

**2022 Second session of the Executive Board of the
United Nations Human Settlements Programme
21-23 November 2022**

**Agenda Item 3: Reports of the Chairs of the ad hoc working groups
established by the Executive Board**

**Statement by the Chair of the ad hoc working group on stakeholder engagement policy:
Mr. Patrick Egloff, Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland to UN-Habitat**

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for this opportunity to brief the Executive Board at this second session of 2022.

Excellencies:

As you may recall, in 2017, Governing Council Resolution 26/7, requested the Executive Director, in consultation with Member States, to develop a draft stakeholder engagement policy. Member States requested that we draw on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions. They also asked that we explore new mechanisms to promote transparency and find ways to effectively engage with civil society. The same resolution also recognized the need to improve the accreditation system. Subsequently, an ad hoc working group on stakeholder engagement policy chaired by the USA was established and held its first meeting in March 2018.

Furthermore, on 31 May 2019, at the First session of the UN-Habitat Assembly in decision 1/3 on arrangements for the transition towards the new governance structure of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, Member States decided on an exceptional basis, to entrust the Executive Board with continuing discussions on, and completing as soon as possible, the development of UN-Habitat stakeholder engagement policy. This follows the request by the Governing Council in its resolution 26/7, with a view to its implementation on the basis of consensus, and to submit the draft policy for consideration and possible approval by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its second session.

You may also recall the Executive Board decisions 2019/3, 20/6, 21/8, and 22/13, which provide information on the work and mandate of the ad hoc working group on the stakeholder engagement policy including the election of Switzerland as the Chair.

Excellencies:

At the First Session of the Executive Board of 2022, I briefed you on progress made and shared the roadmap for development of a stakeholder engagement policy, which was an outcome of the second meeting of the ad hoc working group on the stakeholder engagement policy held on 23 March 2022. We agreed to adopt a two-stage process as follows: (a) development of a stakeholder engagement policy on modalities for stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental processes by the second session of the Executive Board of 2022; and (b) preparation of accreditation procedure by the first session of the Executive Board in 2023.

Since then, the working group has held five meetings, and by invitation of the Chair, stakeholders including UN-Habitat advisory groups and thematic networks, attended the meetings of the ad hoc working group. Participating stakeholders were also given opportunities to contribute to the discussions, and their inputs were considered when improving the draft stakeholder engagement policy.

Today I will provide an update on (i) progress made so far and (ii) next steps as agreed by members of the working group.

(i) Progress with development of stakeholder engagement policy

The third meeting of the ad hoc working group was held in hybrid format on June 15, 2022. At this meeting, the Secretariat made a presentation based on the two background papers shared with member states on modalities for stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental processes in the UN system. The secretariat also shared the current practice by UN-Habitat when engaging stakeholders. Members of the ad hoc working group also reviewed and adopted the following proposed structure of the policy and further tasked the Secretariat with the responsibility of developing content for each of the nine chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Purpose of the Policy

Chapter 3: Guiding Principles

Chapter 4: Definition of Stakeholders

Chapter 5: Accreditation Criteria and Process (as a placeholder)

Chapter 6: Benefits for Accredited Stakeholders

Chapter 7: Responsibilities and obligations of accredited stakeholders

Chapter 8: The Role of UN-Habitat

Chapter 9: Funding

The fourth and fifth meetings of the ad hoc working group were held in hybrid format on September 21, 2022, and October 5, 2022 respectively. The focus of these two meetings was to review chapters 1- 4 and 5-9 of the Zero Draft of the stakeholder engagement policy. The Zero Draft prepared by the Secretariat was also informed by inputs from internal and external consultations. The Zero Draft also included a proposal to establish a stakeholder engagement mechanism to enhance transparency and meaningful stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental processes including through organised groups.

The Secretariat took into consideration all inputs from member states and also took into account views from stakeholders when developing Draft 1.0 of the stakeholder engagement policy. Draft 1.0 was discussed at the sixth and seventh meetings of the ad hoc working group held on 7 and 16 November 2022 respectively. Upon request of the ad hoc working group, the Secretariat further developed and shared an expanded background document on the UN-Habitat current stakeholder engagement practice.

(ii) Next Steps

Excellencies:

After this session of the Executive Board, the ad hoc working group will focus on the accreditation procedure, which will form chapter five of the stakeholder engagement policy. The working group will also consider a stakeholder engagement mechanism as an annex to the stakeholder engagement policy. To-date two stakeholders have shared options for a stakeholder engagement mechanism, and they will have an opportunity to present their proposals at the next meeting of the ad-hoc working group.

This may entail weekly meetings between now and the start of the Christmas break, and upon our return in mid-January 2023. Our target is to present the final draft of the stakeholder engagement policy for consideration by the Executive Board at its first session in 2023.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Member States for their active participation in the ad hoc working group meetings. I would also like to thank all the stakeholders who have provided inputs into this process.

Thank you, Excellencies

Thank you very much, Chair.