



2021 SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 15 - 16 NOVEMBER 2021

SUMMARY OF PLENARY DISCUSSION AND OUTCOMES

TUESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2021

Second Daily Journal (Draft)

Tuesday, 16 November 2021, marked the second and last day of the second session of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat for the year 2021.

Agenda item 7:
Normative and
operational activities of
UN-Habitat, including
reporting on the
programmatic activities
of the Programme in
2021 and the

implementation of sub-programmes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities, and an update on the response of the Programme to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic

The Executive Director briefed the Executive Board on the implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat in line with the 2020-2023 strategic plan. She further presented how these activities contribute to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. She highlighted three entry points including localization of SDGs, guidance on the right to housing and policy, and UN-Habitat's work on migration and displacement.

Localization of SDGs

The Secretariat briefed the Executive Board on the localization of the SDGs which is supported by three main initiatives, namely the global urban monitoring framework, voluntary local reviews (VLRs), and the SDG cities flagship programme. These initiatives have different approaches but are interconnected and converge into the same work stream:

- The global urban monitoring framework is a global approach to data collection and indicator development for SDG localization. It is composed of a multilevel set of indicators to allow for the adaptation and analysis of each locality and vision for each city. The framework is expected to be rolled out worldwide after being endorsed by the Statistical Commission, tentatively in March 2022.
- Voluntary local reviews (VLRs) have become the main tool for local and regional governments to monitor and report on the progress of SDGs localization, allowing transformative actions and local innovation. VLRs are proved to be an accelerator for localization and have grown from 37 in May 2020 to 106 in October 202, representing 87 local and regional governments from 27 countries.
- The SDG cities flagship programme aims to have a positive impact in 1,000 cities through the adoption of a systematic approach that combines evidence-based policymaking, digitized tools, capacity support, technical backstopping, and matchmaking financing support with catalytic projects. The programme has three tracks: data track, capacity development track, and investment track. UN-

Habitat is aiming to add a certification track to this programme.

Housing and policy issues and priorities with a focus on Europe

The Secretariat presented UN-Habitat's engagement on housing policy issues and priorities and provided examples from Europe. The Secretariat indicated that recent data on the implementation of the SDGs in the European Union showed positive trends in all indicators concerning Goal 11 but that certain groups were still disproportionately deprived of housing, a problem that was magnified by the COVID-19 crisis. Together with the Economic Commission for Europe and the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing (Housing Europe), UN-Habitat coordinates the Housing2030 initiative to promote affordable housing in Europe which provides a normative toolkit for policymakers and highlights good practices that can promote housing affordability including land management. The Secretariat indicated that this cooperation is an example that could be replicated with other Regional Commissions.

Migration and displacement

UN-Habitat indicated that it continues to focus its programme development efforts on sub-regions and countries where it can bring significant added value to

United Nations system-wide efforts and presented the value of the UN-Habitat operational strategies in Burkina Faso and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). In Venezuela, the Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity project brings together the unique knowledge and experience of UN-Habitat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in an effort to reduce the vulnerability of refugees, migrants and host communities and to promote their socioeconomic and territorial integration in urban areas. In Burkina Faso, UN-Habitat is currently implementing a project involving four cities, financed by the European Union, which will help local authorities find durable solutions for internally displaced persons in urban areas.

Capacity Building Strategy: Implementation Plan

The Secretariat presented the updated implementation plan of the capacity-building strategy of UN-Habitat for the period 2021–2024, with priorities for the year 2022. The Board was briefed on concrete priorities for 2022 which take account of changing contexts, including the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, available resources, the priorities of UN-Habitat for 2022, and demand from Member States and urban stakeholders. It also introduces an additional focus by taking into account the proposed recalibration of the strategic plan for the period 2020–2023. The Programme identified five strategic areas for implementing the Strategy which include: progressively aligning and coordinating current and new initiatives;

strengthening partners' mobilization; better understanding capacity gaps from Member States; building on the Programme's Catalogue of Services to strengthen capacity-building tools; and seizing digital opportunities and using innovative tools to upscale opportunities. This includes the global New Urban Agenda Illustrated Capacity Building toolkit and a digital learning platform (learning management system). UN-Habitat invited interested Member States to join forces and be champions at a Capacity Development Financing Dialogue to take place at WUF11.

Draft Terms of Reference for the Mechanism for the Review of the Implementation of the United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements

The Secretariat indicated that the Terms of Reference (TORs) of the Mechanism are building on UN-Habitat's 25 years of experiences in normative and operational experience in safer cities at the municipal level in countries such as Tanzania, Cote D'Ivoire, and South Africa. It is meant to assess progress and propose amendments to the Guidelines where necessary to ensure effective implementation. The Secretariat indicated that there is a need for a UN-system wide effort to improve the quality and consistency of policy and programme on safer cities. The Secretariat encouraged the Executive Board to adopt the TORs of the Mechanism. The Secretariat noted that Member

States may participate in the Mechanism and in the national review process on a voluntary basis. The costs associated with such participation shall be paid from voluntary contributions made available for that purpose.

Collaboration between UN-Habitat and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

The Secretariat indicated that UN-Habitat and UNEP have been cooperating with one another for 30 years and that at present, the cooperation between the two programmes has looked at mainstreaming environmental considerations into urban policymaking and urban considerations into environmental policymaking at the local, national, and global levels. At present, new internal strategic plans, a shifting funding landscape, and accelerating global crises warrant a closer look at the modalities and themes of that cooperation. UNEP and UN-Habitat recently contributed together to various important publications including the UN Secretary-General's Policy Brief on COVID-19 in an Urban World. The Secretariat indicated that the two organizations also work jointly on projects such as Go Blue, Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA-2), SOLUTION+, and the Global Wastewater Initiative (GW2I). Moving forward, the collaboration with UNEP will continue to evolve around respective priorities with regular reviews in line with the UN System-Wide Strategy on Sustainable Urban Development.

Interventions by Member States

Oman on behalf of the Arab Countries in Nairobi spoke on behalf of the League of Arab States and welcomed the collaboration between UN-Habitat and UNEP and called for reducing duplication and optimizing the use of resources in the context of COVID-19.

South Africa indicated that it supports UN-Habitat and that it is willing to work closely with UN-Habitat on the United Nations System-wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements, based on their experience. They welcomed the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the Review Mechanism and called to consider the approach as a best practice.

Kenya commended the efforts by the Executive Director to focus its work on Least Developed Countries and fragile cities and welcomed the work of UN-Habitat with respect to the capacity-building strategy. Kenya also commended UN-Habitat's work on two programmes implemented in Kenya – Blue Economy and Go Blue.

USA welcomed the report on the normative and operational work carried out by UN-Habitat and acknowledged the importance of UN-Habitat's work on affordable housing. USA commended UN-Habitat's response to the Venezuelan migrants and refugees crisis, and the Syrian migrant and refugee crisis in Lebanon and Turkey. USA commended UN-Habitat for its work with

UNEP and encouraged continued collaboration and engagement between the two Programmes.

Argentina stressed the importance of the work carried out by UN-Habitat in localizing the VLRs in medium and small-size cities and called for a balanced approach between social and environment perspectives.

Burkina Faso congratulated the Executive Director for her mission to Burkina Faso in March. Burkina Faso expressed concern about the current financial situation of UN-Habitat and recalled that Burkina Faso paid their contribution for 2021, urging other Member States to do the same.

Senegal welcomed the normative and operational work carried out by the UN-Habitat. Senegal shared their comprehensive plan for tackling the consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. Senegal also expressed concerns about the current financial situation of the Programme which affected UN-Habitat's ability to implement work in African countries.

State of Palestine thanked UN-Habitat for offering support during the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic. Palestine welcomed all initiatives in setting up territory management and announced that they had submitted their report on VLR on 31 October 2021.

France praised UN-Habitat's work in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its resource mobilization

efforts. France further stressed the importance of ensuring that actions undertaken by the Programme are commensurate with resources available and welcomed the fact that the G20 has entrusted UN-Habitat with the role of co-chairing a platform on the role of adapting SDGs with the local context of medium-sized cities.

Indonesia emphasized the value of the approach of localizing SDGs through the data, capacity development and investment tracks, in accordance with the commitments and principles set forth in the New Urban Agenda. Indonesia expressed support for UN-Habitat's work that supports South-South cooperation. Indonesia shared their experience on capacity-building activities at the national and local level.

Brazil commended UN-Habitat for its efforts in localizing the SDGs, particularly to reduce spatial inequalities, and the work carried out by the Programme to support the right to adequate housing. Brazil welcomed the cooperation between UN-Habitat and UNEP but cautioned UN-Habitat on the use of concepts and terminology that are not multilaterally agreed such as "nature-based solutions" language.

EU welcomed the presentation by UN-Habitat of its normative and operational work and noted the updates on preparation for WUF11. EU indicated it desires to receive more details on WUF11 to adequately prepare for it and supports the monitoring by UN-Habitat of the implementation of the SDGs via the VLRs.

Cameroon welcomed the work carried out by UN-Habitat and requested that the Secretariat prepares concrete proposals and recommendations in response to the questions raised by Member States with respect to the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, for consideration by the Executive Board.

Finland noted that the work carried out by UN-Habitat on VLRs was of high standard, indicating that they are pleased to see how normative and operational work could support one another. Finland expressed its interest in knowing more about how prioritized areas could be included in the VLRs.

Costa Rica expressed their appreciation to UN-Habitat for their work in implementing the New Urban Agenda. Costa Rica considered UN-Habitat as having unique roles in the UN system. Costa Rica stressed the importance for UN-Habitat to support cities in coping with COVID-19 – with common but differentiated responsibilities – and in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Sweden encouraged UN-Habitat to work with UN country teams to have a catalytic impact on the ground. Sweden acknowledged that the work carried out by UN-Habitat and UNEP is related and strives for a better living environment.

Jamaica commended the Executive Director on the work carried out by UN-Habitat on urban indicators and urban-rural linkages. Jamaica indicated it looks forward

to the implementation of the capacity-building strategy and considers it a valuable tool in advancing knowledge among stakeholders.

Saudi Arabia welcomed the innovative approach adopted by UN-Habitat to implement its work. Saudi Arabia indicated that they support the Green Initiative.

Poland referred to the current migration crisis at its borders and encouraged UN-Habitat to explore further collaboration and cooperation with UNHCR, calling for a holistic approach to migration.

Iraq commended the efforts of the Executive Director and her team to further achieve the SDGs, particularly in post-conflict environments and indicated that Iraq looks forward to further cooperation with the Programme.

Agenda item 8: High-level meeting to assess progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

The Executive Director recalled that in its resolution 75/224 of 21 December 2020, the General Assembly requested the President of the General Assembly to convene a one-day high-level meeting in collaboration with UN-Habitat on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda (HLM). The Executive Director further updated that on 21 October 2021, H.E Mr. Abdulla Shahid, the President of the 76th session of the General Assembly, formally communicated to all Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations in New York that the HLM would take place on 28 April 2022. The Secretariat noted that it had shared this communication with Permanent and Observers Missions in Nairobi.

The Secretariat updated that the main input to the HLM will be the Secretary-General's Quadrennial Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda. In addition, each of the five Regional Economic Commissions will transmit reports adopted by Member States at the respective Regional Forums for Sustainable Development, to be held in March 2022. The concept note and detailed agenda for the HLM will draw upon the main findings of the Secretary-General's Quadrennial Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Office of the President of the General Assembly will consult with the Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations in New York to seek their views on the HLM content, agenda, and prospective outcomes. Informal consultations are presently underway.

The HLM will offer an opportunity for Member States to take stock and identify ways to revitalize the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, at a critical juncture for urban development. The Secretariat encouraged Member States to submit their National Reports and called for Member States to include urban issues in their Voluntary National Reviews or Nationally Determined Commitments. An outcome document similar in nature to the Istanbul+5 Declaration adopted by the General Assembly in 2001 could be envisaged. The alignment with other processes, including with WUF11 is being pursued in collaboration with the host government.

The presentation by UN-Habitat further recalled the genesis of the mandate given by the General Assembly to organise the HLM, including the realization that the New Urban Agenda is weakly implemented and not included in global frameworks. It further stressed that the HLM will consist of a morning session attended by Heads of State and the UN Secretary-General and an afternoon session on discussions on the outcome document. During the same week, different constituents as well as ECOSOC are expected to also meet in preparation.

In terms of outcomes, the HLM will aim at positioning clearly the New Urban Agenda within the Decade of Action and within the recovery from the pandemic, and to respond to the Our Common Agenda report and in particular to the call for a new social contract. In this respect, UN-Habitat is planning to engage with WHO and ILO towards a redefined concept of social protection

which includes housing, basic services, health, and basic income. In addition, the contribution by local governments to climate action and the contribution of inclusive planning to peace and security building will be reaffirmed.

As consultations are starting, UN-Habitat recommended Nairobi-based Permanent Representatives to engage with New York-based Permanent Representatives of their respective countries, as well as with their capitals in relation to the Regional Development Forums. Finally, the Secretariat invited Member States to consider contributing towards the attendance of Least developed countries (LDCs) to the HLM as it was done for the first UN-Habitat Assembly.

Interventions by Member States

Egypt stated that the HLM is critical and welcome due to unprecedented challenges facing urban communities and needs to add value to the New Urban Agenda implementation. Egypt further indicated that they had submitted their national report which highlights the work of the government on urban sustainability, informal settlements upgrading and service provision, and invited Member States to submit their report.

Kenya requested UN-Habitat to facilitate the regional discussions in preparation for the HLM and called all Member States to provide financial contributions to UN-

Habitat. Kenya further underlined the ongoing efforts by UN-Habitat in support of sustainable urbanization.

Germany stressed the importance of leveraging the opportunity of the HLM to present a compelling narrative on the progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and to strengthen the mandate and the role of UN-Habitat and increase UN-Habitat resources. Germany encouraged the Secretariat to establish linkages with the G20 and G7 presidencies as well with other inter-governmental processes. It further requested an update on securing resources for the HLM.

Indonesia indicated that Indonesia submitted its national report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (among 21 countries) which includes detailed data on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and on transformative results. Indonesia affirmed their interest in further discussing the implementation of the New Urban Agenda at the HLM.

Cameroon stressed the need for timely formal communication about the HM to enable follow-up.

UN-Habitat in its response informed that the New Urban Agenda Platform is on-line and ready to receive the national reports. UN-Habitat also confirmed that it will support the regional discussions and assured of its commitment to share information formally in a timely manner. UN-Habitat also clarified that being a General Assembly meeting, the HLM is being prepared by the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the

next formal communication will transmit the Concept Note and preliminary Agenda for the meeting. Several in-kind contributions are being mobilized for activities related to the HLM, however, the concern remains the attendance of LDCs. Finally, the Secretariat acknowledged the importance of a strong narrative and elaborated on the recent informal consultation being held in New York, inviting Permanent Representatives to liaise with their colleagues based there.

Agenda item 9: Annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to the Executive Board

Under this agenda item, presentations and discussion focused on two specific reports:

- Activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services for the period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 (A/75/301 (Part I))
- Implementation and follow-up of evaluation reports in UN-Habitat (HSP/EB.2021/INF/5)

UN-Habitat Accountability and Overview

The Secretariat recalled that audits and investigations are regularly conducted by OIOS, the Board of Auditors, and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). The Secretariat indicated that most recently, JIU had conducted an evaluation of the UN-Habitat administration and conducted a joint evaluation on implementing partners, which included UN-Habitat.

The Secretariat provided an overview of UN-Habitat's accountability framework, which is comprised of: results performance management, a system of internal control, independent oversight bodies, ethical standards and integrity, and enterprise risk management.

The Secretariat indicated that OIOS had recently conducted an audit of the UN-Habitat Regional Office for Africa. As a result, the regional office is currently working to address all eight recommendations contained in the OIOS report. In addition, the Secretariat indicated that the organization has made efforts to address the recommendations provided in the 2020 Report of the Board of Auditors.

UN-Habitat Evaluation Implementation

The Secretariat briefed the Executive Board on the implementation by UN-Habitat of evaluation reports. It provided details of the function of the Independent Evaluation Unit at UN-Habitat, the different types of evaluation conducted within the Programme, and the steps for the evaluation process. The Secretariat also presented the constraints of the evaluation function, including limited financial and human resources for evaluation and increasing demand.

The Secretariat informed the Executive Board that UN-Habitat evaluation reports, produced by external evaluation consultants, are made public on UN-Habitat's website.

Finally, it provided recommendations to be considered by the Executive Board regarding UN-Habitat's evaluation implementation.

Interventions by Member States

USA took note of the OIOS report on UN-Habitat's evaluation function and sought clarification on UN-Habitat's plan to address the report's observations to develop a budget framework and a resource allocation fund for the evaluation function. Further, USA requested the Secretariat to provide an update on the status of the implementation plan for Sub-Saharan Africa, and actions taken to implement OIOS's recommendation regarding Programme Support Cost.

France supported the proposal to systemize the evaluation process for projects that go beyond USD 300,000 if funds are sufficient. France also highlighted the importance of the communication strategy on impact and flagship programmes to make sure that Member States are kept abreast of progress.

Agenda item 10: Annual Report of the Ethics Office

The Executive Director highlighted that the Annual Report of the Ethics Office presents cases and ethics activities undertaken by UN-Habitat with the support and guidance of the relevant offices of the United Nations, including the OIOS. She indicated that UN-Habitat ensures that the ethical standards of the UN and policies relating to standard of conduct and the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, and other forms of unsatisfactory conduct are handled in accordance with the established rules and regulations of the UN. The Executive Director stated that she has established robust and efficient management of ethics-related cases and ensured that UN-Habitat has the necessary resources to detect, prevent, report, and address cases of unsatisfactory conduct.

UN-Habitat has designated a conduct and discipline as well as a sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) focal point and to ensure the implementation of the organization's zero-tolerance policy.

The Secretariat indicated that the Legal Unit of UN-Habitat serves as the main focal point for ethics activities supported by the Office of the Executive Director, Human resources liaison offices, and the conduct and discipline focal point.

Work on ethics as implemented within UN-Habitat is articulated around confidential advisory and guidance to staff, supporting UN-Habitat's financial disclosure, developing standards, training, and education on ethics issues, and supporting ethics standard-setting and promoting policy coherence within the Secretariat.

The Secretariat indicated that in 2021, several training courses were conducted virtually including the 2021 leadership dialogue (which 99 per cent of all staff attended), and seven other training workshops. 35 requests for guidance were received and handled. In addition, all relevant staff members concluded their financial disclosure on time, and the Legal Unit submitted inputs to the UN secretariat annual report on ethics. Moreover, UN-Habitat developed the Speak Up App for speedy reporting and enhanced the Executive Director's delegation of authority to manage disciplinary matters.

The Secretariat informed the Executive Board that eight ethics cases were reported over the period 2020-2021 – among which five ongoing, and three closed. Out of the eight cases, one is on SEA, which the OIOS has investigated and recommended for closure. The other seven deal with allegations of misconduct and two cases are closed with no further recommendation. Two have been referred to the Executive Director, while the remaining three were referred to the Human Resources office in New York.

Challenges include under-capacity due to ongoing austerity measures, and staff confidence in the timely delivery of support and services when reporting a case. Despite the challenges faced, UN-Habitat has instituted remedial actions, including using technology to facilitate training and developing the Speak Up App to meet UN-Habitat's obligation in managing misconduct, including SEA.

The Secretariat indicated that the Legal Unit would be better able to handle and manage ethics issues and queries with an enhanced ethics function. It further indicated that the role of the conduct and discipline and SEA focal point needs to be enhanced, especially in the field.

The Chair closed the agenda item, and the report was adopted without further comment or reservation.

Agenda item 11: Review of the effectiveness of the oversight functions of the Executive Board with regard to its working methods, ensuring congruence with the other governing bodies of UN-Habitat

The Executive Board was invited by the Chair to discuss its working methods for achieving greater efficiency in the implementation of its mandate.

Interventions by Member States

USA expressed appreciation that working methods of the Executive Board are discussed and suggested that this agenda item be considered by the Executive Board at each of its session. USA suggested to prepare a survey to be circulated to Member States ahead of the next

session of the Executive Board which would allow more time to reflect on working methods and submit substantive responses. Finally, USA suggested for the next session of the Executive Board to be held for three days, rather than two, which would enable more time for extensive discussions and would allow representatives of capitals to attend in person.

Sweden welcomed the proposal to discuss the working methods of the Executive Board.

Germany supported the proposal from USA to organize a survey for Member States on working methods of the Executive Board to have more time to respond and reflect on the working methods.

Egypt highlighted that the Executive Board is meant to work on its own working methods and not on the ones of other governing bodies of UN-Habitat. Egypt suggested to have a briefing by the Secretariat on the working methods of the Board during the next Executive Board session instead of having a formal report on the matter.

Argentina agreed with the statement by Egypt that the Executive Board should only review its working methods, but not other governing functions.

Agenda item 12: Provisional agenda for the next session of the Executive Board

H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to UN-Habitat and Chair of the Ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters of the Executive Board, was invited to give a brief on the informal consultations on the three draft decisions. She reported that a consensus was reached on the three decisions and thanked the delegates as well the Secretariat for the work that has been done.

The following draft decisions were adopted:

- Draft Decision 2021/6: Work programme and draft budget, implementation of the strategic plan for the period 2020–2023, and alignment of the planning cycles of the Programme with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review process
- Draft Decision 2021/7: Implementation of normative and operational activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, reporting on the programmatic activities of the Programme in 2021, implementation of sub-programmes, flagship

programmes and technical cooperation activities and the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

- Draft Decision 2021/8: Methods of work of the Executive Board and the workplan of the Executive Board for 2022.

The Executive Board decided that the first session of the Executive Board will be held for a duration of three days, from 29 March to 31 March 2022. The second session will be held for a duration of two or three days between 14 and 17 November 2022, pending further review by the Board at its 2022 first session.

The Executive Board adopted the provisional Agenda for its next session to be held in March 2022 and included in the provisional Agenda an item entitled “Discussion on the progress made on the implementation of the Executive Board working methods as per Executive Board Decision 2020/6, and based on the survey to be conducted by the Secretariat following the second Executive Board meeting of 2021, to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting, so as to further improve the process and outcome of future meetings. ”

The Executive Board finally proceeded to the formal adoption of the five decisions as presented in document HSP/EB.2021/CRP.1/Rev.3, by way of consensus and as an expression of the formal outcome of the Executive Board session.

Before moving to other matters, the Chair granted the floor to stakeholders.

Statements by stakeholders

The **Stakeholder Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE)** said that despite challenges, UN-Habitat had made exceptional progress toward inclusive, just, green, and prosperous cities in the past few years. Following the 2019 New Stakeholder Compact for the New Urban Agenda adopted by hundreds of partners at the UN-Habitat Assembly, SAGE members are continuing to adapt priorities and approaches to the Secretary-General's new social contract including on housing, health, climate change, livelihoods, and localizing the SDGs. SAGE acknowledged that UN-Habitat was inclusive with partnerships reflected by more than a dozen advisory groups and campaigns. SAGE indicated that it welcomes the Ad-hoc Working Group on Stakeholder Engagement Policy meeting on 29 November 2021 and requested Member States to support meaningful, systematic, and inclusive stakeholder engagement toward successful outcomes of UN-Habitat policies and programmes.

The **Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation (SHSF)** said it intends to raise USD 1 billion over the next six years to invest with independent professional fund managers who are licensed and regulated in their respective countries. SHSF indicated that the task of the fund managers will be to generate a fixed annual return that will allow the Foundation to donate the equivalent

of 2.5 per cent of funds under management to UN-Habitat. An independent analysis of this target has been undertaken and will continue to ensure SHSF is able to deliver this annual source of fiscal support to UN-Habitat, thereby allowing the Executive Director and her team to fulfil their mandate. SHSF said it will seek active support from all Member States in the form of a one-time donation of a sum sufficient to allow the Foundation to make an impact through the annual donations.

The **Advisory Group on Gender Issues (AGGI)** stated that it must be recognized that women are key contributors at the forefront of implementing the New Urban Agenda to ensure that the SDGs are achieved, adding that it was committed to providing advice to UN-Habitat to finalize the Revised Gender Policy and Plan (2020-2023), and to position gender equality and women's empowerment as a key transformative path in the implementation of its activities, flagship programmes, and technical cooperation.

Habitat International Coalition (HIC) indicated that despite the recent constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, it had remained ready and able to do its part to restore its partnership with the Programme. HIC indicated that decisions and actions so far have not been sufficient to restore effective partnerships. HIC said that the voluntary commitments of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) promise to give greater clarity and specificity to obligations and ongoing 2030 Agenda commitments. HIC looks forward to a legitimate and functioning stakeholder engagement policy and mechanism, as well

as policy and implementation guidance true to the New Urban Agenda.

Habitat Professionals Forum (HPF) said that human settlement professionals around the world are supporting the UN-Habitat strategic actions to rebuild and inclusively socialize local settlements, communities, territories, cities, and regions, especially during and following the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. HPF announced that it is developing a Just Recovery Roadmap document offering guiding principles on how to build resilience, respond, and recover during and after the pandemic including re-tooling planning systems, reinforcing the health dimension of urban interventions, and stronger impact from sectoral work.

Huairou Commission commended the production of the 2020 UN-Habitat flagship World Cities Report: The Value of Sustainable Urbanization which highlights how gender equality in cities is driven by grassroots organizations, many led by women, and how cities are being transformed into spaces of inclusion due to the efforts of community organizations and committed citizens. It further called on Member States to invest and avail resources to UN-Habitat to lead in the development and implementation of gender-responsive urban policies as one of its key instruments in recalibrating the strategic plan 2020-2023 and carrying out its normative and operational activities.

Colegio de Jurisprudencia Urbanística (CJUR Internacional) announced it is developing the foundations of a new paradigm of urban legal science for

the 21st century in Latin America. This will be based on the creation by local authorities of legislation, regulations, and urban plans that aim to recognize, implement, guarantee, and develop the fundamental rights of the residents of human settlements. CJUR said the new paradigm will also encompass the incorporation within laws, urban regulations, urban development plans, construction permits, urbanization and urban impact of an integral approach that considers a focus on climate change, public health and the prevention of pandemics, disasters, and risks. With the creation of this new paradigm, CJUR International's commitment to the United Nations aims at the concretisation of the SDGs into specific acts to achieve Urban Social Justice, or more precisely, the happiness of the residents of human settlements, as the ultimate goal of urbanism, legislation, urban planning, and land management.

Agenda item 13: Other matters

Agenda item 13 invited additional stakeholders to make statements. These statements are found under the previous agenda item of this Journal.

Agenda item 14: Closure of the session

The Executive Director expressed her gratitude to the Chair of the Executive Board and the Chair of the Ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters for their leadership in preparing the session. She also thanked all Member States for their attendance, as well as colleagues from UNON and UN-Habitat who participated in the organization of the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2021.

She recalled the financial challenges that she inherited when she joined the Programme in 2018 and the achievements made so far to reduce the deficit. She stressed that more financial resources are needed and encouraged Member States to contribute with one-time donations. She also recalled the achievements made during her tenure, including the revision of the governance structure and the internal organizational restructuring, the approval of the strategic plan, the organization of two WUF sessions and the production of the World Cities Report. She stressed the importance of the localization of the SDGs and encouraged more Member States to send their voluntary reports.

She emphasized that UN-Habitat has worked to establish the endowment and the City Investment Facility to diversify resources, as requested by Member States. She underlined the timely production of the Cities and Pandemics report and the important role of UN-Habitat in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. She noted that despite the pandemic and limited resources, UN-Habitat managed to implement its 2020-2023 strategic plan.

The Executive Director further appreciated the frank opinions and guidance received from the Executive Board, both on the normative and operational activities as well as on the financial and administrative matters. She expressed her gratitude for the approval of the 2022 Work Programme and Budget and noted that UN-Habitat adopted a phased approach to budget arrangements, following the guidance from Member States, to ensure the programme can be implemented in line with available resources.

She highlighted different upcoming events in 2022 for Member States to be aware of, including the High-Level Meeting in New York in April (28 April), the Africities Summit in May (17-21 May), the World Urban Forum in June (26-30 June), World Habitat Day in Hawaii (3 October) and World Cities Day in Shanghai (31 October), as well as COP 27 in Egypt. She also recalled that in 2022, UN-Habitat will support UNEP as they celebrate UNEP@50.

The Chair of the Executive Board thanked participants for their presence and commitment to the work of the Executive Board. He expressed his gratitude for the great contributions made by Member States during the two-day session and closed the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2021.

Credits:

UN-Habitat