

**DRAFT INTERVENTION BY H.E. AGRINA MUSSA, HIGH COMMISSIONER AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO U.N. HABITAT, DURING THE MEETING OF THE AD-HOC WORKING GROUP ON PROGRAMMATIC AND BUDGETARY MATTERS TO BE HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

1. ***I thank you Co-Chairs for this opportunity to contribute to the discussion*** on the Draft Work Programme and Budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2021, specifically on the point regarding options for scenario with Foundation Non-Earmarked Budget.
2. ***Malawi would like to thank the Executive Director and the staff of UN Habitat*** for their dedication and professionalism in producing the two documents in front of us outlining the options regarding Foundation non-earmarked funding. Let me at this moment indicate that Malawi aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the African group.
3. ***My delegation would like to recall from the outset*** the dedication, time, effort and consensus that emerged when Member States, Members of Specialised Agencies and Stakeholders were discussing and negotiating on the UN Habitat 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, with its four very important thematic areas. Malawi would also like to recall that recently, following the first session of the UN Habitat Assembly, members approved a new governance structure for UN Habitat. Therefore, in order to allow for inclusivity and efficiency, and also to implement activities and achieve results, it is imperative that UN Habitat is adequately and consistently funded. The UN Habitat Secretariat must be assured of foundation general purpose funds in order for it to carry out its mandate. Now, more than ever, the availability of non-earmarked funding for UN Habitat, is a matter of critical necessity.

4. ***My delegation would also like to recall its earlier view*** that the proposal that was made by the Secretariat to peg the 2021 budget at the figure it was, on the face of it looked daunting and most likely questionable. But it should not have. As we have alluded to earlier, UN Habitat has a new governance structure and a new strategic plan for 2020-2023. These need money. In fact, as regards the 2020-2023 strategic plan, it is most imperative for UN Habitat Secretariat actualise its restructuring plan by filling vacancies and recruiting the necessary staff. Our main interest as Malawi is for UN Habitat to recruit programmatic staff, who are supposed to be the thinkers and developers of tools, in order to achieve the normative mandate of the organisation, as envisaged through the four ***thematic pillars*** of the new strategic plan.
5. ***Having said the above, and before making its position on the two options*** regarding non-earmarked funding, Malawi would like to put on record, the following two points;
- Firstly, my delegation has noted, and is not convinced to the contrary, that UN Habitat Secretariat believes that resource mobilisation is about cultivating and nurturing relations mainly with those that are deemed as major contributors. While it is important, actually, to take cognizance of the contributions by such members, it is equally important to recognise the universality and sovereign equality of states in the composition of UN Habitat. Every member state matters when it comes to ensuing the financial well-being and sustainability of UN Habitat.
  - The second point my delegation would like to highlight, is to encourage all member states, regardless of region or assessed status to make their contributions to UN Habitat. In particular, on this point, my delegation would like to make a special appeal to members states of the developing world, those that encompass the south-south network, to be particularly

forthcoming, since UN Habitat is one of the few UN agencies that is located in this part of the world. We want it to stay in this part and we don't see it going it anywhere.

6. ***Co-Chairpersons, having said the foregoing*** Malawi would like to support the scenario which envisages a **minimum** budget for UN Habitat of Ten Million USD. My delegation has already highlighted that there is already an agreed Strategic Plan which must be implemented. UN Habitat must be enabled to carry out its core mandate of normative and agenda setter, and move away from emphasis on projects and project-related activities.

In giving this support, Malawi does so on the following conditions;

- i. That UN Habitat Secretariat should be more responsive to request and expectations by ALL members;
- ii. UN Habitat Secretariat should be more responsive to request calling for geographical and gender balance in the composition of its staff;
- iii. UN Habitat Secretariat should be more responsive to requests for transparency and accountability in the implementation of its work as well as management of financial and human resources;
- iv. UN Habitat Secretariat should ensure that it reaches out, for resource mobilisation to all member states in a manner that recognises the universality and sovereign equality of member states, and that the Secretariat should provide regular updates on such actions; and finally,
- v. UN Habitat Secretariat should endeavour to leverage its relations and contacts with member states and cooperating partners to ensure equitable and sustainable implementation of its mandate, including replication of best practices and outcomes.

7. ***In conclusion Co-Chairpersons***, Malawi remains committed to the ideals of the work of UN Habitat, and will continue to undertake its obligations, and undertake them seriously. we believe that as member states, we need to walk the talk, in as far as resourcing UN Habitat is concerned. In that regard, Malawi, as it has done in the past, is in the final stages of making its current voluntary contribution to UN Habitat.

**I THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY AND ATTENTION.**