

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY H. E. AMB BOUMEDIENE MAHI, ON BEHALF OF
THE AFRICAN GROUP AT THE SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF
THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENT PROGRAMME**

UNON, 4-6 DECEMBER 2024

**Mr. Chair, Madame Executive Director, Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Algeria has the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the African Group.

At the outset, allow me, Mr. Chair, to extend a warm welcome to Madame Executive Director on her assignment to this vital role and for her participation in this Executive Board session. We commend her dedicated efforts to enhance the work of UN-Habitat in an inclusive and transparent manner. The African Group remains fully committed to supporting these endeavors.

We also commend you, Mr. Chair, and the Secretariat for the diligent preparation of this session and the timely circulation of the related documents.

Mr. Chair,

The African Group takes note of the Report of the Executive Board on the work of its first session of 2024. We also acknowledge the reports presented by the Chairs of the Ad-Hoc Working Groups on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative Matters, and on the Development of Stakeholders' Engagement Policy. The Group commends the Chair of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative Matters for preparing the draft outcomes for this session.

Similarly, we appreciate the efforts of the Chair of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Development of Stakeholders' Engagement Policy. We encourage the continuation of work on this document in an inclusive and transparent manner, ensuring that all Member States' views are duly considered.

Mr. Chair,

The African Group takes note of the Annual Report for 2023 on the Strategic Plan for the period 2020–2025. We extend our gratitude to Madame Executive Director and the Secretariat for the update on the development of the Strategic Plan for 2026–2029. We firmly believe that this new Strategic Plan will serve as a cornerstone in addressing the urban crisis and eradicating informal settlements and slums, particularly in Africa.

In this regard, we call for the Strategic Plan to prioritize strong mechanisms for implementation and capacity building in territorial planning, management, monitoring, and reporting, especially for developing countries. It should include a clear vision for resource mobilization, with a particular emphasis on accessible and affordable housing to ensure adequate living conditions for all. Financing for housing projects should not be limited to investments that impose further economic burdens on developing countries.

The Strategic Plan must also account for varying levels of development and regional contexts. It should broaden its scope beyond urban centers to address rural development by creating jobs and providing essential services to the most vulnerable populations. Clear, actionable measures with measurable objectives should underpin these efforts to ensure effective policy implementation and monitoring.

Additionally, the terminology used in the Strategic Plan should avoid contentious or divisive language, such as underserved “communities”, “gender based violence” and “marginalized communities/groups

Mr. Chair,

The African Group extends high commendation to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the 1st African Urban Forum and the 12th World Urban Forum, respectively. We strongly urge Madame Executive Director and the Secretariat to incorporate the outcomes of the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Cairo Call to Action into the Strategic Plan for 2026–2029, reflecting both regional and global priorities.

Similarly, regional and national urban forums must be acknowledged for their role in highlighting diverse needs and priorities based on varying capacities. These forums pave the way for implementing the New Urban Agenda effectively.

We also stress the need for UN-Habitat to strengthen its presence in Africa by establishing National or Sub-Regional Offices. In this regard, Agenda 2063 of the African Union should serve as a guiding framework for integrating urban priorities into UN-Habitat’s operational activities in the region.

Mr. Chair,

We acknowledge progress in implementing UN-Habitat Assembly resolutions and emphasize the importance of equitable implementation that aligns with different contexts, needs, and priorities. We request the

Secretariat to keep Member States regularly updated on the status of these resolutions.

The African Group also appreciates the Programme's efforts in executing its normative and operational activities, particularly in areas affected by conflicts and disasters. We call on Member States to enhance their non-earmarked contributions to bolster UN-Habitat's capacity to address urban crises effectively.

Mr. Chair,

The African Group takes note of the draft work program of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the UN-Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2025. With regards to the staffing, the Group requests the Executive Director to provide an update on the reinforcement of human resources in the Regional Office for Africa (ROfA).

The Group requests a personnel breakdown at ROfA, particularly at the professional levels (P1 to P5).

The African Group further requests that clear criteria and requirements covering different aspects be defined for the opening of national or sub-regional offices.

Finally, we take note of the organizational effectiveness assessments conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN). We urge the implementation of their findings and recommendations to improve the Programme's efficiency and performance.

Mr. Chair,

The African Group remains committed to supporting you, Madame Executive Director, and the Secretariat. We look forward to engaging with all delegations to ensure a successful session.

Thank you.