



HUIROU COMMISSION

Women, Homes & Community

**Statement
at**

**The Committee of Permanent Representatives to The United Nations Human Settlements
Programme
First Open-Ended Meeting/High-Level Midterm Review
29 June to 1 July 2021**

Good afternoon

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

Allow me to thank you for this opportunity to provide our inputs and shared our concerns at this High Level Mid-Term Review Meeting of the CPR to the UN-Habitat.

The Huirou Commission is a long-time partner of UN-Habitat bringing the constituency of women; we are grassroots women-led social movement of over 100 community-based organizations operating in poor urban, rural and indigenous communities across 42 countries around the world. For over 25 years we have joined together for collective power and political influence to claim resources and increase grassroots women's capacities to drive their local development agenda.

We appreciate the work of UN-Habitat with the strong leadership of the Executive Director and her dedicated team for implementing the *UN Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2023* with that align with the commitments as per the New Urban Agenda in such trying times since the declaration of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020.

We commend the production of the report "Cities and Pandemic: Towards A More Just, Green and Healthy Future which was launch in March this year; it could be a useful guide for governments and stakeholders of the New Urban Agenda in adapting their implementation plan that include the designing and development of their the post Covid-19 Recovery policies and programmes to ensued the we still achieve the SDGs especially SDG 11. We urge UN-Habitat and member states to focus resourcing and partnering with organised grassroots groups in implementing local action in the post Covid-19 Recovery policies and programmes. As pointed in the UN Secretary General policy brief in April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the centrality of local action, and highlighted his observation that organised community-based and grassroots groups, many led-by women, have been in the forefront, responding to the needs of those in their community in managing and addressing the Covid-19

pandemic - despite their limited resources they came up with innovative solutions in their own ingenious ways.

We created the Grassroots Women's Global Covid-19 Recovery Platform as a critical component of our work to improve the livelihoods, living conditions and opportunities for rural and urban and indigenous grassroots women in the next 5 years, and welcome UN-Habitat to collaborate with us in this endeavour

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**. It is very encouraging to learn that continuous project reviews were undertaken by project review committees to ensure that gender equality addressed in all UN-Habitat projects and programmes – that in 6-months . between August a total of 20 project documents and 10 concept notes were reviewed, leading to notable improvements on gender and other social inclusion issues as well as the increase in internal requests for collaboration and engagement to make projects and programmes more gender-inclusive and gender-responsive. We look forward to the completion of the the review and updating 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), that is nearing its completion. We want to impress once again that in developing the revised policy and plan will guide UN-Habitat engagement on gender issues, in line with the strategic plan for 2020–2023, 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 as a central component of developing national urban policies, noting that the national urban policies is one of the 5 thrusts in implementing the New Urban Agenda. 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 also look forward to collaborate in making sure women's role and grassroots contributions will be included in the next New Urban Agenda's quadrennial report due in 2022.

Finally, once again 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 look forward to continue our close partnership with UN-Habitat.

Thank you.