

**11th meeting of the ad hoc working group on stakeholder engagement policy,
6 February 2023**

**Speaking notes for Neil Khor, Special Adviser and Director,
External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge, and Innovation Division**

Part A

Excellencies,
Stakeholder representatives, and
Colleagues

Good morning!

I am honoured to give a brief introduction to Chapter 5 of the draft stakeholder engagement policy, which is on accreditation.

The draft accreditation procedure is very much aligned to UN-Habitat's current practice with suggestions for responding to the challenges identified in the Secretariat's presentation on accreditation to the ad hoc working group on 17 January 2023.

Accreditation procedure is informed by:

- (i) The Rules of Procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly 66-69, and the Executive Board, 17.3.
- (ii) Governing Council Resolutions 19/8 and 26/7; and
- (iii) ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31.

Emphasis is placed on:

- (i) organisations accredited to the UN-Habitat Assembly and the Executive Board,
- (ii) organisations accredited to Habitat II, the Special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, and Habitat III.
- (iii) Local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners accredited to Habitat II and III,
- (iv) Other local authorities, national or international associations and organizations not accredited,
- (v) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC, and
- (vi) Other Habitat Agenda partners not accredited at all.

The chapter also provides an accreditation criterion and supporting documents required. It also describes the process to be followed by the six categories above.

The suggested accreditation procedure attempts to create a level playing field for stakeholders. Secondly, the requirement to submit a quadrennial report allows verification of competence and relevance of organizational activities to the work and mandate of UN-Habitat and to the agenda of the respective governing bodies.

The chapter ends with guidance on renewal of accreditation, expectations, and timelines, which allows for continuous accreditation by the Executive Board for ultimate approval by the UN-Habitat Assembly.

Part B Brief on Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism

Excellencies,
Stakeholder representatives, and
Colleagues

With over 7,000 different stakeholder entities associated with the work of UN-Habitat and the New Urban Agenda, and 200 organizations accredited to the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly and the Executive Board, the purpose of the Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM) is to assist stakeholders to participate in intergovernmental meetings in a meaningful and effective way.

A SEM describes the approaches by which stakeholders can plan, consult, coordinate, and contribute expertise on substantive policy issues in housing, sustainable urban development, and human settlements, especially within the mandate of UN-Habitat. It also provides clear guidance for stakeholder engagement when the governing bodies of UN-Habitat are in session and facilitates stakeholder participation during inter-sessional periods.

Following the 9th meeting of the ad hoc working group on the stakeholder engagement policy held on 7 December 2022, the Secretariat prepared a concept note on a stakeholder engagement mechanism, which was shared with stakeholders for review on 11 January 2023. The proposed SEM builds on option 2 suggested by the Secretariat as follows:

“Stakeholders are self-organized. The secretariat provides a neutral platform, organizes stakeholder meetings, and facilitates participation in the intergovernmental meeting and self-organized activities in conformity with the UN Charter and the Rules of Procedure.”

The stakeholder engagement mechanism will include a stakeholder coordinating committee (like the UNEP model) to liaise with the Secretariat and major groups and other stakeholders on matters concerning stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental meetings.

The Stakeholders Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE) at their meeting on 27 January 2023 also considered a stakeholder engagement mechanism and members sought clarifications on some aspects.

The criteria and membership, role and specific terms of reference, composition of stakeholder coordinating committee, working methods, internal governance, geographical balance, age, and other considerations will be developed in due course.

A stakeholder working group will be established by 15 February 2023 to work out the details with the support of the UN-Habitat Secretariat. What is important is to create a balanced and efficient mechanism that can work for all – stakeholders, member states and UN-Habitat.

The deadline for submission of comments on the concept note on stakeholder engagement mechanism has been extended to Wednesday 8 February 2023 to allow more stakeholders to provide comments.

A revised concept note will be prepared by the Secretariat by 10 February 2023, which will serve as a background document to the development of the full stakeholder engagement mechanism with related terms of reference and governance structure.

The current proposal by stakeholders is to finalise the stakeholder engagement mechanism for adoption by the Global Stakeholder’s Forum, which will take place on 3-4 June 2023.