



Ethiopian delegation Speech at the First Session of 2024 UN Habitat Executive Board Meeting, from May 6 to 8, 2024

Mr. Chair,

Acting Executive Director,

Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Nigeria for becoming the Chair of the Executive Board. I would like also to thank staff of UN-HABITAT for their meticulous preparations leading up to this crucial meeting.

Mr. Chairperson,

Aligned with our collective vision 2063 for a prosperous Africa, prioritizing urbanization and sustainable development is not only advisable but imperative. While Africa currently stands as one of the least urbanized continents, the rapid acceleration of the pace of urbanization is indispensable. Projections indicate that over 60 percent of Africa's population will be expected to reside in urban areas by 2050. This demographic shift underscores the critical need to transform urbanization patterns and development strategies to achieve our overarching socio-economic and development objectives.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to provide a comprehensive update on Ethiopia's preparations for the first and historic African Urban Forum (AUF), which is crucial for the success of World Urban Forum Scheduled to be held in November 2024 at Cairo, Egypt.

The Forum is scheduled to convene at the place called ADWA Victory Memorial in Addis Ababa from September 4 to 6, 2024, under the theme "Sustainable Urbanization for Africa's Transformation - Agenda 2063." This forum is expected to bring together over 1500 African Cities' representatives, stakeholders and global partners, marking a crucial milestone in Ethiopia's commitment to sustainable urban development across the continent.

The AUF is placed at the highest level of the nation, and located in the cabinet of the Premier Minister. The preparatory work for the AUF has been diligently carried out under the direct leadership of Deputy Prime Minister of the FDRE. The team commenced the preparation process by developing the Concept Note for AUF, which outlines key decisions regarding the forum's dates, venue, theme, objectives, and anticipated outputs. Subsequently, an actionable AUF Action Plan and a comprehensive event program have been meticulously crafted with the invaluable support and collaboration of UN-Habitat and the [African Union Commission](#). These documents are designed not only to guide the proceedings of the forum but also to maximize the benefits and outcomes for African participants at all levels.

In addition to the effective implementation of the designed Action Plan, stakeholder engagement and coordination have been central to Ethiopia's preparations for the AUF. A robust stakeholder mapping exercise, coupled with clear delineation of responsibilities and budgeting, has been undertaken.

Recognizing the logistical complexities inherent in organizing such a high-profile event, administrative support and event management procedures have been

diligently put in place. This includes ongoing recruitment processes to ensure a capable and dedicated team has already been put in place to oversee the smooth execution of the forum.

Mr. Chairperson,

Communication and outreach efforts have also been accorded with high priority. A comprehensive communication strategy, coupled with targeted invitations, has been devised. All these endeavors are aimed at ensuring seamless coordination and alignment with the strategic directives guiding the AUF.

Mr. Chairperson,

As the host nation, Ethiopia takes immense pride in its longstanding tradition of hospitality and collaboration in organizing such type of far reaching and high value events. Our shared commitment and dedication to the success of this Pan-African event is unwavering.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to all Executive Board Members and participants to join us in Addis Ababa for this historic event. Your active participation and engagement is not only appreciated but essential for the success and long-lasting impact of the Africa Urban Forum.

Together, let us chart a course towards a united, peaceful, and prosperous Africa through sustainable urbanization and development.

I thank you all for your attention.