



2021 FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 7-8 APRIL 2021

SUMMARY OF PLENARY DISCUSSION AND OUTCOMES | THURSDAY, 8 APRIL 2021



Executive Board
for all in an urbanizing world

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Thursday, 8 April 2021, marked the second and last day of the first session of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat for the year 2021.

Agenda item 8: Implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN Habitat Assembly.

The Executive Director gave a status update on the implementation of resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session in May 2019. She noted that the lack of consistent voluntary funding had made this work challenging, specifically during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The Executive Director highlighted progress made, as follows:

Resolution 1/1 on the United Nations Human Settlements Programme strategic plan for the period 2020–2023.

The Secretariat provided an update on the implementation of the supporting documents towards the effective and accountable implementation of the strategic plan for the period 2020–2023.

a) Results framework with performance indicators and a data collection method

The Results Framework as well as the Results-Based Management policy have been disseminated throughout the Programme and the roll-out has started through project and programme review mechanisms, the provision of training to staff and the completion of an upcoming Results-Based Management Handbook.

b) Impact communication strategy

The Secretariat highlighted main actions undertaken to improve its communication such as dissemination of UN-Habitat's COVID-19 Response Plan in all UN languages, media coverage of the outcomes of the World Urban Forum 10, improvements made on the corporate website, as well as global campaigns such as the #Housing4All Campaign.

In 2021, communications and advocacy will focus on Climate Solutions for Cities, The Cities and Pandemics Report and Voluntary Local Reviews as well as decent housing and the Future of Cities.

The Executive Director also indicated that an informal contact group on communication matters met to discuss proposals for future improvement in strengthening the trust of Member States, improving UN-Habitat's brand to increase recognition globally, and demonstrate efficiency in UN-Habitat's work.

UN Habitat is already engaged with Poland/Katowice for the planning of World Urban Forum (WUF 11) to be held in June 2022.

c) Partnerships strategy

In 2020, UN-Habitat signed agreements of cooperation and MOUs with 194 partners including national and local governments, civil society, and UN agencies.

UN-Habitat also works closely with the Stakeholder Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE). SAGE adopted a workplan for 2021, which includes stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental processes, programme design and implementation, resource mobilization, advocacy, and monitoring of global commitments including urban related SDGs and the NUA.

The Secretariat indicated that in 2021, UN-Habitat will strengthen the reporting on cooperation and collaboration with its partners and will build the capacity of stakeholders on monitoring SDGs and the New Urban Agenda in support of Voluntary Local Reviews and Voluntary National Reviews.

d) Typology of human settlements

The Secretariat informed the Executive Board that the approved typology is being used as a programming tool to support decision-making on country presence, normative development, knowledge exchange and inter-country/city cooperation. In this regard, UN-Habitat has already identified 15 countries where the tool will be rolled out.

e) Accountability framework

The Secretariat mentioned that it will continue its efforts to: a) strengthen results-based management through the improvement of guidance and training, and on the basis of staff feedback; b) launch an online overall results-based management training programme in 2021; c) support all entities in the development of their annual results frameworks in accordance with the results-based management principles through workshops and technical support; d) mainstream the use of the integrated planning, management and reporting solution in the Secretariat and adapt its functionality to the needs of assessed contributions; e) ensure alignment of the Umoja Extension; f) integrate programmatic data with transaction data seamlessly to enable more in-depth and cross-cutting analyses of the work of the United Nations and facilitate real-time decision-making and reporting on results by linking the resources to results at appropriate levels, and; g) report to the Management Committee on a regular basis on progress in embedding the strategic planning, budget formulation and performance management in the organization and in measuring the mainstreaming of the solution across the United Nations Secretariat, thus ensuring its fullest adoption.

The Secretariat also presented to the Executive Board the report A/75/804 of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

f) Resource mobilization strategy

The Secretariat presented the 2020 achievements as follows:

- Regular bilateral and regional group briefings, strategic dialogues
- Monthly financial updates with programmatic highlights
- Private sector strategy, foundations and philanthropies platform, online public giving (“Donate now” button)

- Enabling environment: stronger and more systematic internal procedures, donor information system
- Income acquisition: Earmarked grants: USD 172.2M; Voluntary core contributions: USD 4.9M; Regular budget: USD 12.5M

g) Draft financial plan

UN-Habitat worked on a concept note on the draft financial plan and will work with the ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters to develop an explanation of actual annual income and expenditures of the draft financial plan.

Resolution 1/2 on UN Systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements.

The Terms of Reference for a peer review mechanism to assess progress and propose amendments to the guidelines where necessary to ensure effective implementation will be submitted to the next session of the Executive Board. A joint programming framework has been established with UNODC.

In order to be able to deploy the peer review process, as described in the Guidelines, UN-Habitat estimated a budget of USD 2.5M per year to engage with 15 identified countries, which results in a total of USD 15M for a period of 10 years. UN-Habitat has already started the peer-review processes in South-Africa and in Mexico. Lebanon has also been identified.

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

An update was given on the launch of the global capacity building toolkit on the New Urban Agenda in January 2021, comprising an Illustrated Handbook (totalizing 10,000 downloads as of 1 March 2021), a free online interactive course, as well as ongoing efforts to translate the tools in official UN languages.

The Secretariat informed Member States of the Digital Capacity Building Guide and Strategy currently being reviewed and disseminated internally. Updates were provided regarding various types of partnerships related to capacity building and the support delivered to regional and sub-regional centres of excellence.

Resolution 1/4 on Achieving gender equality through the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements.

The Secretariat updated that continued project reviews were undertaken by the Project Review Committee to ensure gender and other cross cutting issues are addressed in all UN-Habitat works.

The revision of the UN-Habitat Policy and Plan for Gender Equality is under finalization and will guide UN-Habitat engagement on gender issues in line with the strategic plan 2020–2023. The Gender Equality evaluation final draft has been submitted for review internally.

In partnership with UN sister agencies, civil organizations and grassroots women organizations, and AGGI, UN-Habitat hosted three side events during the 65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65 15-26 March).

Resolution 1/5 on Enhancing urban-rural linkages (URL) for sustainable urbanization and human settlements.

This resolution has continuously and steadily been implemented despite limited resources. Normative products and thematic guides on URL have been developed and deployed in at least five countries.

As requested by the resolution, documentation inspiring practices have been undertaken and disseminated widely including through a series of Webinars. Through impactful outreach and advocacy, strategic global partnerships have been forged particularly with the FAO (Green Cities Initiative), the OECD, and UN-Habitat advice to the Italian presidency of G20 on territorial approaches and intermediate cities. In the coming months, many other initiatives will be launched including online training and capacity building on URL.

Decision 1/3 on Arrangements for the transition towards the new governance structure of UN-Habitat

The Secretariat indicated that was no progress to report as the Ad-hoc working group on stakeholder engagement policy is yet to meet when in-person meetings are possible, in line with Decision 2020/6 adopted by the Executive Board at its second session.

Interventions

Cameroon paid tribute to the amount of work carried out by the Executive Director despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the financial situation of UN-Habitat and shared encouragements to pursue the efforts being implemented. Cameroon also stated its interest in hosting the UN-Habitat sub-regional office for Central Africa.

Canada welcomed the details provided on the resource requirements for the Safer Cities programme and recognized the complexity and the cost for designing Terms of Reference for Review mechanisms. Canada hoped that UN-Habitat was able to review and submit an updated concept note of the Safer Cities programme. Canada requested UN-Habitat to share the Memorandum of Understanding signed with UNODC with the Executive Board, as well as the details of the cooperation in practice. The Secretariat clarified that the collaboration with UNODC was ongoing since 2003 and that UNODC was one of the agencies who contributed to the System Wide Guidelines. The collaboration has been both normative and programmatic.

The Secretariat underlined that using the Safer Cities review mechanisms peer review can be complex and this explains why it took UN-Habitat some time to develop the Terms of Reference. UN-Habitat is in the process of circulating a survey to Member States on Safer Cities which will enable to update the concept note based on Members States' feedback. It will be presented along with the Terms of reference at the next session of the Executive Board

Sweden took note of the presentation and requested an update on UN-Habitat Policy and Plan for gender equality and the empowerment of women in urban development and informal settlements.

Agenda item 9: Progress made by UN-Habitat in the implementation of the United Nations development system reform

The Chair recalled that the Ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters discussed the scenarios for aligning the UN-Habitat strategic planning process to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review Process but was not able to reach an agreement, and agreed that further consultation was needed. All member States in the Ad-hoc working group, under the leadership of Pakistan are committed to aligning UN-Habitat's Strategic Planning processes. The challenge is to determine whether to adopt an Interim Strategic Plan, or to extend the current Strategic Plan to cover six years. Both these options will allow UN-Habitat to align its Strategic Plan with other UN agencies.

The Executive Board encouraged the working group to continue its discussions with a view to reach a recommendation to report to the second session of the Executive Board in 2021. As the UN-Habitat Assembly is the governing body that ultimately has to take a decision on the matter, the Executive Board took note of the briefing by the Executive Director of her consultation with the President of the UN-Habitat Assembly as per the request of the Bureau of the Executive Board and the Ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters. Member States also acknowledged that the final decision will need to be taken by the UN-Habitat Assembly, so it was necessary for the Executive Director to brief the President of the UN-Habitat Assembly (Mexico) on progress made by the working group.

Implementation of UN Development System reforms started following the adoption of Agenda 2030, in order to align work of the UN Development System to Agenda 2030, as well as to the humanitarian, peace and development nexus. The reforms aim to enhance country ownership, accountability and effective use of resources, and revitalization of the Resident Coordinator System.

UN-Habitat has contributed to UN System wide reforms with the introduction of a sub-regional approach, a shift to urban comprehensive programming with UNCT, the engagement in development of CCA/CF in 25 countries in 2020, and in 23 additional countries in 2021, and assisting UN to think spatially, work in cities, engage stakeholders, apply a systems approach, and mobilize public, private domestic and international investments to finance the SDGs.

UN-Habitat is the coordinator of the UN System wide strategy for sustainable urbanization and acts as chair of the UN Task Force on the Future of Cities and Local2030 Global Campaign, co-leads the Secretary-General's Guidance Note on Land and Conflict Prevention, and the IASC Framework for engagement of cities in humanitarian operations.

Member States expressed appreciation and support for UN-Habitat's work on UN System wide reforms and urged UN-Habitat to position itself strategically to maximize the impact of its work.

The Executive Director welcomed feedback and expressed appreciation for acknowledgements by Member States of the hard work UN-Habitat has put into UN System wide reforms. Member States were told they can count on UN-Habitat to strengthen further its efforts at the global, regional and local levels.

Interventions

Before opening the floor to interventions, the Chair extended his condolences to the USA delegation on the passing away in Nairobi of a United States diplomat. The USA representative thanked the Chair for the condolence message.

Noting that the USA has been one of the biggest supporters of the United Nations Development System reforms, the USA proposed that given the complexity of the matter discussions should continue, including consultations with the President of the UN Habitat Assembly. The USA emphasized that the implications of moving dates of key meetings need to be considered comprehensively. The Executive Board should consult extensively with a view to making a consensus recommendation to the UN-Habitat Assembly in 2023. Canada reiterated the position of the USA calling for further discussions and more detailed evaluation of potential options.

Kenya assured the Executive Director of its support and commitment to implementing the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, and proposed more discussions on the alignment of the QCPR to the Strategic Plan in the working group and at the next session of the Executive Board, noting that the final decision would require endorsement by the UN-Habitat Assembly.

Germany called for further discussions at the next session of the Executive Board. Given the ongoing tense financial situation, full implementation of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan may not be possible, and some flexibility may be necessary. An evaluation of the cost implications of the different options should be carried out to determine the best mid-term scenario.

On behalf of the regional group of African States, Eritrea welcomed progress made in the process of aligning the Strategic Plan to the QCPR. Cognizant of the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a well-coordinated and coherent process to improve support to UN-Habitat is necessary. Eritrea called on discussions to remain focused and reiterated unequivocal support and commitment to cooperation with Member States, regional groups and the UN-Habitat Management team.

Serbia called for a stronger UN-Habitat presence on the ground in Eastern Europe, noting that contacts between the regional representative and individual countries are few and far between in countries with pressing issues. Options for alignment of the Strategic Plan to the QCPR must be looked at carefully as it would be unhealthy not to have a session of the UN-Habitat Assembly for six years.

Finland underlined the importance of UN cooperation in mainstreaming UN-Habitat's contribution to sustainable urbanization and welcomed collaboration with other UN entities such as UNEP on climate action. The 2020-2023 Strategic Plan strengthens UN-Habitat's ability to contribute more effectively to the process despite resource constraints.

Egypt welcomed the progress that has been made in enhancing UN-Habitat's ability to deliver and agreed with the proposal for more substantive discussions on aligning the Strategic Plan to QCPR in order for the Executive Board to make its recommendations to the UN-Habitat Assembly.

Sweden noted that in the context of UN-Habitat's financial situation and the austerity measures being undertaken, the option chosen must be cost efficient. UN-Habitat must position itself strategically to promote its normative work without expanding its footprint.

Agenda item 10: Annual report on action by UN Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual and any other type of exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace

UN-Habitat updated that the Organization is working hard to ensure adequate safeguards and appropriate actions to prevent and respond to allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), or sexual harassment in the workplace. The Programme is advancing the Secretary General's "zero tolerance" vision and developed a "a model of code of conduct" to combat harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN events. UN-Habitat has also developed the phone-based app "Speak up" providing information on related policies to staff members and on the way to report incidents of SEA or sexual harassment.

UN-Habitat has a corporate level risk mitigation strategy for preventing SEA, including mandatory protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) training for all staff, a standardized approach and training for all implementing partners, and the establishment of a country specific PSEA focal points system.

UN-Habitat indicated that no allegations of SEA involving the agency's staff and non-staff personnel had been reported. One allegation of sexual harassment has been reported since the last meeting of the Executive Board, which was referred to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

UN-Habitat further drew attention to the UN Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly on investigations into sexual exploitation and related offences. The Executive Director reaffirmed her engagement to this issue as an International Gender Champion appointed by the UN Secretary-General, and as a member of the International Gender Board of the UN.

Interventions

The USA welcomed UN-Habitat's zero-tolerance approach and took note of the Management letter informing that there had been no allegations of SEA in 2020. The USA requested further clarification on the actions taken by UN-Habitat to prevent and respond to SEA in terms of training, recording mechanisms, assisting survivors, and responding to any forms of misconduct by staff and contractors.

Sweden also welcomed UN-Habitat's commitment to a zero-tolerance policy towards SEA. Sweden indicated that the absence of reported cases does not necessarily mean the absence of problems and encouraged UN-Habitat to continue monitoring and reporting.

Argentina supports the measures adopted by UN-Habitat and urged prevention efforts to continue to ensure that exploitations of any kind are prevented.

Agenda item 11: Annual report on action by the Executive Director to update and improve the internal management, policies and procedures of UN-Habitat

The Executive Director of UN-Habitat highlighted the “whole of house” progress made towards the reform and restructuring of UN-Habitat despite scarce resources. UN-Habitat informed the Executive Board about the consultative process put in place to implement reforms, and about the new organizational structure developed to strengthen the organization. The restructuring at the Headquarters level is complemented by a policy defining field presence.

The Executive Director of UN-Habitat has established standard operating procedures to ensure sustainable reforms, including a performance monitoring dashboard with Key Performance Indicators associated to the various reforms.

A change in work culture has been implemented using a “whole of house” approach and co-creation at project level through the Project Review Committee (PRC). UN-Habitat recalled that the Executive Board approved a Results Based Management policy, and further recalled that a High-Level mid-term review process will take place in June at the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) meeting.

UN-Habitat recalled that the Executive Director meets all of its obligations in support of the Secretary-General and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. UN-Habitat is currently leading a Task Force on the Future of Cities, which demonstrates the growing importance of the mandate to the wider policies of the Secretary-General.

UN-Habitat informed the Board that a review by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on Management Assessment Review is taking place in 2021. UN-Habitat indicated that the recommendations of JIU have been helpful for UN-Habitat to identify gaps, allocate limited resources, and operate more efficiently.

UN-Habitat indicated that the Executive Director identified other key reforms to implement in the future. This includes the diversification of resources, seeking donors’ support to ensure data collection and analysis activities, and support for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. The Executive Director will also give further attention to risk management, the implementation of a cost recovery programme, and better monitoring of evaluations recommendations.

Interventions

The USA appreciated the report and requested more background information on corporate responsibility and the accountability framework. They encouraged completion of the reform process.

Sweden appreciated the efforts of UN-Habitat working with JIU and taking into account the recommendations from OIOS. Sweden reminded UN-Habitat of the role of change agents to strengthen leadership, create an environment of open communication and trust, and improve opportunities for staff development. Sweden requested updates on the training received by change agents to sustain the internal reform processes, and whether the staff management consultative committee serves to obtain feedback from the staff. Sweden finally expressed the importance of ensuring the well-being of staff members.

Statements by stakeholders

At the beginning of the fourth plenary meeting, in the afternoon, the Chair invited representatives of intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organization to contribute towards the discussions and make statements.

Prof. M Siraj Sait made a statement on behalf of UN-Habitat Stakeholder Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE). He updated the Executive Board on progress made by stakeholders towards joint implementation of UN-Habitat strategies and plans and recalled the work done by SAGE and partners to take forward the Secretary-General's call for the "new social contract" in the context of sustainable urbanization. SAGE congratulated the Executive Director for appointing new members and has adopted a work plan to support implementation of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan. SAGE requested the Executive Board to reconvene the Ad-hoc working group on Stakeholder Engagement Policy at the earliest opportunity and to provide UN-Habitat support in development of the working group's partnership strategy.

Ms. Sri Husnaini Sojfan delivered a statement on behalf of the Huairou Commission, recalling the long-time partnership between UN-Habitat and the Commission. The Commission took note of the report on the implementation of the resolution on achieving gender equality and urged that the revised Policy and Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women include commitments and strategies to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment as key transformative pathways in implementing UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan and the New Urban Agenda. She expressed the hope that the role and contribution of women will be highlighted in the context of the New Urban Agenda Platform and the next New Urban Agenda's quadrennial report, and called for the inclusion and participation of women in the High-Level Meeting on Implementation of the New Urban Agenda

Agenda item 12: Election of Officers

The Chair invited members of the Executive Board to proceed to the election of the new Bureau of the Executive Board for the term 2021-2022, to hold office starting at the end of the session.

The following members nominated by their respective regional groups were elected:

- Chair: Poland
- Vice-Chairs: Egypt, Pakistan and France
- Rapporteur: Chile

After the election of the new Bureau, the Chair recalled that in May 2019, the UN-Habitat Assembly elected by acclamation the 36 members of the Executive Board for a term of 4 years and that from the Asia-Pacific States the Member States had agreed that the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Republic of Indonesia would share a seat, with Indonesia serving for the first 2 years of the 4-year term and Bahrain for the following 2 years.

H.E Mr. M. Saleh Sulaiman Al-Harhi in his capacity as Chair of the Regional Group of Asia-Pacific States in Nairobi updated the Executive Board on the change in the representation of the Asia-Pacific States in the Executive Board of UN-Habitat with the Kingdom of Bahrain. H.E. Eng. Basim Al Hamer, Minister of

Housing of the Kingdom of Bahrain, took the floor to reiterate the support of the Kingdom of Bahrain as member of the Executive Board to the work and mandate of UN-Habitat.

Indonesia also took the floor in support of the important mandate of UN-Habitat in the recovery towards sustainable development, and wished the incoming bureau well.

Agenda 13: Dates and provisional Agenda for the next session of the Executive Board

Egypt, as Chair of the open-ended consultations, was invited to give a brief on the progress of the open-ended consultations on draft decisions held on Wednesday 7 April 2021. Member States reviewed five draft decisions as contained in HSP/EB.2021/CRP.1/Rev.1, building up on the work conducted by the Ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters, as follows:

- Draft Decision 2021/1; Status of the draft Work Programme and Budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2022; implementation by UN-Habitat of the UN Development System reforms and alignment of the planning cycles of UN-Habitat's Strategic Planning processes with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review process.
- Draft Decision 2021/2: Financial, Budgetary and Administrative matters of UN Habitat including the improvement of the internal management, policies and procedures of UN-Habitat and actions by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual and any other type of exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Draft Decision 2021/3: Implementation of normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat including resolutions and decisions of the UN-Habitat Assembly and including reporting on the programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2020 and the implementation of subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities, and update on the UN-Habitat response to the coronavirus pandemic;
- Draft Decision 2021/4: Methods of work of the Executive Board and workplan of the Executive Board for the year 2021.
- Draft Decision 2021/5: Election of officers of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the term 2021-2022.

The provisional agenda for the next session of the Executive Board as set out in HSP/EB.2021/CRP1/Rev.2 was approved. The Executive Board decided that the second session of the Executive Board in 2021 will be held for two or three days between 16 and 18 November 2021.

The Executive Board finally proceeded to the formal adoption of the five decisions as presented in document HSP/EB.2021/CRP.1/Rev.2, by way of consensus and as an expression of the formal outcome of the Executive Board session.

Agenda item 14: Other matters

The Republic of Korea expressed its appreciation for a well-prepared session and assured its continued support to UN-Habitat. The Republic of Korea informed the Executive Board of the coming Partnering for Green Growth (P4G) virtual summit to be held on 30-31 May 2021 in Seoul, South Korea. The Republic of Korea suggested that the outcomes of the summit will bring important insights to future activities and programmes of UN-Habitat.

Agenda item 15: Closure of the Session

The Executive Director expressed her gratitude to members of the Executive Board for the work done during an extraordinary year and thanked Member States for their attendance at the first Executive Board's session of 2021. She thanked in particular the outgoing Chair and members of the Bureau for their leadership and guidance.

She noted the wish of Member States to focus UN-Habitat's work on the impact of COVID-19 and on the efforts to manage multi-level governance into better coordination.

The Executive Director presented the High-level mid-term review of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat, to be held from 29 June to 1 July 2021, as a unique opportunity to take a collective review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

She informed that the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda will take place in New York in April 2022, and recalled the urgency of securing non-earmarked and soft earmarked funding to enable UN-Habitat to fulfill its mandate.

The Executive Director announced the effective preparations for the Eleventh Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF11) to be held in Katowice, Poland in June 2022 with the theme "Transforming our cities for a Better Urban Future".

The Executive Director recalled that UN-Habitat has been mandated by the Secretary-General to lead several UN system wide initiatives, including the United Nations Task Force on the Future of Cities, the Local2030 Global Campaign, and the UN systemwide strategy for sustainable urban development

The outgoing Chair gave his closing remarks and thanked all Member States for their support during the tenure of the Islamic Republic of Iran as Chair of the Executive Board. He appreciated the full engagement of Member States during this session despite its virtual format and commended the continued engagement of Member States through the Ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters.

The outgoing Chair stressed the difficult financial situation of UN-Habitat, urged the Executive Board to continue its guiding efforts, and called upon all Member States to contribute to non-earmarked funding. He also stressed the need to keep the UN headquarters in Nairobi as a hub for multilateralism.

The Chair finally expressed special gratitude to Egypt, Chile, France and Serbia that have facilitated the work of Iran as chair and congratulated the new Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2021-2022.

Interventions

Poland expressed its sincere gratitude to the Eastern European group for nominating Poland as its representative and thanked the Executive Board for electing Poland as the chair of the Executive Board for 2021-2022. Poland highlighted the need to focus on the resource mobilization to ensure that no one is left behind in an urbanizing world and expressed its satisfaction with the main theme of the WUF11 to take place in Katowice, namely “Transforming our cities for a better urban future” and acknowledged the tremendous preparations for this event in collaboration with UN-Habitat. He invited all participants to attend WUF11 in Katowice next year.

Burkina Faso congratulated UN-Habitat for the success of the first 2021 session of the Executive Board, underlined the excellent relations with UN-Habitat which have provided a strong support to Burkina Faso, and thanked the Executive Director for her recent visit to the country during which she had the opportunity to meet with high level officials and to conduct site visits.

On this note, the Chair closed the 2021 first session of the Executive Board.