

**2023 First Bureau Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat**

Hybrid format – Wednesday, 8 February 2023

14:30-16:00 hrs. East Africa Time (EAT)

**Statement by the Executive Director**

*(Draft 7 February 2023 -12 noon)*

**SLIDE 0: Title slide**

**Slide 1: Provisional Agenda**

*Adoption of the Agenda led by the Chair.*

1. Adoption of the provisional Agenda,
2. Preparations for the 2023 first session of the Executive Board:
  - a. Guidance on format and venue.
  - b. Proposed organization of work during the session.
  - c. Informal consultations on possible outcomes of the 2023 first session of the Executive Board.
3. Elections for the 2023-2024 Bureau of the Executive Board and members of the Executive Board.
4. Any other matters.

**Slide 2 (Title slide): AGENDA ITEM 2 - Preparations for the 2023 first session of the Executive Board**

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Good afternoon and welcome to this first meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2023.

Before briefing you on Agenda item 2, I recognize that this is the first time we are gathered together this a year and as such let me take this opportunity to wish you a very productive and successful 2023.

I also want to acknowledge with gratitude all the support you accorded to me and to UN-Habitat in the year 2022. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and all members of the Bureau for your dedication throughout 2022. With your support and guidance, we had a very successful and innovative sessions of the Executive Board which included for the first time the participation of our beneficiaries and partners in the Executive Board, during which they briefed the Board on our work in their countries. We also achieved key milestones in 2022 with the clear outcomes of the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the new urban agenda held in April 2022 , the very successful and inclusive eleventh session of the World Urban Forum in June 2022, and the impactful contributions of UN-Habitat to the COP 27 with first ever Ministerial meeting on urbanization. We closed the year on a high note with a favorable outcome from the General Assembly at its 77<sup>th</sup> session in December 2022 which approved the conversion of 7 extra-budgetary posts to UN-Habitat under the Regular Budget. Let me assure you that we have immediately effected the conversion. Once again, I am most grateful for your support and that of Member States both in Nairobi and in New York on this matter.

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

I am also very pleased to inform you that within context of our resource mobilization strategy and with your support and guidance, in the year 2022 we were able to achieve a total of USD 7.5 Million in the core contributions under the foundation non-earmarked fund. This represents USD 5.5 million in surplus, from which we have set aside USD 3 million to fund the financial reserve and USD 500,000 was used to pay for the first progress payment against the loan. I am very grateful for this milestone which was possible because of the support by Member States. ***[NOTE FOR ED - THIS IS AN ESTIMATE PENDING FINALISATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ON 31 MARCH 2023]***

Excellencies,

This year 2023, is another very important year for UN-Habitat. We will have the Executive Board meet three times, the CPR will hold its second open ended meeting to prepare for the United Nations Habitat Assembly and the Assembly itself will hold its second session in June 2023, four since the first session took place in May 2019. Another key milestone event will take place right after the Assembly in July 2023 when the High-Level Political Forum in New York will focus on the implementation

of the SDG 11 which is under the responsibility of UN-Habitat as the lead UN agency.

I will once again count on your full support and guidance for the success of these important activities.

I also wish to thank through you Mr. Chairman, the Ambassador of Kenya and the Ambassador of Pakistan, for their leadership in the recently concluded induction seminar for new and relatively new Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat which was well attended by 50 representatives. It was a great opportunity to familiarize Member States on oversight functions and their guiding role in the work of UN-Habitat including on strategic planning, budgetary matters and resource mobilisation.

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

Coming back to agenda item 2 of our meeting today **which is preparations of the upcoming first session of the Executive Board for the year 2023**, I wish to first recall that during our meeting of 9 December 2022, you gave us guidance on the dates, provisional agenda and pre-session documents for the 2023 first session which enabled us to proceed with preparations in timely manner. We have been able to share the convocation note with Member States on 18 January 2023 which conveyed the dates of the session as 28 and 29 March 2023 as well as the provisional agenda for that session as recommended by the Bureau in line with decision 2022/7. I wish to confirm to the Bureau that we are making good progress in terms of the preparation of the key pre-session documents towards the session in liaison with the UNON Division of Conference services. It is expected that the documents will be shared with all Member States by 28 February 2023, which will be four weeks prior to the start of the session, in line with the rules of procedure.

The formal Notification and provisional Agenda are with the UNON Division of Conference Services for finalization in the six UN official languages, and will be shared with Member States by 15 February 2023, which will be within the required 42 days prior to the session as stipulated in the rules of procedure.

We expect registration for the session to open on Friday 24 February 2023 and close on Wednesday 23 March 2023.

**[Slide 3: Format of the 2023 first session of the Executive Board](#)**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies

With specific reference to item **2a on “Guidance on format and venue”**, I wish to share with you that UNON complex has remained open for access since 1 September 2022 when most of the COVID-19 related restrictions at the complex were lifted. As such, we foresee a high number of in-person participation like in the case of the second session of the Executive Board held in November 2022. In addition, and as has been the practice, we would like to propose that we continue with a hybrid session by providing online access to those not able to participate physically. With regards to the venue and just as a matter of confirmation, we expect to hold the session here at the UN-Habitat Headquarters as provided for by the rules of procedure.

#### **Slide 4: Proposed Organization of work during the 2023 first session of the Executive Board**

With regard to item **2b on “Proposed organization of work during the session”**, we propose for consideration of the Chair and the Bureau the organization of work across the two days as shown on the screen:

**On day one in the morning, the Board may consider the following agenda items.**

1. Opening of the session.
2. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2023;
  - (b) Adoption of the report of the Executive Board on the work of its second session of 2022.
3. Reports by the chairs of the ad hoc working groups established by the Executive Board.

4. Financial status of UN-Habitat including an update on the financial reserve and the updated model for the non-earmarked budget of the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation

**On day one in the afternoon, the Board may consider the following agenda items.**

5. Briefing on the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly.

6. Preparations for the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum.

7. Findings of the analysis of the reputational risks related to the Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation and overview of earmarked private sector contribution agreements.

**On day 2 in the morning, we propose that the Board may cover one agenda item, on**

8. Normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including reporting on the programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2022 and the implementation of subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, this item will focus on the need and the possible benefits of the development of the model of Sustainable Development Goals related cities certification in response to decision 2022/6 of the Executive Board, specifically paragraph 15 which requested “the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on the need and the possible benefits of the development of the model of Sustainable Development Goals-related cities certification at the first session of 2023 of the Executive Board”.

**On day 2 in the afternoon, the Board may consider the following agenda items.**

9. Annual report on action by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual and any other type of exploitation and abuse and against sexual harassment in the workplace.

10. Consideration and adoption of the outcomes of the session, including the provisional agenda for the second session of 2023.
11. Other matters.
12. Closure of the session.

**Slide 5: Item 2c: Informal consultations on possible outcomes of the 2023 first session of the Executive Board**

Excellencies,

In the roadmap towards the first session of the Board and other Governing Body meetings in 2023, we have included **informal consultations on draft decisions** prior to the session on 8 March 2023 in the afternoon and on 15 March 2023 both morning and afternoon.

In addition, during the actual session on 28 and 29 March 2023 we propose that informal consultations be held at the end of business on day 1, that is 28 March 2023, and a final informal consultation on the draft decisions be held during the lunch time on day 2, that is 29 March 2023.

We have already provided the technical inputs to the draft decisions as part of the annotated agenda for the session as is expected. These are ready for the informal consultations to begin on 8 March 2023 under the leadership of the Chair of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative issues, as may be considered by the Bureau.

I thank you Excellencies and I look forward to any feedback on this item.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, back to you.

**Slide 6: AGENDA ITEM 3 (TITLE SLIDE). Elections**

*To be led by the Chair*

**Slide 7: AGENDA ITEM 4- (TITLE SLIDE). Any other matters**

*(To be led by the Chair).*

## **Suggested AOB by the Executive Director**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

I wish to share with you, as a friend, the dilemma I am currently faced with which is whether to participate in the General Assembly meeting on Zero Waste which will take place at the end of March 2023 with the participation of the Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly. My loyalty is with the Executive Board yet the General Assembly meeting on Zero Waste also presents a similar opportunity that UN-Habitat actualised with the very successful High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the New Urban Agenda held in April 2022. In the event that I travel to the General Assembly meeting on Zero Waste, I assure that I will log into the Executive Board session virtually. For now, my team and I are considering the options and I thought I should mention this matter to the Bureau at this early stage.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.