

Ambassador of the Republic of Colombia in Kenya
H.E. Pedro León Cortes Ruiz
Speech Agenda Item 5

Thank you very much to the Secretariat for your diligent efforts in providing the report and accompanying documents regarding Agenda Item 5: "Update on the draft work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2025." And the "Report of the Executive Director on the status of the work programme and budget for 2025".

I would like to draw attention specifically to subprogramme 1, which focuses on reducing spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum, and subprogramme 3, which aims to strengthen climate action and improve the urban environment. These initiatives align closely with Colombia's priorities, as outlined by our Minister of Housing, who emphasized the importance of strategies that integrate differential housing visions, engage grassroots housing organizations, and support the provision of potable water to municipalities with limited technical capacity through community aqueducts.

For Colombia, advancing an environmental justice-focused territorial planning centered around water is paramount. This approach will facilitate a fairer distribution of water conservation benefits, reduce the burden of pollution-induced inequities, and enable effective, inclusive, and differential participation of individuals in decisions affecting them.

Our foremost priority lies in the stewardship of our water resources and their cycles. Secondly, we must resolve land conflicts to optimize water usage. Additionally, territorial strengthening through technical cooperation with local governments and communities is imperative.

In Colombia, approximately 12 million rural residents lack adequate water services, while 3.2 million lack access to potable water. The Ministry of Housing, City, and Territory is keen to foster cooperation in zero waste management, community water management, and establishing an academic Habitat network in Colombia.

Our priorities in this regard include:

- Community water management
- Access to water through non-conventional technologies
- Community habitat management
- Regulation of informal settlements

Furthermore, in waste management, the Zero Waste Program, spearheaded by the Ministry of Housing, City, and Territory, will coordinate efforts between national government entities, local authorities, public service companies, and civil society. This program aims to integrate waste pickers and their organizations, promote their socio-economic inclusion, define regulatory aspects, supervise and control waste management, invest in waste treatment and

valorization parks, promote technological development, conserve the environment, mitigate climate change, and devise a strategic plan for the definitive closure of open-air landfills.

Regarding subprogramme 1, we reaffirm the commitments made in the Buenos Aires Declaration of MINURVI, where regional ministers pledged to initiate the formulation and design of a regional mechanism to mobilize resources for climate change adaptation and mitigation in Latin American and Caribbean cities. Additionally, they committed to developing policies to recognize and enhance concepts of resilient and low-emission cities, based on a broader understanding of urban areas as integrated systems with their natural surroundings.

Finally, I would like to address a query regarding the General Financial Reserve mentioned in the report. How does the allocation and utilization of these reserves occur when needed?

Thank you for your attention.