



UN HABITAT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 7-8 APRIL 2021

Statement of Prof M Siraj Sait, Co-Chair of UN Habitat Stakeholder Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE) and Director, Noon Centre of Equality and Diversity, University of East London

Hon'ble Mr. Chair, Madam Executive Director, Your Excellencies, UN Habitat colleagues and partners

On behalf of the UN Habitat Stakeholder Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE) and my co-chair Ms. Dyan Currie, I would like to thank the UN Habitat Executive Board for the opportunity to speak today and at earlier sessions in July and October 2020, statements for which are on record. I seek to update the Executive Board on progress stakeholders are making toward joint implementation of UN Habitat strategies and plans at the local, national and regional level.

As Member States would recall, over 200 representative stakeholders at the first UN Habitat Assembly in May 2019 adopted the 'New Stakeholder Compact for the New Urban Agenda', echoed also by the Abu Dhabi World Urban Forum in February 2020 attended by 13,000 delegates through its declaration. SAGE and partners are now working with the Executive Director to take forward collectively the UN Secretary General's call for the 'new social contract' in the context of sustainable urbanisation and pro-poor, gender responsive and inclusive social development, humanitarian work and Covid 19 recovery.

SAGE meets every month formally and its meetings are attended regularly by the Executive Director and Ms. Christine Knudsen and advised by senior managers led by Mr. Raf Tuts and Partnership team. Stakeholders are fully involved in supporting UN Habitat directly as well as promoting the New Urban Agenda, UN Habitat's vision, best practices and tools elsewhere. Some of SAGE recent contributions include

- UN Habitat Report on Cities and Pandemics: Towards a more just, green and healthy future
- World Cities Day: Valuing our cities and communities
- Innovative Financing Dialogue with UN Habitat and new partners
- Facilitating coordination between National Urban Forums
- Regional meetings, such as the Arab Land Initiative
- Network meetings such as the Global Land Tool Network
- Supporting the launch of the New Urban Agenda Platform
- World Economic Forum Cities of Tomorrow
- Commonwealth Cities of the Future
- World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments
- North Africa NELGA Capacity Development Process

The pandemic has only increased demand for UN Habitat's expertise and reemphasises the need for strong partnerships with governments and all stakeholders. We would like to congratulate the Executive Director for appointing new independent and diverse members to SAGE and we have adopted a five area work plan to supporting UN Habitat Strategic Plan toward achieving targets for the New Urban Agenda and SDGs.

To enable this, stakeholders request that the Executive Board reconvene the *ad hoc* working group on stakeholder engagement policy at the earliest; request UN Habitat to assist the working group with the development of its partnership strategy including consultation with partners; and request the Board to consider these items at the next session of the Executive Board in 2021.

We also request Member States to continue to do their best in providing resources and supporting the efforts of UN Habitat and partners towards a just, green and inclusive recovery. This resourcing commitment from Member States is necessary to carry out essential sustainable urban development programmes for communities and urban areas that need it most, and to meet agreed goals and targets of the New Urban Agenda, including previous resolutions of the UN Executive Board.

On behalf of SAGE members

Alexander Bazenov, Chairman of the Board of InfraKAP investment, Russia
Alice Charles, Lead, World Economic Forum's Platform for Cities, Switzerland
Aromar Revi, Director, Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), India
Dyan Currie, Chief Planner Brisbane, Commonwealth Association of Planners, Australia (Co-Chair, SAGE)
Emilia Saiz, Secretary-General of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), Spain
Eugenie L Birch, University of Pennsylvania and General Assembly of Partners, USA
George Wasonga, CEO, Civil Society Urban Development Platform, Kenya
Magdalena Garcia, Huairou Commission, Bufete de Estudios Interdisciplinarios AC, Mexico
Philippe Akoa, Special Council Support Fund for Mutual Assistance Africa FEICOM, Cameroon
Rose Molokoane, coordinator Federation of Urban Poor (FEDUP) and SDI, South Africa
Sahar Attia, Chair Habitat UNI, and Professor, Cairo University, Egypt
Shamoy Hazare, CEO of Jamaica School for Social Entrepreneurship, Jamaica
Shi Nan, Secretary General and Senior Planner, Urban Planning Society of China
Siraj Sait, Director, Noon Centre Equality and Diversity, University of East London, UK (Co-Chair, SAGE)
Victor Santiago Pineda, Founder, World Enabled, USA