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Item 9 of the provisional agenda***

**Briefing by the Executive Director on the implementation of
all resolutions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly**

Implementation of all resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides a summary update on the implementation of the 15 resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its first two sessions, held in 2019 and 2023. The present report, drafted for the second session of the 2024 Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), covers progress made since the first session of the 2024 Executive Board in May, as well as any significant activities anticipated to take place until December 2024. Notably, the implementation of most resolutions is constrained by limited funding.

II. Implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its first session, held in 2019

A. Resolution 1/1

United Nations Human Settlements Programme strategic plan for the period 2020–2023

2. Pursuant to resolution 1/1, the implementation period of the 2020–2023 strategic plan was extended to 2025. An independent midterm review of the strategic plan of UN-Habitat for the period 2020–2025 by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (HSP/EB.2024/4) has been completed.

B. Resolution 1/2

United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements

3. The implementation of resolution 1/2 continues, with the focus shifting to advocacy and partnerships. Through funding provided by the United Nations trust fund for human security, UN-Habitat co-developed an urban safety monitoring tool with mayors, academia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Human Security Unit, inter alia. Urban safety monitoring improves

* HSP/EB.2024/14.

the quality and consistency of municipal safety policies and programming. UN-Habitat also developed an e-learning course entitled “Urban safety and human security in cities”, which presents the human security approach in a practical format for municipal practitioners, civil servants, urban planners, non-governmental and community-based organizations and other stakeholders. This phase of the project is now operationally closed.

4. A second phase of the project is being developed to further mainstream the human security approach in UN-Habitat support for the development of human security plans. Through the Global Network on Safer Cities, efforts will be made to implement the urban safety monitoring tool and promote the e-learning course to support the development of inclusive urban safety and security policies at the city level. It is hoped that the human security approach will be utilized by country teams to implement the UN-Habitat strategic plan 2026–2029, including through joint activities with other United Nations entities.

C. Resolution 1/3 Enhancing capacity-building for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

5. In response to resolution 1/3, UN-Habitat continues to work towards achieving sustainable capacity-building at scale. An in-house needs survey conducted over the period May–June 2024 resulted in several initiatives, including the development of a help desk run by the Capacity Development and Training Unit. The help desk provides: (a) an online repository platform featuring tools for designing and implementing capacity-building interventions; (b) internal capacity-building and e-learning support; (c) a series of webinars focused on fundamental concepts, methodologies and tools; and (d) project development support through the review of capacity-building-related components at the project design stage.

6. In addition, two research papers are being developed, in collaboration with the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies (Kingdom of the Netherlands), with a focus on methodologies for building institutional competency frameworks and self-diagnostic tools for capacity-building needs assessments at the national level for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, guided by the progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals (e.g. Goal 11). The development of pro-poor learning tools, including through microlearning platforms such as WhatsApp-based training courses, is being explored.

7. Annual training programmes in collaborations with regional centres of excellence – such as the International Urban Training Center (Republic of Korea), the Centre for Liveable Cities (Singapore), universities and private-sector partners – remain focused on the delivery of Sustainable Development Goals at the local level, especially for low-income countries.

D. Resolution 1/4 Achieving gender equality through the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements

8. In response to resolution 1/4 on achieving gender equality, UN-Habitat is developing the innovative Women-led Cities initiative, in collaboration with the United Nations Capital Development Fund. This initiative is aimed not only at empowering women to take up leadership roles in cities, ensuring access to safe and gender-violence free spaces, but also to enhance female economic empowerment and female leadership at various levels of governance. In addition, a human rights, gender and social inclusion handbook for project managers is expected to be launched internally by the end of 2024.

9. In line with UN-Habitat commitments under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, progress has been made towards systematically institutionalizing the United Nations Gender Equality Marker, expected to be fully rolled out by the end of the year.

10. Partnerships with other United Nations entities and stakeholders continue to be strengthened, in particular through the upcoming twelfth session of the World Urban Forum to be held in Cairo and other relevant gender-equality-focused events and discussions. Funding for gender equality and women’s empowerment at UN-Habitat, however, remains critical.

E. Resolution 1/5 Enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlement

11. Responding to resolution 1/5, UN-Habitat organized an expert group meeting in April 2024 in Jinja, Uganda, gathering global experts from academia, government and global organizations, on the role of intermediary cities in bridging the urban-rural divide and enhancing territorial resilience.¹ UN-Habitat also contributed to events by the World Farmers Markets Coalition, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), focusing on food systems and urban-rural linkages.

12. In collaboration with the University of Nairobi, UN-Habitat trained more than 20 government officials, in Nakuru County, Kenya, on integrating urban-rural linkages into urban planning and contributed to global training sessions led by the Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements, leading to updated capacity-development materials.

13. A memorandum of understanding was signed with Shanghai University to advance urban-rural linkages and revitalization in China and beyond, along with renewed agreements with FAO, the University of Nairobi and collaborations with Nature For Cities and the Observatory on Digital Communication.

14. UN-Habitat developed additional knowledge products, including the 7th edition of the urban-rural linkages newsletter,² a primer on urban-rural linkages and land (including migration), a strategy paper on advancing urban-rural linkages through digital solutions for food systems, a guide for cooperation in intermediary cities for enhanced territorial development, the special (4th) edition of the compendium of case studies on urban-rural linkages and a report on global urban-rural trends and insights.

III. Implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its adjourned second session, held in 2023

A. Resolution 2/1 International guidelines on people-centred smart cities

15. Pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 2/1, UN-Habitat advanced the drafting of the international guidelines on people-centred smart cities through an extensive consultation process involving global, regional and multi-stakeholder groups. It ensures that the guidelines are informed by diverse perspectives related to challenges and opportunities offered by smart cities.

16. In April 2024, the inaugural expert working group meeting for the development of the guidelines with the 31 global experts nominated by Member States was held in Strasbourg, France. At the meeting, the group outlined the structure of the guidelines and identified critical elements to be captured. The group continues to provide expert insights to UN-Habitat through monthly meetings.

17. UN-Habitat also held consultations with representatives of academia, civil society organizations, and local and regional governments from June to August, with consultations with regional experts and private-sector and international organization representatives planned to be held by the end of 2024.

18. Simultaneously, a state-of-the-art assessment is being conducted by Edinburgh Napier University to provide empirical evidence on emerging trends, challenges and opportunities in urban digital transformation. The *World Smart Cities Outlook 2024* report, to be launched during the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum, will provide data-driven foundations for the guidelines, reflecting current realities. See document HSP/EB.2024/INF/15 for additional details on these activities.

¹ <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/expert-group-meeting-concludes-with-strong-calls-to-enhance-the-role-of-intermediary-cities-in-bridging-urban-rural-and-urban-nature-connections/>.

² Available at <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/download/url-7th-newsletter/>.

**B. Resolution 2/2
Accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030**

19. UN-Habitat, with core partners and in close partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development, has developed the Transformative Action Design Toolkit, responding to the 10 key actions outlined in resolution 2/2. This is a first step to the multi-partnership guidelines requested in paragraph 8 of the resolution.
20. UN-Habitat signed a memorandum of understanding with the Secretariat of the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States to advocate for the implementation of the resolution in their 79 Member States.
21. Furthermore, in partnership with the Government of South Africa and the Secretariat of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, UN-Habitat is facilitating the development of a subregional implementation framework. This process of development of the SADC regional framework was launched and endorsed by the Council of Ministers of SADC in 2024.
22. With the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and Slum Dwellers International, UN-Habitat is developing an initiative, “For Resilient Children”, aimed at child-responsive slum transformation targeting an estimated 500 million children living in slums and informal settlements.
23. Pursuant to paragraph 7, UN-Habitat has worked with the Informality Task Force of the Cities Alliance, which it co-leads with Habitat for Humanity and the Government of South Africa, to launch a series of working meetings on operationalizing the Global Action Plan on Accelerating the Transformation of Informal Settlements and Slums. In the absence of voluntary funding, implementation is being supported by project funding, as opportunities allow, and through the availability of limited core staff time.

**C. Resolution 2/3
World Cleanup Day**

24. In response to resolution 2/3, a note verbale was sent on 14 May to the permanent and observer missions to UN-Habitat in Nairobi and to the United Nations in New York, informing them that the General Assembly had established World Cleanup Day. Member States were invited to express interest in hosting the 2024 observance by 10 June 2024. After reviewing all expressions of interest received by the deadline, UN-Habitat announced in a note verbale dated 15 July 2024 that the inaugural World Cleanup Day observance would take place in Tromsø, Norway. The event is supported by the Norwegian Retailers’ Environment Fund and organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, GRID-Arendal, the FRAM - High North Research Centre for Climate and the Environment and Let’s Do It World.
25. Themed “Arctic Cities and Marine Litter,” World Cleanup Day 2024, to take place on 20 September, included round-table discussions, clean-up activities and updates from diverse locations. In addition, UN-Habitat was to hold a related event in New York on 24 September during the Summit of the Future.
26. A note verbale will be sent in the fourth quarter of 2024 inviting Member States to express interest in hosting the 2025 and 2026 observances.

**D. Resolution 2/4
Biodiverse and resilient cities – mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning**

27. In response to resolution 2/4, UN-Habitat, with the financial support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, has advanced the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning. With the “Hotspot Stoplight” (the centrepiece of the toolkit), open-source data are used to project urban expansion and the risks of biodiversity loss and climate change to 2050. Data collection and ground-truthing for the Stoplight were carried out in seven municipalities in the metropolitan region of San José.
28. A related expert group meeting brought together more than 25 experts from around the world, including representatives of ministries, cities and civil society, to discuss challenges and share practices contributing to more biodiverse and resilient cities.

29. In parallel, UN-Habitat presented the Hotspot Spotlight at the 2024 Understanding Risk Global Forum held in Japan in June and is discussing with the World Bank how it could be refined and scaled up.
30. Internally, UN-Habitat is exploring the modular application of the Hotspot Spotlight project through other existing tools and has responded to multiple calls for proposals that would fund related technical advisory services.
31. The Hotspot Spotlight project will also be presented at a side event at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Cali, Colombia, and at the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum, in the fourth quarter of 2024. To date, Member States have not provided funding that would enable the establishment of an advisory group, as requested in paragraph 2 of resolution 2/4. For additional updates on the implementation of resolution 2/4, see document HSP/EB.2024/INF/16.

**E. Resolution 2/5
Enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience**

32. To advance resolution 2/5, UN-Habitat continues to organize relevant meetings, including at the ministerial level, and has published *Urban Content of NDCs: Local Climate Action Explored through In-depth Country Analyses: 2024 Report*, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and the University of Southern Denmark. It was launched at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Bonn in June, and serves as a foundation for understanding the urban content of nationally determined contributions and ways to strengthen it under the Paris Agreement. UN-Habitat is strongly engaging with the presidency of the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in preparation for the third ministerial meeting on urbanization and climate change.
33. Pursuant to paragraph 1, UN-Habitat has further strengthened linkages between climate change and urbanization in its work. A regional programme document for Asia and the Pacific has been prepared, and implementation has begun; a similar programme document is under development for the Africa region. However, core funding limitations have resulted in personnel reduction at headquarters, constraining the development of normative tools and direct support to Member States.
34. The operationalization of the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative was endorsed at the first session of the 2024 Executive Board. The decision highlights the setting up of a Secretariat, linking SURGe with other initiatives and the provision of technical advisory services to Member States. Resource mobilization is ongoing and has been successful in support for specific activities, such as the ministerial meeting at the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, but not yet for setting up the secretariat. The engagement with the Coalition for High Ambition Multi-Level Partnerships, launched at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is ongoing. UN-Habitat also supports the United Nations-wide engagement in support of Member States in strengthening nationally determined contributions.

**F. Resolution 2/6
Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals**

35. In response to resolution 2/6, UN-Habitat is currently supporting 22 countries in Sustainable Development Goal localization processes. Pursuant to paragraph 2 (a), UN-Habitat is partnering with national counterparts to develop Sustainable Development Goal localization country frameworks – a blueprint to guide policy reforms and the local delivery of the Goals. In addition, UN-Habitat co-organized 13 events at the 2024 high-level political forum on sustainable development and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security of Italy to develop a joint global initiative under the Group of Seven (G7) mandate: the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs. UN-Habitat launched the training module “Planning for Change with the SDGs” and is finalizing four e-learning SDG Cities courses.
36. Pursuant to paragraph 4 (a), an additional 8 cities have applied the urban monitoring framework, while a further 12 have received capacity-building support. The Data and Analytics Unit is mapping urban monitoring framework open data availability for capital cities globally, also to inform the *World Cities Report* and the 2026 quadrennial report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

37. The Local2030 Coalition, chosen as one of the United Nations high-impact initiatives, presented its first progress report, showcasing progress towards its targets, at the 2024 high-level political forum. With funding support from the Government of Spain, the Local2030 Coalition and the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund launched a call focused on Sustainable Development Goal transitions, resulting in 27 approved proposals for country-level implementation by United Nations country teams. Likewise, the localization marker is successfully identifying programmes that significantly contribute to Sustainable Development Goal localization within the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund portfolio. As a result, approximately \$24 million is being allocated to programmes with a localization marker, driving the Goals forward locally.

G. Resolution 2/7 Adequate housing for all

38. The implementation of resolution 2/7 has significantly advanced. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Executive Board, at its first session of 2024, approved the draft agenda and dates of the first session of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on adequate housing for all, to be held from 9 to 11 December 2024 in Nairobi. (Details are available in document HSP/EB.2024/17.) A communication has been sent to the permanent and observer missions to UN-Habitat in Nairobi and to the United Nations in New York announcing the meeting. The secretariat is finalizing the pre-session working documents, to be shared with Member States by 28 October 2024.

39. Pursuant to paragraph 8, a needs assessment is being conducted that will inform the development of the proposed platform on adequate housing for all, projected to be launched in 2025. The platform is to provide a broad range of policy best practices and examples that support the progressive realization of adequate housing and facilitate collaboration and informed decision-making on adequate housing for all.

40. In addition, UN-Habitat is facilitating a political briefing, organized by France, in the margins of the World Urban Forum. This event is aimed at strengthening and broadening the coalition of countries championing the implementation of the resolution.

41. Limited voluntary funding has been received and implementation is being supported largely by project funding, as opportunities allow, and through the limited core staff time available.

H. Resolution 2/8 Urban planning and sustainable infrastructure

42. In response to resolution 2/8, the integration of sustainable infrastructure tools and knowledge bases is ongoing, with the addition of sustainable urban mobility elements on the Our City Plans digital platform. Resources have been secured and work initiated, with a detailed outline already in place for the conceptual document linking spatial planning, finance and sustainable urban mobility (including aspects of own-source revenue, land-based finance, land management and financial instruments for different types of sustainable infrastructure). This document will clarify the position of UN-Habitat on the topic and will provide a strong basis for the contextualization of the instruments and their use to support national and local governments in integrating spatial planning and sustainable infrastructure, linking such integration to concrete financial mechanisms.

43. Pursuant to paragraph 6, further consultations have been undertaken with Member States in relation to the concrete implementation of the resolution, with a specific focus on developing countries. Decentralization of the urban labs is supporting sustainable integrated urban planning and infrastructure development initiatives as the labs work with regional and country UN-Habitat offices to develop portfolios, share knowledge and consolidate programmes on spatial planning, infrastructure and finance.

44. Pursuant to paragraph 5, discussion on the financing of urban development and infrastructure, including guidance and information from financing institutions, is advancing, with the engagement of UN-Habitat in the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development preparatory process (Addis Ababa, July 2024) and joining of the Global Commission for Urban SDG Finance under the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

45. A corporate event is planned at the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum to outline how the platform, urban labs and financial instruments can support national and local governments in accessing international finance and increasing own-source revenue for urban planning and sustainable infrastructure.

I. Resolution 2/9
Creation of a human settlements resilience framework for early warning, foresight, risk reduction, crisis response, and post-crisis recovery and reconstruction

46. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of resolution 2/9, UN-Habitat continues to work towards the development of a comprehensive operational resilience framework for early warning, foresight, risk reduction, crisis response and post-crisis recovery and reconstruction. An initial concept note was produced and disseminated within UN-Habitat. Once internally enriched and agreed, the concept note will be shared with external partners for further consultation and enhancement. UN-Habitat aims to produce a zero-draft framework prior to the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum (November 2024), for broader mobilization and discussion. Progress to date is limited as no extra resources have been mobilized for the production of the framework and the implementation of the resolution, including the emergency response fund.

J. Resolution 2/10
Equitable financing and effective monitoring of the implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly

47. Through its resolution 2/10, the UN-Habitat Assembly seeks to improve the funding of underfunded resolutions by establishing the urban action funding window as a new funding mechanism, complemented by regular reporting on the implementation of resolutions. In 2023, the funding window was established within the financial system of UN-Habitat, and its terms of reference were endorsed by the Executive Board in its decision 2023/6,³ adopted at its third session of 2023.

48. In 2024, the contribution agreement template was revised to include the elective transfer of project balances to the urban action funding window, with explicit reference to resolution 2/10, decision 2023/6 of the Executive Board and to the terms of reference for the funding window. Engagement with donors on such transfers will be supported through advocacy and communication.

49. The tracking system for the implementation of resolutions is expected to be available by the end of 2024 and will be updated semi-annually.

³ HSP/EB.2023/23.