

**First Session of the UN-Habitat Executive Board in 2023**  
**Report of the Chair of the Ad hoc working group on Stakeholder Engagement Policy**

Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my pleasure to report back to you on the work of the ad hoc working group on a stakeholder engagement policy. Since the last session of the Executive Board in November 2022, the ad hoc working group met eleven times until 22 March 2023. The working group considered proposed options for a stakeholder engagement mechanism, held general discussions on accreditation procedure, completed the first reading and negotiation of the full draft, and started the second reading of the stakeholder engagement policy. Overall, the ad hoc working group has made progress, but there remains some work to be done before submitting the policy for adoption. An Executive Board decision is therefore needed on how to proceed between now and the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly in June 2023.

The working group supported the principle of self-organisation of stakeholders. At the seventh meeting of the working group held on 7 December 2022, Habitat International Coalition, the General Assembly of Partners, and a co-chair of the Stakeholder Advisory Group Enterprise (SAGE) shared proposals and suggestions for key elements of a stakeholder engagement mechanism. The Secretariat also shared options for a stakeholder engagement mechanism based on current practice. The ad hoc working group requested the Secretariat in consultation with stakeholders to prepare a stakeholder engagement mechanism.

The eighth and ninth meetings held on 17 January 2023 and 8 February 2023 focussed on accreditation procedure. On 15 February 2023 at its tenth meeting the working group started the first reading of a full draft stakeholder engagement policy, and reading continued until its seventeenth meeting held on 22 March 2023. Although meetings were held on a weekly and thereafter on bi-weekly basis, the ad hoc working group could not complete the task assigned before the first session of the Executive Board in 2023. The discussions were intensive and constructive, but the working group only reached the start of the second reading of the draft policy. The working group has made good progress in the definition of stakeholders, the benefits for accredited stakeholders as well as their responsibilities and obligations and in the definition of the role of UN-Habitat to mobilize and facilitate stakeholder engagement. There is broad consensus that the implementation of this policy should not have significant programme budget implications (PBI) and that the funding should be discussed and decided in the ordinary budget process, including the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters and the Executive Board. There is also broad agreement that the current accreditation practice has served its purpose. Yet more discussion is needed on the accreditation process for first time applicants that are not in consultative status with ECOSOC and whether an accreditation can be suspended or withdrawn and on what grounds.

Some open questions will have to be answered with regard to the accreditation of local authorities.

At the last session on 22 March 2023, the ad hoc working group considered options for the way forward. The overwhelming feeling was that the ad hoc working group should continue in order to conclude its work until the second session of the UN Habitat Assembly. I trust that the Executive Board will address this need.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As the outgoing Chair of the ad hoc working group on stakeholder engagement policy, I would like to express my deep appreciation to you all for the trust and support accorded to me, and for the dedication and commitment by Member States and stakeholders to the development of a UN-Habitat stakeholder engagement policy. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Executive Director of UN-Habitat and her Secretariat team and the Legal Officer for the tireless support rendered to me and the ad-hoc working group. It has been a pleasure to collaborate with you all.

I will leave Nairobi in June as part of the regular rotation in my foreign service. Much as I would have liked to complete this exercise, my pre-departure commitments in May will not allow me to dedicate the necessary time to successfully conclude this noble task. It is with a heavy heart that I leave unfinished business to the Executive Board.

Mr. Chair, I have the pleasure to inform the Executive Board that Mr. Antonio Miguel Luis, Alternate Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal, would be available to assume the chairmanship of this ad-hoc working group, if the Executive Board decides to extend its mandate. Mr. Antonio Miguel Luis has all the qualifications to lead this process to successful conclusion and I trust that delegates and stakeholders will support him and continue to work in the same constructive spirit.