

UN **HABITAT** **FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE**

**Statement by Dr. Joan Clos
Executive Director**

**Status of Preparations for the twenty-sixth session of the
Governing Council of UN-Habitat including draft resolutions for
recommendation by the CPR to the Governing Council**

Agenda Item 4

HSP/CPR/64/4

Nairobi, 20 March 2017

Statement of the ED on Agenda item 4.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

I wish to start by thanking the Committee of Permanent Representatives and its Working Groups for the hard work that you have put into the preparations for the 26th session of the Governing Council. Because of the Habitat III conference, the date of the Governing Council and the preparatory process had to be delayed, especially the discussions on the theme, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme and Budget. I thank you for your patience and your constructive guidance throughout the preparatory process. We are still awaiting resolutions from member states and I look forward to receiving them soon.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives, the agenda of the 26th session of the Governing Council will consist of three substantive items. These are: **Agenda Item 5**, on Activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, including coordination matters; **Agenda Item 6**, Review of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). Agenda Item 7 on the Dialogue on the special theme for the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council; and **Agenda Item 8**, on the Work Programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2018–2019.

In this statement I wish to highlight key substantive issues under each of these four agenda items and the nature of decisions expected from the Governing Council.

Under Agenda Item 5 of the Governing Council session, I would like to highlight two substantive issues, in relation to the implementation of resolution 25/7.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives, you will recall that by its resolution 22/5, the Governing Council requested the Executive Director and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to undertake, jointly, an examination of the governance of UN-Habitat, with a view to identifying and implementing ways to improve its transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness and to identify options for any other potential relevant changes for consideration by the Governing Council. The Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session adopted resolution 25/7 which set up the working group on programme and budget.

Since its establishment, the working group has held three formal meetings, in September 2015 and in March and October 2016. In addition, the working group held eight informal meetings between June 2015 and December 2016. The working group has covered topics such as audits and evaluations, financial management, risk management, resource mobilization, regional and national strategies as well as the business transformation of UN-Habitat. A detailed report of the working group will be submitted to the Governing Council.

Turning to agenda item 6 on the implementation of the outcome of the **Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III**.

In terms of decision-making on this item, we expect the Governing Council, following its deliberations on the Executive Director's report, to reinforce UN-Habitat's new role as a result of the New Urban Agenda. UN-Habitat is preparing itself to act as a focal point for the implementation, follow up to and review of the NUA (NUA para 171); to coordinate the NUA reporting (NUA para 166,167,168); to generate evidence-based and practical guidance for the implementation of the NUA and urban dimension of SDGs (NUA para 128); and to enhance advocacy, awareness raising and stakeholder engagement in the implementation of the NUA (NUA para 169). The report also highlights what has happened in the past few months as part of the early implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The support of the Governing Council is critical in obtaining a sustainable financial framework for UN-Habitat to facilitate its role in the implementation of the NUA, within the framework of the revised Strategic Plan and Work Programme and Budget which I will highlight in more detail shortly.

Under Agenda Item 7 of the 26th session of the Governing Council, allow me, Mr. Chairman, I wish to highlight that the Dialogue on the special **theme for the twenty-sixth session has now been chosen and, as is indicated in paragraph 7 above, is "Opportunities for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda", while the sub-themes for the session are: "Towards inclusive, sustainable and adequate housing for a better future" (sub-theme 1); "Synergies and financing for sustainable urbanization" (sub-theme 2); and "Integrated human settlements planning for sustainable urbanization" (sub-theme 3)**. We expect a dynamic and inclusive dialogue that will bring to bear good practices and innovative solutions in these areas and that they will result into specific implementable outcomes and programmes. A resolution on this theme will be presented to the Governing Council for approval.

The Governing Council's deliberations at its twenty-sixth session will provide a clearer picture and guidance on how we should implement the New Urban Agenda..

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates, under Governing Council Agenda Item 8, I would like to highlight that the Governing Council, in its resolution 23/11, adopted at its twenty third session, requested the Executive Director, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to develop a strategic plan for 2014–2019, taking into account the recommendations of the peer review and other reviews of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008–2013, for presentation to and approval by the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session.¹ The strategic plan for 2014-2019 was subsequently approved by the Council in April 2013 (resolution 24/15). Paragraph 95 of the strategic plan states that the plan would be adjusted on the basis of the midterm evaluation, the

outcome of Habitat III (i.e., the New Urban Agenda), and any changes in the governance structure of UN-Habitat. Thus, pursuant to that paragraph, the strategic plan 2014-2019 was revised to respond to the New Urban Agenda, the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and lessons so far learnt from the implementation of the strategic plan. It also takes into account, within the mandate of UN-Habitat, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement and the 2016 “New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants”. As the midterm evaluation is yet to be completed, the present revised strategic plan may be further updated to reflect the recommendations of that evaluation.

The proposed work programme of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2018–2019, is based on the approved six-year strategic plan for the period 2014–2019 as well as the strategic framework for the biennium 2018–2019. The work programme was prepared in accordance with the support guide issued on 20 October 2016 by the Programme Planning and Budget Division of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts of the United Nations Secretariat.

I will be recommending that the Governing Council approve the work programme of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 2018–2019, as proposed in the present report.

Excellencies, the 2018-2019 programme of work reinforces the agency’s catalytic role of mobilizing Governments, Local Authorities and other Partners on the implementation of a shared vision of the New Urban Agenda on sustainable urbanization. The proposed Work Programme reflects a strong results orientation and was informed by lessons learnt from implementation of the programme during the previous biennia.

The work programme and budget document is also prioritized, as requested by the Governing Council through its resolution 22/7 of April 2009. UN-Habitat plans to implement the full programme of work, but in the event that the organization is not able to raise all the resources required, the prioritization will facilitate decision-making on the allocation of available resources.

Distinguished Representatives, I have highlighted only the main substantive issues that will be discussed by the Governing Council and that will require important decisions.

However, as you are aware, the CPR will be working on resolutions to be submitted later. I believe we have prepared well for the 26th session of the Governing Council, and I personally look forward to lively and constructive deliberations.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like to invite Mr. Chris Mensah, the Governing Council Secretary, to brief you on the logistical aspects of our preparations.

I thank you for your kind attention.