to be considered by the Executive Board at its second session for the year 2022

A. Recommendations on the Draft work programme and draft budget of UN-Habitat for 2022

Excellencies,

With regard to the draft programme and budget for the year 2022, as may be recalled, the Executive Board at its first session in 2021 requested in paragraph 3 of its decision 2021/1 that working group should continue its discussions on the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation non-earmarked budget of UN-Habitat for 2022 to be within the range of USD 10 million to USD 12 million. In that decision, the Board also requested the Executive Director to finalize a draft annual work programme and budget for 2022 based on feedback from the Committee for Programme and Coordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, utilizing all projected sources for funding of the overall budget of the UN-Habitat, and to present it for further consideration by the Executive Board at its second session of 2021.

Excellencies,

The Secretariat informed Members of the working group that the draft work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2022 which was presented at the first session of the Executive Board for the year 2021 was within the recommended budget range for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation non-earmarked budget for

2022, which is between USD 10 million and USD 12 million and other extrabudgetary resources. Specifically, an amount of USD 11.9 million was indicated in the draft work programme and budget for 2022. UN-Habitat stated that the proposed draft budget for the year 2022 was based on the needs of the Programme to build back better after the Covid-19 crisis and to address the shortfalls in some key components of the budget based on the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. The working group was made aware that the draft work programme of UN-Habitat for the year 2022 had been presented to the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the draft budget of UN-Habitat was presented to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

The working group had no general objections on the proposal that the budget for the year 2022 of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation non-earmarked budget of UN-Habitat should be within the range of USD 10 million to USD 12 million. Member States reiterated the importance of providing adequate resources to UN-Habitat to deliver efficiently with respect to the four sub-programs of the programme of work for the year 2022. It was further emphasized that a drawdown could have consequences in terms of core competencies and human resources for UN-Habitat.

One Member State, however, noted that the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation had only received USD 1.5 million non-earmarked budget in 2021, as at September 2021 which was only 10% of the approved non-earmarked budget for the year 2021 and further requested the secretariat to prepare and present a revised draft work programme and draft budget for the year 2022 which should be based on the actual revenue levels of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2021.

In response, the Secretariat noted that the draft work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2022, having been presented to the Executive Board at its first session for the year 2021, was forwarded to the ACABQ based on the guidance received from

the Executive Board at that session, with the recommended budget range for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation non-earmarked budget for 2022 between USD 10 million and USD 12 million. The secretariat stated that due to time constraints on the schedule of the ACABQ, it would not be possible for UN-Habitat to go back and present a different budget to the ACABQ for consideration.

The Secretariat also provided further details to the working group on possible areas of prioritization based on continued funding projections.

Excellencies

The working group made the following specific **recommendations** with respect to the work programme and budget for the year 2022:

1. The working group provided its support to the proposed work programme for 2022, which aligns with the 2020- 2023 Strategic Plan.
2. The working group was not in a position to reach consensus on supporting the proposed draft budget for the year 2022, with the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation non-earmarked budget to be a maximum of \$11.9 million.
3. The working group noted that some Member States would consult further with their respective capitals on the matter and revert.
4. The working group recommended that the Executive Board, based on continued funding projections, provide further guidance on possible areas of prioritization of the draft work programme for the year 2022 to match funding that may be available for 2022.

5. The working group noted UN-Habitat's concrete actions to seek alternate sources of funding to support the implementation of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020-2023, particularly from the private sector and acknowledged the additional information on contemplated innovative ways to raise both earmarked and non-earmarked resources through a financial vehicle in a form of a facility to allow for third party financial support to the Organization.

Mr. Chairman

The draft work programme and budget is before this session as document HSP/EB.2021/4 for further consideration by the Board under agenda item 5.

B. Recommendations on the Alignment of UN-Habitat planning cycles with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review process

Excellencies,

With regard to our discussions on the alignment of UN-Habitat planning cycles with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review process (QCPR) as requested by the Executive Board at its 2021 first session, the working group made the following recommendations which provide a number of options and opinions for the alignment of the QCPR with the planning cycles, but which were far from consensus:

1. Possibility to retain the current Strategic Plan 2020-2023 for the full term and develop an Interim two-year Strategic plan for the period 2024-2025 and develop a Strategic Plan for the period 2026-2029 (Scenario 2). In this scenario it was stated that an interim Strategic Plan would be a better fit for purpose to reflect the current needs and realities on the ground, specifically under the Covid-19 circumstances.

2. Possibility to extend the current Strategic Plan 2020-2023 by another two years to the period 2020-2025 and develop a Strategic Plan for the period 2026-2029 (Scenario 3). With respect to this scenario, the working group suggested that the high-level midterm review of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to UN-Habitat held in June 2021 did not call for a change of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and as such that strategic plan remains relevant. Under this scenario, one delegation suggested that in June 2023, only the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly should be held and not the CPR which is mandated to prepare for that session.

3. The working group further recommended that the Executive Board at this second session recommend another three options for alignment to the UN-Habitat Assembly with the view that the UN-Habitat Assembly should consider all options and take a final decision. The additional options mentioned are as follows:
 - i. That the format for the UN-Habitat Assembly in 2025 could be virtual.
 - ii. That the UN-Habitat Assembly should consider empowering the Executive Board to approve the strategic plan on exceptional basis.
 - iii. That the UN-Habitat Assembly should consider changing the Rules of procedure to allow the Executive Board to permanently approve the strategic plan.

4. The working group also stated that any recommendation by Executive Board on the alignment of planning cycles of UN-Habitat with the QCPR be considered by the UN-Habitat Assembly, with CPR taking up the discussions on the two scenarios, that is scenario 2 and scenario 3.

5. Recalling the delicate discussions to create the new governance structure of UN-Habitat, the working group called for the need to respect the new governance structure and adhere to its three bodies with distinct functions. These are the Executive Board, the CPR and the UN-Habitat Assembly.
6. Lastly, the working group noted that the final decision on the alignment will be made by the UN-Habitat Assembly, at its second session scheduled for the year 2023.

Based on the recommendations of the working group, a proposed decision language in the outcome document has been provided to the Executive Board for consideration at this session. The Executive Board hopefully would then conclude discussions on the alignment of the QCPR with the planning cycles of UN-Habitat by referring the matter to the UN-Habitat Assembly for consideration and decision at its second session in 2023.

C. Recommendations on the Normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat

Excellencies

The working group also discussed the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat.

In this regard, the Secretariat briefed the working group on UN-Habitat's new initiatives in both normative and operational activities, with a focus on engagement in housing policy issues and priorities in Europe; engagement on migration and displacement, including progress on flagship programme 4 on inclusive cities for migrants. The briefing also highlighted the role of UN-Habitat in supporting voluntary local reviews on the Sustainable Development Goals, in line with paragraph 10 of recommendation 2021/1,

adopted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives at the first meeting of the high-level midterm review.

The Secretariat also presented a plan towards developing the institutional anchoring of capacity-building as a cross-cutting function as well as a briefing on the effective implementation of the United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements, including the terms of reference of a peer review mechanism for an effective implementation of the Guidelines. The working group was also briefed on cooperation with the UNEP.

The working group acknowledged UN-Habitat's professionalism and its strategic positioning in the implementation and delivery of its normative and operational activities. There were no additional specific recommendations to this topic. The documents related to the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat are before the Board for consideration Board under agenda item 7.

D. Informal consultations on the draft decisions towards the 2021 second session of the Executive Board

Mr. Chairman

Excellencies

Distinguished delegates

As recommended by the Bureau, the ad hoc working group on programmatic budgetary and administrative matters also took on the task of leading the informal consultations on the draft outcomes to be considered by the Executive Board at this session well before the session. In this regard, the working group met three times and considered the draft decisions based on the technical input by the Secretariat.

I now have the distinct honour to present to this second session of the Executive Board the draft decisions, which I formally forwarded to you on 11 November 2021, for further consideration as contained in the document HSP/EB. 2021/CRP.5, namely, “Draft Decisions of the Executive Board at its 2021 second session”.

In that document, there are three draft decisions to be considered by the Executive Board as follows:

- Draft Decision 2021/6 on the work programme and draft budget, implementation of the strategic plan for the period 2020–2023, and alignment of the planning cycles of the Programme with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review process
- Draft Decision 2021/7 on the implementation of normative and operational activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, reporting on the programmatic activities of the Programme in 2021, implementation of subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities and the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda
- Draft Decision 2021/8 on the methods of work of the Executive Board and the workplan of the Executive Board for 2022

I have formally handed the most current version of the above draft decisions as contained in document HSP/EB.2021/CRP.5 to the Chair of the Executive Board for further consideration by the Board at this session.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies

Before I conclude, allow me to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Member States for their active participation in the ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters.

Thank you, Excellencies.

Thank you very much Chair.