

First meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2022

Wednesday, 02 February 2022

10:00 am - 12:30 pm EAT

Hybrid meeting-UN-Habitat OED Boardroom

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the provisional Agenda.

1. H.E. Mr. Marek Rohr-Garztecki, Chair of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland, opened the meeting at 10:05 am EAT.

The following Executive Board Bureau members were present:

H.E. Mr. Marek Rohr-Garztecki, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland.

H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High-Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

H.E. Ms. Maria Alejandra Guerra, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Chile.

Mr. Ahmed Raafat Hanafy, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Mr. Clement Payeur, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of France.

The following UN Habitat Secretariat members were also present:

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director.

Mr. Chris Mensah, Secretary to the Governing Bodies.

Mr. Neil Khor, Chief of Staff.

Mr. Stadler Trengove, Principal Legal Adviser

Mr. Martin Barugahare, Chief of Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

Ms. Katerina Bezgachina, Senior Public Information Officer

Mr. Raf Tuts, Director, Director, Global Solutions Division.

Mr. Justin Bonongwe, Financial Management Officer.

Mr. Atsushi Koresawa, Director, Regional Office for Asia Pacific.

Mr. Sharmaarke Abdullahi, OiC, Donor Relations Unit

Mr. Haris Pajtic, Senior Human Resource Officer

Mr. Francisco Vasquez, Chief of Section, Conference Services

2. The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting. The provisional Agenda was adopted without any changes and can be accessed [here](#).

3. The Bureau endorsed the summary of discussion and recommendations emanating from its meeting held on 9 December 2021 which can be accessed [here](#).

Agenda item 2: Preparation for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board

a) Guidance on the format and venue of the session in light of the Covid-19 global situation;

4. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Executive Director shared her views on the format and venue of the upcoming 2022 first session of the Executive Board in light of the Covid-19 global situation. The statement by the Executive Director can be accessed [here](#). The presentation was followed by an exchange of views with Bureau members.
5. Subsequently, the Bureau after reviewing the proposal by the Executive Director, recommended that the Executive Director continues her preparations for the session with the assumption that the meeting will be held in a hybrid format.
6. The Bureau further recommended that with respect to delegates' participation, all the 36 Member Countries of the Executive Board, as well as delegations from State Members of the United Nations and United Nations Specialized Agencies that have Permanent and Observer Missions to UN-Habitat based in Nairobi, may be represented physically by two delegates, namely the 1+1 format in Conference Room 2 at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) Complex. All other members of delegations of the Nairobi based Missions may participate in the session online, with the understanding that the choice and level of representation is at the discretion of State Members of the United Nations and United Nations Specialized Agencies that have Permanent and Observer Missions to UN-Habitat based in Nairobi.
7. The Bureau also recommended that delegations from State Members of the United Nations, any other member of a United Nations Specialized Agency, and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or accredited to the UN-Habitat Assembly and not based in Nairobi should follow and contribute to the session on-line.
8. In addition, under this sub-item, the Principal Legal Officer, Mr. Stadler Trengove, briefed the Bureau on modalities of participation of representants of disputed territories. He further recalled that considering that all UN Agencies are created by the UN General Assembly, all UN entities such as UN-Habitat are bound by the decisions and resolutions that emanate from the General Assembly. As such, it is the UN Security Council that provides guidance on the position of Non-Self-Governing Territories and other territories.

b) Consideration of the request by the Joint Inspection Unit of the UN system to brief to the Executive Board on the findings of the management and administration review of UN-Habitat.

9. The Executive Director informed the Bureau that the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations system is currently undertaking a review of management and administration in UN-Habitat and has requested to present the key findings of the review at the upcoming session of the Executive Board. The Executive Director noted that JIU's request was received after the provisional Agenda was approved at the 2021 second session of the Executive Board held from 15 to 16 November 2021 and after the Bureau further reviewed it on 9 December 2021.
10. The Executive Director recommended that rather than amending the provisional Agenda, the Bureau should consider amending the proposed organization of work for the upcoming session to include the briefing by the JIU after the consideration of Agenda item 14, namely "progress made in the implementation of the working methods of the Executive Board pursuant to its

decision 2020/6. Including discussions on the schedule of future sessions”. This way, the need for a revision of the provisional Agenda and the Notification of the Executive Director, which have already been printed would be avoided because any such revisions would impact the timely issuance of pre-session documents to Member States. The detailed presentation can be accessed [here](#).

11. The presentation was followed by exchange of views of Bureau members.
12. Subsequently, the Bureau after reviewing the proposal by the Executive Director, recommended that the provisional Agenda for the upcoming session of the Executive Board includes a new Agenda item 15 namely, “key findings of the review of management and administration in UN-Habitat by the JIU”.
13. In order to avoid a revision of the Agenda and the Notification which may impact timely issuance of pre-session documents to Member States, the Bureau further recommended that this amendment be made from the floor at the first meeting of the session and further that this should be scripted in the Chair’s statement.

c) Proposed organization of work during the session

14. The Executive Director presented the proposed organization of work for the upcoming 2022 first session of the Executive Board. The detailed presentation can be accessed [here](#).
15. The presentation was followed by an exchange of views among Bureau members.
16. Subsequently, the Bureau recommended an adjusted organization of work to include the new Agenda item 15 on the key findings of the JIU management and administration review of UN-Habitat. The revised organization of work can be accessed [here](#).
17. One Bureau member recommended that the session should strive to be brief and focused, and that the discussions on the decisions and negotiations should take place during the session itself as much as possible.

d) Informal consultations on possible outcomes of the 2022 first session of the Executive Board

18. The Executive Director presented a proposed allocation of time for informal consultations on possible outcomes of the 2022 first session. The detailed schedule can be accessed [here](#).
19. Subsequently, the Bureau after reviewing the proposal by the Executive Director, agreed to the proposed schedule. The schedule can be accessed [here](#).

e) Nominations towards the election of the 2022/2023 Bureau of the Executive Board

20. The Chair of the Executive Board recalled that with accordance with rule 9 of its rules of procedure, the Executive Board will elect on the last day of the first session of the year 2022, from among its members and taking into consideration the need to ensure equitable geographical representation, a new Bureau comprising a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, who shall start holding office at the end of the first session of the year 2022.
21. Accordingly, the Secretariat recommended the following composition of the Bureau:

Latin American and Caribbean States: **Chair**
Eastern European States: **Vice-Chair**
African States: **Vice-Chair**

Asia-Pacific States: **Vice-Chair**
Western European and other States: **Rapporteur**

22. Subsequently, one Bureau member raised a question regarding which regional group was in line to Chair the Executive Board for the period 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and enquired why GRULAC was indicated as the next Chair of the Executive Board because the rotational matrix indicated that it would be the turn of the regional Group of African States.
23. The Secretariat, in response, referred to the agreement by Member States that “a Regional Group holding the Presidency of the UN-Habitat Assembly shall not, to the extent possible, hold the chairmanship of the Committee of Permanent Representatives or of the Executive Board, to avoid any overlap”. An overlap would occur if the Group of African States takes the Chair for the 2022-2023 Bureau. In addition, Rule 9.3 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board provides that ‘The offices of Chair and Rapporteur shall rotate each year to a different regional group. Each regional group shall occupy the office of Chair and Rapporteur once during a period of five years.’
24. The Bureau recommended that the Secretariat provides a detailed response in writing to the Bureau. Subsequently, the Secretariat circulated on 3 February 2022 an Explanatory Note which can be accessed [here](#).
25. The Bureau also recommended that in the meantime, a Note Verbale be sent to the Chairs of the Regional Groups by the Secretariat, inviting all regional groups to start caucusing towards nominations for their respective representatives to the new 2022-2023 Bureau of the Executive Board. The Bureau further recommended deferring the matter for consideration at its next meeting.

Agenda item 3: Any other matters

26. The Executive Director noted that the Bureau recommended to hold the upcoming session in a hybrid format and noted that Least Developing Countries (LDCs) and capital-based representatives will participate physically in UNEA 5 in early March 2022. She therefore introduced an idea for consideration by the Bureau to accord a similar opportunity to the 5 LDCs members of the Executive Board for the upcoming session of the Executive Board should COVID-19 conditions allow by the end of March 2022. The Executive Director further indicated that the UN-Habitat Assembly trust fund established pursuant to Resolutions 73/539 and 73/239 dated 26 November 2018 and 20 December 2018 respectively would be used to finance the participation of the LDCs.
27. Subsequently, the Bureau after reviewing the proposal by the Executive Director, recommended deferring the matter for consideration at its next meeting.

The first meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2022 was adjourned at 11:30 hrs. East African Time (EAT).