

OPENING REMARKS BY THE DEAN OF THE AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC CORP IN NAIROBI DURING THE FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING OF UN-HABITAT ON 29TH MARCH 2022.

**Mme President of the United Nations Habitat Assembly,
Chair of the Bureau of the Executive Board,
Director General of the United Nations Offices Nairobi,
The Executive Director of UN-Habitat,
Excellences,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my privilege and honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group.

At the outset, let me start by congratulating the Bureau and the Secretariat of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat for the all the practical arrangements in the framework of the organization of this First Session of the Executive Board meeting in 2022.

The African Group wishes to congratulate the Executive Director, Ms. Maiumunah Mohd Sharif, for her re-election for a Second Term to UN-Habitat and to commend her leadership in navigating the Organization throughout this unprecedented time. There is no doubt that your second term is the recognition of all your efforts and also the indication that more is awaited from you.

The first session of the Executive Board for the year 2022 is being held during an unprecedented era as the tropical Storm Ana continues to hit most African Economies in the Eastern and Southern of Africa. This unprecedented situations have continued to highlight the important role of UN-Habitat in a dynamically evolving Global Age. .

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Urbanization is of significant importance to African Group with 90% of Urban Growth taking place is the developing world where it is largely unplanned with capacities and resources are constrained. Unplanned growth urban growth fuels expansion of informal settlements and slums resulting in increase in Urban Poverty, inequality and lack of adequate affordable housing.

In this regard, the African Group looks at the implementation of the new organizational structure which aims at increasing impact at project Country, Regional or Sub-Regional Level with interest. The Group also appreciate efforts made by UN-Habitat in utilization of regional collaborative platforms and ongoing cooperation with the regional economic commissions to assist Member States in preparing their input for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly to review implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

The Financial position of UN-Habitat remains a matter of concern to the African Group putting into consideration the decline in the Non-Earmarked Contributions. The Group encourages UN-Habitat to strengthen its efforts to increase revenues for the Non-earmarked fund through the

implementation of the Resource mobilization strategy and look forward for active involvement and participation of member states during the Partner and Pledge for Sustainable Urbanization event during the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum.

The Group stresses the need and importance of transparency and accountability in the governance of the Organization. In this regard, the Group advocates for zero tolerance of any act of discrimination and harassment, as well as clarity in the use of available resources and all types of engagements with the various stakeholders. These critical requirements are lay ground for a conducive environment for action in our common endeavor to provide the people that we represent with legal, political and technical support in building smart and resilient cities across the world.

The Group reiterates the call for continued negotiations between the Executive Director and the United Nations Secretary General to increase the number of Senior Staff Posts funded under the United Nations Regular Budget as a temporary measure that could be used in addressing UN-habitat's Staffing Challenge.

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

The African Group supports continued use of the UN-Habitat flagship programmes as vehicles to fast-track integration between the normative and operational activities and calls for continued capacity-building initiatives, use of digitization of tools and virtual e-learning programmes, in line with the organization capacity-building strategy. The Group urges UN-Habitat to increase Capacity Building Initiatives offered to Member States in regards to Monitoring and Reporting of the New Urban Agenda.

As I Conclude, The African Group thanks the Executive Director and the UN-Habitat Secretariat on Interventions made under the Covid-19 response plan which helped many countries in responding to the Pandemic and urge them to facilitate more programmes geared towards post recovery interventions.

It is with those short remarks that I give you back the floor chair.

DEAN OF THE AFRICAN GROUP
NAIROBI
MARCH 2022