



KENYA PERMANENT MISSION TO UN-HABITAT

STATEMENT THE CABINET SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT BY ZACHARIA M. NJERU, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON UN-HABITAT ON TUESDAY, 28TH MARCH, 2023

President of the UN-Habitat Assembly, Ms. Martha Delgado

Chair of the Executive Board, the Permanent Representative of Brazil H.E. Silvio Albuquerque,

Director General of the United Nations Office in Nairobi Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura,

Executive Director of UN-Habitat Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. I am delighted to join you at this First Session of the Executive Board for 2023. On behalf of the Government and the people of the Republic of Kenya, I take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to you all and invite you to enjoy our hospitality.
2. Allow me from the onset to congratulate the Executive Director, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif for her leadership, and the secretariat, the Bureau and the Adhoc Committees for the excellent preparations put in place for this meeting.
3. This session of the Executive Board is being held almost two months before the UN- Habitat assembly and it provides us with an excellent opportunity to reflect and review the work of UN-Habitat since its

restructuring and the establishment of the new governance structure in 2019.

4. The current three-tier governance structure made up of the UN-Habitat Assembly, the Executive Board and the Committee of Permanent Representative together, are intended to strengthen the accountability and transparency of UN-Habitat, and provide an effective oversight mechanism for UN-Habitat to enhance its normative and operational activities.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. This meeting of the Executive Board demonstrates the commitment that member states have to strengthen the accountability, transparency and effectiveness of this organization. Your participation in this meeting is key to ensuring continuity in the work of UN-Habitat and providing the much needed oversight and direction in the normative and operational work of Habitat.
6. In this regard, I am delighted to recognize the efforts of the Executive Director in fund-raising and note that for the first time in 12 years UN-Habitat has realized a surplus of USD 5.5 million in the non-earmarked foundation funds and also managed to repay some funds to the pending loan.
7. We are confident that this is signalling a new era towards our objective of having a revitalized and reinvigorated organization. We urge the Executive Director to continue introducing innovative ways of resource mobilisation and enhance the capacity of her team to continue leveraging on the political goodwill of Member States and donors to ensure sustainability in management of the finances of UN-Habitat.

8. Kenya is committed to paying our regular annual voluntary contribution to UN-Habitat. I note with concern that the voluntary contributions from member states remain low. I wish to urge Member States to honour their commitments by providing the much needed financial support especially in non-earmarked contributions, which are vital for the normative work of the agency.
9. With less than seven years to the timeline for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the need to build the capacity of Member States to report on progress made in their implementation of the New Urban Agenda cannot be gain said. It is regrettable that so far only 45 out of 193 countries have been able to report under the New Urban Agenda. This is a matter of concern, which calls for catalytic action that would assist member states, in implementing their reporting. Any additional resources that can be provided to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in particular SDG 11 should be a priority.
10. Kenya appreciates the support from UN-Habitat in implementation of its transformative agenda. Kenya has prioritized affordable housing as one of its projects. In December 2022 H.E President Ruto launched The Mavoko affordable Housing Project , a partnership between Government and the UN-Habitat The project is aimed at providing affordable homes to low and middle-income earners and will deliver 960 one-bedroom units, 2,400 two-bedroom units, 1,440 three-bedroom units, and 560 studio units.
11. Other transformative actions include; investment in diverse modes of urban transport and infrastructural projects, through implementation of the

Kenya Urban Support Program II (KUSP II), which covers 59 municipalities within 45 counties as well as the rehabilitation of Kenya's ecosystem and

particularly the cleaning of the Nairobi Rivers; addressing the marine ecosystem through the Blue Economy programme and championing for Building Climate Resilience of the Urban Poor (BCRUP) through the Kenya Urban Resilience Programme that focuses on, among other key areas, the establishment of economic stimulus projects.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. Kenya is proud to host the United Nations Offices in Nairobi that hosts both UNEP and the Headquarters of UN-Habitat among other UN Agencies.

The second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UNHA II) is scheduled to take place here in Nairobi on 5th-9th June, 2023. This is an important conference and I wish to assure you that the Government of Kenya as host of the conference is making all the efforts to ensure a successful assembly. We are certainly looking forward to receiving and welcoming your delegations to the Assembly and to the forthcoming Second open -ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives that will be held in advance to prepare for the conference.

13. Finally, as we embark on the session's Agenda that is before us, I wish you fruitful deliberations.

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION.

ZACHARIAH M. NJERU

CABINET SECRETARY