



**UN HABITAT** Executive Board  
of the United Nations  
Human Settlements Programme

Distr.: Limited  
6 July 2020  
Original: English

---

Executive Board of the United Nations  
Human Settlements Programme  
First session of 2020  
Online, 29 June 2020

**Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human  
Settlements Programme on the work of its first session of 2020**

**Rapporteur: Mr. John Chome (Malawi)**

**I. Introduction**

1. The Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) was established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 73/239 of 20 December 2018, on implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of UN-Habitat. The first meeting of the Executive Board was held at the headquarters of UN-Habitat in Nairobi on 30 May 2019, with a resumed segment on 19 and 20 November 2019. At that meeting, the Executive Board, by its decision 2019/4, established the dates of the sessions to be held in 2020. Subsequently, owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the date of the first session of 2020 was changed and it was held online on 29 June 2020.

**II. Opening of the session**

2. The first session of 2020 of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat was opened at 9 a.m. on Monday, 29 June 2020, by the Chair, Mr. Daniel J. Carl, on behalf of Mr. William Lehmborg (United States of America). The Chair outlined the protocol arrangements for the online session, and the Executive Board agreed to adopt those arrangements.

3. Opening statements were delivered by Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi; Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat; Ms. Martha Delgado, President of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UN-Habitat Assembly); and Mr. Charles Hinga, Principal Secretary of the State Department for Housing and Urban Development of Kenya.

4. The first session of 2020 of the Executive Board was adjourned at 8.35 p.m. on Monday, 29 June 2020. The session resumed at 10.10 a.m. on Wednesday, 29 July 2020, by the Chair, Mr. Daniel J. Carl, on behalf of Mr. William Lehmborg (United States), to conclude consideration of agenda items 8 and 9. At the resumed session, the Executive Board followed the same protocol and working arrangements as for the first part of the session.

### **III. Organizational matters**

#### **A. Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2020**

5. The Executive Board adopted the agenda for its first session of 2020 on the basis of the provisional agenda (HSP/EB.2020/1/Rev.2) and the annotated provisional agenda (HSP/EB.2020/1/Rev.2/Add.1), as amended, as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2020;
  - (b) Adoption of the report of the Executive Board on the work of its resumed first session;
  - (c) Reports of the ad hoc working groups of the Executive Board.
3. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.
4. Status of and discussions on the draft annual work programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2021.
5. Status of implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session.
6. Consideration of the draft decision enabling the Executive Board to adopt decisions under a silent procedure when not in physical session.
7. Dates and provisional agenda for the second session of the Executive Board in 2020.
8. Election of officers of the Bureau of the Executive Board.
9. Other matters.
10. Closure of the session.

#### **B. Proposed organization of work for the first session**

6. The Executive Board agreed to follow the proposed organization of work and timetable for the first session of 2020 of the Executive Board, as set out in annex III to the annotations to the provisional agenda (HSP/EB.2020/1/Rev.2/Add.1). Draft decisions for consideration by the Executive Board as recommended by the Bureau were presented by the Chair of the Executive Board and circulated in a conference room paper.

#### **C. Adoption of the report of the Executive Board on the work of its resumed first session**

7. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat on the work of its resumed first session, held on 19 and 20 November 2019 (HSP/EB.1/12).

#### **D. Reports of the ad hoc working groups of the Executive Board**

8. The chairs of the ad hoc working groups created by decisions adopted at the resumed first session of the Executive Board in November 2019 provided an overview of the work of those groups. Briefings were made by Ms. Julia Pataki (Romania) on the work of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters; by Mr. Martin Gronda (Argentina) on the work of the ad hoc working group on working methods; and on behalf of Ms. Marta Elena Eugenia Juarez Ruiz (Costa Rica) on the work of the ad hoc working group on the development of a draft stakeholder engagement policy.

9. The Executive Board decided that the final report on the work of the ad hoc working group on working methods would be presented at its second session of 2020, and that the term of that working group would conclude at the end of that session.

## **E. Attendance**

10. The session was attended by representatives of the following 35 Member States of the UN-Habitat Executive Board: Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kenya, Malawi, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United States of America and Uruguay.

11. The session was also attended by the following observers that are States Members of the United Nations: Algeria, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Colombia, Croatia, Czechia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Finland, Ghana, Guinea, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Malta, Montenegro, Mozambique, Myanmar, Oman, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zimbabwe.

12. The session was also attended by the following observers that are members of specialized agencies of the United Nations: European Union, State of Palestine.

13. The session was also attended by the following observer State: Holy See.

## **IV. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters**

14. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the report of the Executive Director on the financial status of UN-Habitat as at 31 December 2019 (HSP/EB.2020/2), the report of the Executive Director providing an update on the ongoing restructuring of UN-Habitat (HSP/EB.2020/2/Add.1), and the report of the Executive Director on the staffing of UN-Habitat as at 31 December 2019 (HSP/EB.2020/3). The Secretariat had also prepared an overall update on key activities that had taken place since January 2020 and an update on the financial status of UN-Habitat as at 24 June 2020, both of which were set out in conference room papers.

15. The Executive Director delivered a statement on the financial, budgetary and administrative matters of UN-Habitat. A representative of the secretariat made a presentation providing further information on financial, budgetary and administrative matters, including the financial status of UN-Habitat as at 31 December 2019 and key financial information for the period between January and June 2019, options to further rationalize costs, the current status of the restructuring of UN-Habitat, and progress in establishing a framework and methodology for full cost recovery.

16. Following the presentation, statements were delivered by the representatives of the following Member States of the Executive Board: Brazil, Cameroon, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mexico, Morocco, Senegal, Serbia and the United States. Statements were also delivered by the representatives of Eritrea, speaking on behalf of the group of African States; the European Union; and Malaysia. The Executive Director and the representative of the secretariat responded to the issues raised.

17. The Executive Board took note of the reports on financial, budgetary and administrative matters of UN-Habitat (HSP/EB.2020/2, HSP/EB.2020/2/Add.1 and HSP/EB.2020/3) and the respective updates thereto as provided by the Executive Director and the representative of the secretariat.

18. The Executive Board also took note of the Executive Director's briefing on the overview of options to further rationalize costs.

19. The Executive Board further took note of the continuing efforts by the Executive Director relating to the restructuring of UN-Habitat.

20. The Executive Board took note of the progress achieved on how to address the recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors and on the establishment of a framework and methodology for full cost recovery in accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/226.

## **V. Status of and discussions on the draft annual work programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2021**

21. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the report of the Executive Director on the draft annual work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2021 (HSP/EB.2020/4).
22. The Executive Director delivered a statement on the status of and discussions on the draft annual work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2021. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation providing an update on the UN-Habitat COVID-19 response plan. Another representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on the draft work programme and budget for 2021.
23. Following the presentations, statements were made by the representatives of the following Member States of the Executive Board: Canada, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Romania, the Russian Federation, Senegal, Turkey and the United States. The Executive Director and the representatives of the secretariat responded to the issues raised.
24. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Executive Director on the status of and discussions on the draft annual work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2021 (HSP/EB.2020/4).
25. The Executive Board took note of the briefing of the Executive Director on the follow-up to the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for 2020.
26. The Executive Board recommended that the Foundation non-earmarked budget for 2021 be more realistic, in the range of \$5.58 million to \$10 million; requested the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters to finalize a recommended budget for the consideration of the Executive Board at its second session in 2020; and requested the Executive Director to prepare a work programme for 2021 taking into account the recommendations of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters.

## **VI. Status of implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session**

27. Under the item, the Executive Board considered the status of implementation of the following resolutions and decision adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session: resolution 1/2 on United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements; resolution 1/3 on enhancing capacity-building for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; resolution 1/4 on achieving gender equality through the work of UN-Habitat to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements; resolution 1/5 on enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements; and decision 1/3 on arrangements for the transition towards the new governance structure of UN-Habitat.
28. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the report of the Executive Director on progress in the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session (HSP/EB.2020/13); the draft capacity-building strategy for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda (HSP/EB.2020/13/Add.1); and the concept note on the implementation of a review process for the United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements (HSP/EB.2020/13/Add.2).
29. The Executive Director delivered a statement on the status of implementation of the resolutions and decision adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation providing further information on the matter.
30. Following the presentation, statements were delivered by the representatives of the following Member States of the Executive Board: France and Kenya. A statement was also delivered by the representative of Peru.

31. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Executive Director on progress in the implementation of resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session (HSP/EB.2020/13) and updates thereto provided by the Executive Director.
32. The Executive Board took note of the briefing of the Executive Director on the draft capacity-building strategy for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda (HSP/EB.2020/13/Add.1), and requested the Executive Director to further update the Executive Board on the development of the draft strategy at its second session of 2020.
33. The Executive Board took note of the presentation of the Executive Director on the concept note on the implementation of a review process of the United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements (HSP/EB.2020/13/Add.2).

## **VII. Consideration of a draft decision aimed at enabling the Executive Board to adopt decisions under a silence procedure when not in physical session**

34. Introducing the item, the Executive Director drew attention to a draft decision, set out in a conference room paper, aimed at enabling the Executive Board to adopt decisions under a silence procedure when unable to meet face to face.
35. Statements were delivered on the matter by the representatives of the following Member States of the Executive Board: Cameroon, Chile, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mexico, Morocco, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal and the United States.
36. The Executive Board adopted decision 2020/1 on the adoption of decisions by the Executive Board during the coronavirus disease pandemic via a silence procedure when the Board is not in session. The decision is set out in the annex to the present report.

## **VIII. Provisional agenda for the second session of the Executive Board in 2020**

37. The Executive Director introduced the item. A representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on the financial implications of various meeting options for the sessions of the Executive Board.
38. The Executive Board decided to hold its second session of 2020 for three days between 27 to 29 October 2020.
39. The Executive Board then considered the proposed provisional agenda for its second session of 2020. Statements were delivered on the matter by the representatives of the following Member States of the Executive Board: China, France, Kenya and Senegal.
40. The Executive Board adopted decision 2020/2 on the date and provisional agenda for the second session of 2020 of the Executive Board, as amended. The decision is set out in the annex to the present report.
41. The Executive Board agreed that it had no objection to the secretariat using the documents that had already been prepared for the Executive Board pertaining to the agenda items that had not been considered at the first session of 2020 and which would therefore need to be considered at its second session of 2020, provided that any updates would be prepared as addenda.

## **IX. Election of officers of the Bureau of the Executive Board**

42. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to annex II, on geographical distribution of officers elected at the first session of the Executive Board, in 2019, to the revised annotated provisional agenda (HSP/EB.2020/1/Rev.2/Add.1), and specified the nominees from each regional group for membership of the Bureau for the period 2020–2021, to be elected at the present session.
43. The representative of the United States raised an objection to the nomination by the group of Asia-Pacific States of the representative of Iran (Islamic Republic of) for the position of Chair of the Bureau.

44. Statements on the matter were delivered by the representatives of the following Member States of the Executive Board: Canada, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Malawi, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal and United States. The Senior Legal Officer provided legal advice on the matter.

45. At its resumed first session of 20 0, on 29 July 2020, in accordance with rule 9 of its rules of procedures, the Executive Board elected by acclamation its Bureau members for the term 2020–2021, as follows:

Chair: Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Vice-Chairs: Chile

Egypt

France

Rapporteur: Serbia

46. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran delivered a statement on the matter.

## **X. Other matters**

47. At the resumed first session of 2020, on 29 July 2020, statements were delivered by Ms. Minata Samate Cessouma, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union Commission, Mr. Mohamed Siraj Sait, Co-Chair of the UN-Habitat Stakeholder Advisory Group and Ms. Mona Rady, Chairperson of the Habitat Professionals Forum.

## **XI. Closure of the session**

48. The Executive Board decided to suspend its first session of 2020 and to resume the session on a date to be specified before the end of July 2020 for the purpose of electing the Bureau of the Executive Board for the period 2020–2021. The Executive Board recommended that the members of the Bureau be elected by consensus. If the Board were unable to reach consensus, the election should be conducted by secret ballot, in accordance with the rules of procedure. The Executive Board further decided that the secretariat should inform the Board of the date of any such election, following consultation with the Bureau.

49. The Chair suspended the session at 8.35 p.m. on 29 June 2020.

50. At the resumed first session of 2020, on 29 July 2020, the Executive Director of UN-Habitat delivered a closing statement.

51. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 10.45 a.m. on Wednesday, 29 June 2020.

## Annex

### Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first session of 2020, held on 29 June 2020

#### Decision 2020/1: Adoption of decisions by the Executive Board during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic via a silence procedure when the Board is not in session

##### *The Executive Board*

1. *Notes* with concern the situation concerning the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the limitations recommended on meetings within United Nations premises as precautionary measures aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19;
2. *Takes note* of General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 entitled “Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic”;
3. *Recalls* that, in its decision 74/544, the General Assembly authorized the President of the Assembly, where, in his view a plenary meeting of the General Assembly was not practicable due to the coronavirus pandemic, to circulate, after consultation with the General Committee, draft decisions of the General Assembly to all Member States under a silence procedure of at least 72 hours; and decided that, if the silence was not broken, the decision should be considered adopted, and the General Assembly should take note of the decision at its first plenary meeting held after the cessation of the precautionary measures as soon as the circumstances allowed;
4. *Takes note* of the step-by step-process for consideration of draft decisions/resolutions in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020;<sup>1</sup>
5. *Also takes note* of General Assembly decision 74/555 of 15 May 2020, in which the Assembly decided that its decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 would continue to be in effect until the end of June 2020 and that the subsidiary organs of the Assembly could apply the procedure set out in decision 74/544;
6. *Decides that:*
  - (a) The Chair of the Executive Board may, after consultation with the Bureau, circulate draft decisions of the Executive Board on procedural matters to all the Member States of the Executive Board under a silence procedure, allowing at least three working days for a response thereto. The Secretariat may also provide an information note to accompany the formal communication from the Chair;
  - (b) The formal communication from the Chair of the Board shall include the text of the draft decision and an indication of the specific time (UTC+2) by which any objections to the draft decision should be raised by Member States of the Board. In addition, the communication should, if needed, include information from the secretariat on the programme budgetary implications that are available at the time of the circulation of the communication;
  - (c) Should the silence not be broken, the decision shall be considered adopted. The Chair shall circulate a letter confirming the adoption and the Executive Board shall take note of the decision at a plenary meeting held physically or online. Member States of the Executive Board may submit written explanations of vote or position, without prejudice to their rights under the rules of procedure of the Board;
  - (d) Should a single Member State of the Executive Board formally object to the draft decision, it shall be considered as not adopted. Should the Chair wish to circulate an amended or revised draft under another silence procedure, the same procedure as for the circulation of the first draft, described in paragraph 6 (a) of the present decision, shall apply;

<sup>1</sup> The step-by step-process for consideration of draft decisions/resolutions in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 can be accessed on the following link: <https://www.un.org/pga/74/wp-content/uploads/sites/99/2020/04/Updated-Rev-marked-2-Procedure-for-decision-via-silence-procedure.pdf>.

(e) The procedure set out in the present decision shall be without prejudice to the procedure for the informal consideration of draft decisions to be considered at an online or face-to-face meeting;

(f) The procedure for adopting decisions of the Executive Board under a silence procedure shall remain in effect until the next face-to-face session of the Executive Board to be convened after the adoption of the present decision.

## **Annex to decision 2020/1**

### **Procedures for the consideration and adoption of draft decisions and the communication of objections**

The draft decision should be made available at the same time the formal communication from the Chair of the Board is posted on the Executive Board webpage in the six official languages of the United Nations.

Member States of the Executive Board wishing to make an explanation of their position may do so, without prejudice to the rights of delegations under the rules of procedure to explain their position at a session of the Executive Board, in the following way: electronic versions of statements in explanation of position received within two weeks after the end of a silence procedure will be posted on the webpage of the Executive Board. An email attaching the explanation of position and indicating the title of the relevant draft decision/resolution in its subject line shall be sent to the Secretary of the Governing Bodies at [unhabitat-sgb@un.org](mailto:unhabitat-sgb@un.org).

Member States of the Executive Board wishing to formally object to a draft decision may do so via a letter or note verbale addressed to the Chair of the Executive Board, expressing their formal objection. Such correspondence should be sent via email to the Secretary of the Governing Bodies at [unhabitat-sgb@un.org](mailto:unhabitat-sgb@un.org), indicating the title of the relevant draft decision/resolution in the subject line of the email.

Should there be any objection to the adoption of a draft decision/resolution, the Chair of the Executive Board shall circulate a letter informing Member States that the silence has been broken. Should a revised draft be circulated under another silence procedure, the same procedure as for the circulation of the first draft shall apply.



## Decision 2020/2: Date and provisional agenda for the second session of 2020 of the Executive Board

### *The Executive Board*

1. *Adopts* the report of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat on the work of its resumed first meeting;<sup>2</sup>
2. *Decides* that its second session of 2020 will be held for a duration of three days from 27 to 29 October 2020;
3. *Also decides* that the provisional agenda for its second session of 2020 shall be as follows:
  1. Opening of the meeting.
  2. Organizational matters:
    - (a) Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the second session of 2020;
    - (b) Adoption of the report on the first session of 2020;
    - (c) Reports of the chairs of the ad hoc working groups
  3. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.
  4. Implementation of UN-Habitat strategic plans:
    - (a) Receipt of the 2019 annual report on the strategic plan for the period 2014–2019;
    - (b) Update on the final report on the strategic plan for the period 2014–2019 and briefing on the status of the ongoing evaluation of the strategic plan for the period 2014–2019;
    - (c) Implementation of the strategic plan for the period 2020–2023:
      - (i) Accountability framework;
      - (ii) Financial plan;
      - (iii) Results-based management policy;
      - (iv) Results framework;
      - (v) Partnership strategy, including UN-Habitat engagement with the private sector and with non-governmental partners;
      - (vi) Impact communication strategy;
      - (vii) Resource mobilization strategy and review of the investment funds.
  5. Briefing on the status of implementation of resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session.
  6. Briefing on the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including reporting on programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2020 and the implementation of the subprogrammes, the flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities.
  7. Action by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and workplace sexual harassment.
  8. Action by UN-Habitat to address geographical and gender imbalances in the composition of its staff.
  9. Implementation by UN-Habitat of the reform of the development system and management of the United Nations.

---

<sup>2</sup> HSP/EB/1/12.

10. Annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to the Executive Board.
  11. Annual report of the Ethics Office to the Executive Board.
  12. Briefing on the status of development of the capacity-building strategy.
  13. Provisional agenda for the third session of 2020.
  14. Other matters.
  15. Closure of the meeting.
-