

Written comments provided by the United States of America on financial and administrative matters of UN-Habitat based on the background documentation shared with Member States on 24 March 2020

Briefing by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat – Tuesday 31 March 2020 10:00 am East Africa Time

1. Can UN-Habitat provide additional information on the level support it provides to its regional offices and to workers in the field? Are there measures under consideration to re-evaluate such support in an effort to cut costs?
2. **UN Regular Budget (UNRB) Overview:** UN-Habitat noted that their proposals are not being included in the final submission to legislative bodies. **Which proposals and which bodies are they referring to?**
3. In their narrative, UNH states that \$18.9 million was approved. Is this the “final budget” that was approved or the initial budget amount? This is a key issue, since in the past, the ED determined the final budget without input for the Governing Council. This is not the way the EB is set up. The final budget is determined by the EB. The EB should adopt a conservative (i.e. realistic) budget based on current revenue trends and past actual expenditures. A budget based on last year’s actual would look more like Scenario 3.
4. The presentation is not giving us the whole picture. Funding from the UNRB is now the largest component of non-earmarked funds. The ED is only presenting proposed spending of the donor funds. In order to understand how all of this fits together we need to see a comprehensive proposal as to how ALL funds will be budgeted. This include all earmarked and non-earmarked contributions, cost recoveries, and UNRB funds. The EB cannot make any informed decision without all of the information. **We should remind the ED that it is the US position that the new UNH governance structure passed in NY gives the EB oversight of the entire UNH budget. Presenting just a portion of the total UNH budget is not particularly useful.**
5. **Technical support:** Your technical support budget (training, workshops, etc.) could be conducted online or through webinars. Is this a potential option?
6. Welcome any action taken to engage with the private sector.
7. COVID-19 Questions:
 - o See USAID questions (attached)
 - o Given the role of city governments and the potential impacts of the virus on urban spaces, UN-Habitat’s has not adequately communicated to key donors how they are responding to COVID-19. Is there a taskforce? Donor page?
 - o Will Habitat set-aside additional funds to research COVID-19 impacts in the global south.