

2021 Tenth Bureau Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat
Third Bureau meeting of the Bureau 2021-2022
Hybrid, Tuesday, 9 December 2021
10:00 hours to 12:00 hours East Africa Time
Statement by the Executive Director

SLIDE 0: Title slide

Slide 1: Provisional Agenda

Adoption of the agenda led by the Chair

1. Adoption of the provisional Agenda.
2. Post-session review of the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2021.
3. Workplan of the Executive Board for the year 2022 including preparations of the first session of the Executive Board for the year 2022:
 - a. Review of the provisional Agenda for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board.
 - b. Review of the proposed Roadmap towards the 2022 first session of the Executive Board.
4. Any other matters.

SLIDE 2: AGENDA ITEM 2: (TITLE SLIDE): Post-session review of the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2021.

Agenda item led by the Chair

PROPOSED COMMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON AGENDA ITEM 2.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Good morning and afternoon wherever you may be. I recognize the Representatives present with us here at the UN complex. *(NOTE FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: ED you may wish to recognize by country those PRs present in the room)*

A warm welcome to this tenth meeting of the Bureau for the year 2021. It is likely to also be our last meeting this year and one during which we may take stock of our activities this year. Especially, the recently concluded second session of the Executive Board, and review what is expected of us in the first quarter of the year 2022.

Excellencies,

I wish to first thank this Bureau collectively and each one of you individually for all your efforts in the preparatory process for the 2021 second session of the Executive Board held on 15 and 16 November 2021.

I thank you Mr. Chairman for conducting a smooth session, despite the many items to be covered in just two days, including the informal consultations on draft decisions and for ensuring that Stakeholders could also make their important contributions to the session.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

I am very pleased and grateful for the kind consideration of the Members of the Executive Board in approving our work programme and budget for the year 2022 and for their flexibility in allowing us to prepare the draft work programme and

budget for the year 2023 with a budget of USD 12 million for foundation non earmarked resources as I had requested. It was also good to note the very extensive efforts by the Executive Board to find a way forward regarding the alignment of the QCPR with the planning cycles of UN-Habitat.

These are very important outcomes which will aid us in terms of predictable planning for our resource mobilisation for 2022, preparation of our draft work programme and budget for 2023 and in the preparation for the possible extension of our strategic plan 2020 to 2023 to cover the period 2024 to 2025 should the UN-Habitat Assembly support the strong recommendation by the Executive Board in this regard.

Excellencies,

We have taken note of the request by the Board for the secretariat to issue concise, clear, transparent and focused pre-session documents as well as concise draft decisions and technical inputs for future sessions of the Executive Board. We are keeping this important request in mind as we begin our preparations for the 2022 first session of the Board during which we intend that all documents will be less than 5000 words, against the official 8500 words guideline by the General Assembly. It is, however, to be understood that the draft work programme and budget document is usually outside this limitation owing to the details that it must contain, and which are necessary for purposes of review by the UN Controller and the ACABQ in New York and the subsequent approval by the Executive Board when the time comes.

I also wish to note here that documents received from the General Assembly such as those related to audits and evaluations may be lengthy and outside the control of UN-Habitat. We are, however, exploring easier ways to share such documents, for example through a very short note by the secretariat which provides links and specifies relevant sections of such reports for the attention of the Member States.

We have also taken note of the expectation by the Board in its Decision 2021/8 para 9, item 14 to conduct a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2021 second session, so as to further improve the process and outcome of future sessions. To this end we are already planning for the survey by our Evaluation Unit for timely presentation of the results at the 2022 first session of the Board.

As I conclude my general views on the conduct of the 2021 second session, I wish to state that I was very pleased with the extensive engagement of Member States particularly on the discussions on our normative and operational activities. In this regard, the format of the session which was in hybrid format probably provided a

better environment for the discussions and I would like to encourage that, should the situation with the global COVID -19 pandemic allow, then the Bureau may consider the upcoming 2022 first session to be held in a hybrid format.

Excellencies,

We had about 100 delegates participating in person in Conference room 2 at UNON.

In total we had we had 280 participants comprised of:

- 6 Ministers from Angola, Bahrain, Ecuador, Iraq, Mexico and Sierra Leone.
- *the* Principal Secretary, State Department for Housing and Urban Development representing our host country Kenya.
- 48 Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives.
- 41 Deputy Permanent Representatives.
- 150 Other Government Officials, and
- 34 Accredited participants from Academia, Civil Society Private Sector and Foundations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, back to you.

SLIDE 3: AGENDA ITEM 3 (TITLE SLIDE). Workplan of the Executive Board for the year 2022 including preparations of the first session of the Executive Board for the year 2022:

a. Review of the provisional Agenda for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board.

b. Review of the proposed Roadmap towards the 2022 first session of the Executive Board.

Excellencies

Prior to this meeting, we had shared with you the provisional Agenda for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board to be held for three days from 29 to 31 March 2022. That is the provisional agenda as approved by the Executive Board during the

2021 second session held on 15 and 16 November through decision 2021/8. As is the practice and as required by the rules of procedure, we would be grateful if the Bureau can review and make any recommendation on the provisional Agenda. This will help us to earnestly kickstart our preparations for the upcoming session including the Executive Director's notification and the necessary background documents for the session.

On my part I wish to wish to make just one recommendation on the provisional Agenda which I will share shortly.

Slide 4: Agenda item 3a. Review of the provisional Agenda for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, 29-31 March 2022

Excellencies

As you can see on the screen the provisional Agenda as approved by the Executive Board is as follows:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters: (a) Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2022; (b) Adoption of the report on the second session of 2021.
3. Reports of the ad hoc working groups established by the Executive Board.
4. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters, including the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy in accordance with the strategic plan and UN-Habitat actions to address geographical and gender imbalances in the composition of its staff.
5. Reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions relevant to the work and activities of UN-Habitat issued since the most recent session of the Executive Board.

Slide 5: Agenda item 3a. Review of the provisional Agenda for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, 29-31 March 2022 *continued...*

6. Status and discussion of the annual work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for 2023.
7. Briefing by the Executive Director on the implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including reporting on the programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2021 and the implementation of subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities.
8. Preparations for the High-level meeting to assess progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.
9. Preparations for the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum
10. Implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly.
11. Briefing by the Executive Director on progress made in the implementation of the United Nations development system reform.
12. Annual report on UN-Habitat actions to strengthen protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and against workplace sexual harassment, as well as any other type of exploitation or abuse.

SLIDE 6: Agenda item 3a. Review of the [provisional Agenda](#) for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, 29-31 March 2022 *continued...*

13. Annual report on the Executive Director's actions to update and improve the internal management, policies and procedures of UN-Habitat.
14. Discussion on the progress made on the implementation of the Executive Board working methods as per Executive Board Decision 2020/6, and based on the survey to be conducted by the Secretariat following the second Executive Board meeting of 2021, to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting, so as to further improve the process and outcome of future meetings.

Excellencies, before moving to item 15 which is on “Election of officers of the Bureau”, I wish to propose as required by the rules of procedure a new procedural item on:

“Consideration and adoption of the outcomes of the session including the provisional Agenda for the next session of the Executive Board”.

Rule 6.3 of the Rules of procedure requires that “The Executive Board shall approve at the end of each session, on the basis of a proposal by the Board secretariat, a provisional agenda for the next session”. If aggregable, this new proposed item would become **the new item 15**.

Thereafter as you can see on the screen,

Item (16) will be: Election of officers of the Bureau.

Item (17) will be: Other matters.

And item (18) will be: Closure of the meeting.

So, the provisional Agenda with my proposed amendment will have 18 items with a new item 15.

Mr. Chairman,

Before you consider this proposal for a new procedural item, allow me to quickly walk you through the proposed roadmap as we move towards the 2022 first session to be held at the end of March 2022.

SLIDE 7: Agenda item 3b: Roadmap towards the 2022 first session of the Board: Proposed Bureau meetings.

Excellencies

We have developed an indicative roadmap for the first quarter of next year with careful consideration for the upcoming UNEA 5.2 to be held in February and early March 2022. As such, we have synchronized to the extent possible the proposed roadmap with that of UNEP with the usual understanding that there could be a few changes as may be necessary as we head towards UNEA 5.2 and towards the 2022

first session of the Executive Board. But for now, the two roadmaps for UNEP and UN-Habitat are synchronized.

Mr. Chairman,

We have proposed three Bureau meetings prior to the 2021 first session of the Board on:

- i. 9 December 2021, which is today,
- ii. 2 February 2022 and,
- iii. 28 March 2022.

SLIDE 8: Agenda item 3b: Roadmap towards the 2022 first session of the Board: Ad hoc working group meetings.

We have also proposed **at least six meetings** of the ad hoc working group on **programmatic budgetary and administrative** matters to:

- i. Discuss the draft work programme and budget for the year 2023,
- ii. Discuss thematic areas of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat to be presented to the Board at the 2022 first session, and
- iii. Undertake informal consultations of the possible draft outcomes of the 2022 first session of the Executive Board.

In addition, following the election of Switzerland as Chair of the ad hoc working group on the development of a **stakeholder engagement policy** and in line with paragraph 5 of Decisions 2020/6, **we are proposing at least one meeting of that working group** to advance discussions on the draft stakeholder engagement policy and accreditation procedure.

SLIDE 9: Agenda item 3b. Roadmap towards the 2022 first session of the Board: Induction Seminar, Informal briefing to Member States and Regional Consultations.

Excellencies

As part of the roadmap for towards the 2022 first session of the Board, we have planned for the following:

- i. **An Induction seminar** for new representatives in the Permanent and Observer Missions to UN-Habitat. This proposed for 31 January 2022.
- ii. **An Informal briefing** to Member States by the Executive Director prior to the second session in line with Rule 6.10 which is proposed for 15 March 2022.
- iii. **Consultations** between the Executive Director and Regional Groups prior to the 2022 first session is proposed for 22 and 23 March 2022.

The detailed roadmap was shared with you prior to this meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, back to you.

SLIDE10: AGENDA ITEM 4: (TITLE SLIDE). Any other matters

(To be led by the Chair).

AGENDA ITEM 4: Any other matters

PROPOSED STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UNDER AGENDA ITEM 4 ON PREPARATION OF THE DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2023.

Excellencies

I wish to bring to your attention a communication we have just received from the UN Controller regarding his guidance on the 2023 Regular Budget.

The UN controller has indicated that this year his guidance on the 2023 Regular Budget will only be received mid-February 2022, especially around 10 February 2022. This will impact our preparations of the draft work programme and budget for the year 2023 as a pre-session document in readiness for discussions by the Executive Board at the first session of the 2022 which will take place from 29 March to 31 March 2022. As you have already approved in the provisional agenda for the session, this discussion is to take place specifically under agenda item 6 on “Status and discussion of the annual work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for 2023”.

I would like, therefore, to seek the guidance of the Bureau on the preparation and presentation of the draft work programme and budget for 2023 to the Executive Board and, in this regard, I wish to propose the following:

1. The Secretariat produces a strategic note which will highlight UN-Habitat's work programme priorities for 2023 in line with the Strategic Plan 2020-2023 by 19 January 2022 in time for the scheduled ad hoc working group meeting on 26 January 2021. A similar note was done for the 2022 work programme and shared with Member States.
2. Whenever we receive the expected guidance from the Controller in mid-February 2022 on the regular budget, we will then proceed with developing the full 2023 draft work programme and Budget for discussion by the ad hoc working group on programmatic budgetary and administrative matters on Friday, 11 March 2022.

As already mentioned, and as we can all appreciate, we have a very tight schedule for the first quarter of 2022 here in Nairobi due to UNEA 5.2 and UNEP @50 celebrations including the related preparations by Member States. Hence the earliest opportunity for the ad hoc working group on programmatic budgetary and administrative matters to discuss the 2023 draft work programme and budget will be after UNEA on 11 March 2022. The discussion by the working group is important in line with decision 2021/6 of the Executive Board particularly paragraph 11 which requires the working group to discuss the work programme and budget with a foundation non earmarked budget of USD 12 million.

The implication, however, is that it will not be possible to have the draft work programme and budget document edited and translated in time for the 2022 first session of the Board which starts on 29 March 2022. Given these circumstances, I wish to specifically request the Bureau to consider making one of the following recommendations:

- (a) that the Executive Board at its 2022 first session will have the full 2023 draft work programme and budget as a pre-session document in English only as translation will be impossible before the session.

or

- (b) that the Executive Board at its 2022 first session will have the “UN-Habitat work programme priorities for 2023 in line with the Strategic Plan 2020-2023” as a fully translated pre-session background document in the six UN languages. This document will then be complemented by a full 2 draft of the 2023 work programme and budget document but in English only to be presented as an in-session “Conference room paper” in line with Rule 6.9 of the rules of procedure which states that “Conference room papers shall be made available to all States Members of the United Nations and members of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes in English.”

I take note that for the first session of the Board in 2022, the requirement of Agenda item 6 is update on the “Status and discussion of the annual work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for 2023” while the actual approval of the work programme and budget is only expected during the 2022 second session of the Executive Board, by which time, the full document in languages as reviewed by the Controller and the ACABQ will be available before the Board.

Thank you Excellencies and I look forward to your kind recommendation.