



# **HUAIROU COMMISSION**

*Women, Homes & Community*

## **Statement**

at

**the First Session of the 2021 UN-Habitat Executive Board**

**8 April 2021 (2 minutes - approximately at 2:05pm EAT)**

**Delivered by Sri H Sofjan**

### **Good afternoon**

Dear Chair, dear ED,

Excellencies , dear colleagues of UN-Habitat and from other constituencies,

Allow me to thank you for providing a space for us to provide our inputs - the Huairou Commission is a long-time partner of UN-Habitat bringing the constituency of women, especially organised grassroots women groups in poor and marginalised communities in 45 countries across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin and North Americas. Huairou Commission members envision a world transformed with balanced power relations and sustainable resilient communities where grassroots women leaders with their groups and communities are at the center of decision-making, and where people lead lives free from poverty, inequality, violence, insecurity and all forms of injustice.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate UN-Habitat and in particular the Executive Director and its teams for the work carried out in such trying times in the past 1-year.

We take note on the report made on the implementation of 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 and that the review and update of the UN-Habitat Policy and Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Urban Development and Human Settlements 2014–2019, together with the Gender Equality Action Plan 2014–2019, is in the final stages. We URGE the revised Policy and Plan will include commitments and strategies to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment as key transformative pathways in implementing the

agency's Strategic Plan and the New Urban Agenda to achieve SDG 11. Gender equality and women's empowerment should not just be an element of social inclusion and in ticking the check-boxes. We need to commit to having gender mandates and gender-responsive criteria for making decisions in all policy spaces and programmes, by institutionalizing gender-lens in all planning, designing and decision-making.

Women, especially organised groups working at the community and grassroots level, have taken an active role in engendering the housing, human settlements and urban policy agenda from the first Habitat I Conference in Vancouver in 1976 until now. Organized in diverse ways—as constituency and issue networks, as grassroots women's groups focused on reducing their poverty and improving their living conditions, as urban planners and researchers, policy makers, and government officials—women have championed the idea that vibrant and prosperous cities engage and deliver for all their citizens. We hope women's roles and contributions will be highlighted in the content of the New Urban Agenda Platform and the next New Urban Agenda's quadrennial report due in 2022.

The UN Secretary-General reminded us during his address at the launch of the Decade of Action- the last 10-years remaining to achieve the SDGs, that women and gender equality are key components that will ensure we achieve the 2030 Agenda.

We Call on Member States to invest and resource UN-Habitat in creating a gender equality and women's empowerment specific programme as its commitment towards achieving substantive equality in ensuring we have sustainable cities and human settlements, that leave no person and place behind. We need gender-responsive systems to ensure women's equitable & secure access to resources, services and decision-making; participation in all levels of development policy making, planning, programming and resource allocation.

Finally, as we gear up towards the High-Level Meeting on the Review and Implementation of the New Urban Agenda, we Call the inclusion and participation of women, especially organised grassroots groups in the national and regional review process. Organised grassroots groups have been actively involved in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda through awareness raising of the policy document at the local level by leading the Urban Thinkers Campuses of the

World Urban Campaigns, and through active meaningful participatory and inclusive methods and tools of data collection, mapping and engagement processes such as the Local-to-Local Dialogues.

We look forward to continue our close partnership with UN-Habitat.

Thank you.