

**Minutes of the twenty-fourth Meeting of the
Ad hoc Working Group on Stakeholder Engagement Policy held on
27 March 2024 Conference Room 4, at 10.00am – 12.30pm**

Agenda item 1: Welcome remarks by the Chair.

The Chair of the Ad-hoc Working Group on stakeholder engagement policy welcomed member states attending in-person and online to the 24th Meeting of the Working Group.

The Working Group adopted the meeting agenda without modification:

1. Welcome remarks by the Chair.
2. Continuation of review of Draft Stakeholder Engagement Policy, Second Reading Version of 18 May 2023 dated 25 March 2024.
3. AOB.

Agenda Item 2: Continuation of review of Draft Stakeholder Engagement Policy, Second Reading Version of 18 May 2023 dated 25 March 2024.

The Chair reiterated the process – which entailed a general review of the paragraphs starting with Chapter one (1), except for Chapter five (5) on accreditation.

The Working Group extensively discussed paragraphs 1.1, 4.1, 4.2, and 6.2 c, d, e, and f.

The Chair referred to the procedural recommendations by the previous Chair of the Working Group (Switzerland), particularly recommendations (1) that the focus of the policy would be only on legislative meetings, and recommendation (3) on invitation of stakeholders to meetings of the Working Group. The Chair supported the invitation of stakeholders to future meetings of the Working Group.

The Chair, with the support of others suggested to focus on Alt 1 of paragraph 1.1. Four Member States recommended the inclusion of public meetings in Alt 1 as a key element. The UN-Habitat Legal Officer explained that rule thirty-eight (38) of the UN-Habitat rules of procedure and Governing Council resolution 26/7 were instructive on public meetings. Another Member state pointed out rule seventeen (17) as relevant to this matter.

Another Member State reminded Member States that the Working Group has discussed the policy over a prolonged period. The first Chair wanted all aspects of stakeholder engagement including the accreditation procedure. The second Chair made a creative approach for the stakeholder engagement policy to focus on intergovernmental meetings and based on UN-Habitat practice stakeholders at the World Urban Forum (WUF) and Urban October meetings do not need accreditation. The Member State emphasised that the policy should focus only on intergovernmental meetings.

After the above clarification, two Member states still recommended inclusion in paragraph 1.1 of non-legislative meetings, such as, the WUF into the scope of the stakeholder engagement policy and the deletion of footnote one to that effect to avoid contradictions in

the policy. Other Member States maintained that the focus of the policy should be only on legislative meetings.

The UN-Habitat Legal Officer in responding to a question related to host country agreements, explained that the Office of Legal Affairs in New York has responsibility to negotiate host agreements bearing in mind the UN Charter and the 1946 Diplomatic and Immunities Convention. He stated that host country agreements become treaties once signed.

In conclusion on paragraph 1.1, the Chair focussed on the two proposals – scope of the policy, and participation in public meetings. He recalled the decision made by the Working Group for the policy to focus on intergovernmental meetings and not WUF, Urban October. He also recalled that there were also rules on participation in public meetings. The Chair asked whether it will not mean exclusion when the idea was to balance both sides – public and private. He requested Member States to bear in mind these two questions as they contacted their capitals.

Another Member State asked Member States also to think about 1.4 and to formulate a policy which is consistent with the rules of procedure.

The Working Group agreed on paragraph 4.1 definition of the stakeholder engagement policy. The Working Group, when discussing paragraph 4.2 agreed in principle that Chapter 5 on accreditation should address all matters related to no objection basis and not anywhere else, hence a reference the Chapter 5 in this paragraph.

The Working Group extensively discussed 6.2 c, e, and f. The focus was on whether to retain 6.2c, and combine or delete 6.2 e and f.

A Member State referred to rule sixty-nine of the UN-Habitat Assembly rules of procedure in discussing 6.2c. The UN-Habitat Legal Officer suggested to stick to the rules of procedure – stakeholders make oral statements on matters within their expertise and scope.

Another Member State was emphatic on stakeholders making oral statements and not to speak or advise. Another Member State objected to deletion of 6.2(f) arguing that stakeholders should have a right to speak as is in the case with UNEP.

Two Member States suggested deletion of 6.2.e and f as they are a given and already covered under 1.4. Another member state suggested to combine 6.2c and f as they focus on the same thing. The Chair requested for permission to produce the Chairs proposal on c/f.

A Member State asked to be cautious and not to apply the rules of procedure selectively. Add including in discussions of decisions and resolutions.

The Chair would continue to conduct bilaterals on 1.1, 1.4, 4.2, and 6.2 if given the mandate would prepare a Chairs suggestion working with the Secretariat and the Legal Adviser.

Agenda item 3: Any Other Business.

There being no request from the floor the Chair adjourned the meeting at 12.33pm.