



**SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERVENTION DURING THE 2021 SECOND SESSION OF  
THE UNHABITAT EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**AGENDA ITEM 7: THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF A PEER REVIEW  
MECHANISM FOR AN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE GUIDELINES ON SAFER CITIES AND HUMAN  
SETTLEMENTS**

**15 – 16 NOVEMBER 2021**

**NAIROBI**

*Check against delivery*

Thank you to the secretariat for an update on the Normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat. Since it's the first time taking the floor, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to UNHABITAT for the work undertaken on the programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2021 and the implementation of sub-programmes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities.

Mr Chair,

Allow me to comment on the implementation of the Guidelines on safer cities and human settlements. My delegation appreciates the progress made in this regard following the presentation of the concept note during the last meeting of the Executive Board.

South Africa has always been a strong supporter of UN-Habitat's normative mandate and remains instrumental in the development of programmes in line with the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the UNHABITAT Strategic Plan.

In the follow-up to the adoption of the UN systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements in May 2019, South Africa through its Integrated Urban Development Framework (IUDF) – which is our National Policy to address Urbanisation through Spatial Transformation – continues to promote safety as a cross cutting theme in our urban development initiatives. Through the relevant national Department, South Africa has signed a Memorandum of Understanding, with the UN Resident Coordinating System and is working closely with UN Habitat towards an in-country peer review process on the implementation of these important Guidelines. It should be noted that this approach is consistent with the UN development system.

Mr Chair,

To show progress, South Africa has initiated the development of a project document costing at USD 1 million for an in-country peer review process that will engage 10 municipalities in secondary towns, and leveraging on the city of Durban as a good practice. We believe that framing a peer-review mechanism for the implementation of the Guidelines in 10 cities and towns in South Africa and measuring and integrating safety within existing policies and plans, will harness UN-Habitat's expertise as the global authority on human settlements, urban development, and strengthening local

governance in that context. Furthermore, this will support the Government of South Africa in achieving its priorities through providing policy and programme development support, capacity building and training, amongst other things.

This peer review process is envisaged to draw on UN-Habitat's technical assistance, and provide South Africa's contribution to the global peer review process in the implementation of the UN systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements. The in-country peer review process will see participating municipalities accompanied by UN-Habitat in the review of the policy and programming on safer cities, to improve their quality and consistency, and present the results at the 2nd Habitat Assembly in 2023. The process will also leverage on the South Africa Cities Network that has already developed an Annual State of Safety in South African Cities Reporting tool and an Urban Safety Reference Group at the national level.

In this context, promoting awareness on tools that have worked to enable safety at the municipal level is key towards developing more effective monitoring systems on human security and urban safety for all inhabitants. We note that this has led to safety being addressed as a transversal issue, bringing on board non-traditional departments such as Human Settlements, as co-implementers to the safety and security cluster; in addition to the imperative role played by the South African Police Service.

In conclusion Mr Chair, my delegation welcomes the adoption of the Terms of Reference for the peer review mechanism and wishes to encourage other member States to consider our approach, as one of the best practices, in establishing an in-country peer review process.

I thank you!