

USA Opening Statement  
UN-Habitat Midterm Review  
29 June 2021

Thank you Mr. Chair:

Madame Executive Director, Mr. President of the GA, Excellencies,

The United States fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the United Kingdom on the behalf of WEOG.

The United States has always been one of the most engaged MS in UN-Habitat and one of the most consistent financial supporters of this organization.

Therefore, in our national capacity, the United States wishes to raise a number of concerns about the lack of Member States engagement and decision making in the development of this meeting.

The United States expects all UN meetings to be planned in a transparent and inclusive manner. In our view, all members of the CPR should have received a concept note outlining potential approaches to this meeting and Member States should have been asked to provide feedback on the concepts provided.

Subsequently, Member States should have been engaged in developing the agenda including the duration, level of participation, and substantive content.

The primary intersessional body for UN-Habitat, the UN-Habitat Executive Board, would have been a logical venue for such consultations. The Executive Board met four times, between the decision to hold the Midterm Review, and today's meeting. Thus, there was ample opportunity to engage Member States. And yet, the Chair's opening statement for today's meeting clearly communicated that only the Secretariat and Bureau were engaged in planning this meeting and no broad consultations with all Member States took place.

The United States does not raise these concerns lightly. We made a prolonged and legitimate effort to engage the Secretariat and Bureau to help guide the preparations for this meeting. The Western European and Others Group (WEOG) met on several occasions to develop our concept for the meeting. Following those consultations, the United States and other WEOG members met with the Secretariat to express concern about the overall meeting planning and suggest concrete measures to adjust the meeting agenda.

In our role as a CPR Bureau member, we also brought WEOG's concerns to the attention of the Chair and the rest of the Bureau. However, we can only express our concern that this meeting

was planned nearly exclusively by the Secretariat with the very limited participation of the CPR Bureau.

As the meeting name suggests, this Midterm Review should assess the organization's success in implementing its work program as guided by Habitat Assembly decisions and the Strategic Plan. We also expect this meeting to provide guidance to the Executive Director and the Secretariat on the way forward given programmatic and budget shortfalls.

It is for these reasons that the United States will introduce new decision language that calls on the Executive Director to ensure that future UN-Habitat meetings are conceived, prepared, and executed in a transparent, and consultative manner. We have already introduced language that calls on the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on a number of substantive issues to ensure that the work we do this week can be further pursued and implemented.

Thank you very much Mr. Chair.