

**DRAFT SUMMARY NOTES FROM THE FOURTH MEMBER STATES RETREAT  
ON THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2029 HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2025**

**Session I: Proposed outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2026-2029**

**REACTIONS BY MEMBER STATES**

**ALGERIA (for Africa Group)**

- Congratulates UN-Habitat for convening the retreat
- Appreciates the strategic focus
- Requests to add layers of the following: normative and technical guidance on participatory and inclusive, evidence-based urban planning
- Focused and concrete outcomes needed, especially demand in countries most in need; we should have indicators to measure support for developing countries
- Good reporting will help to better measure the Strategic Plan
- Outcomes should also include housing affordability
- Outcomes should capture intermediary areas of the main focus especially basic services
- Believes that strategy should focus on intermediary cities and rural areas in terms of access to services and affordable housing
- African Urban Forum and WUF outcome documents can provide outcomes and indicators
- Controversial terminology: Marginalised people and vulnerable groups. We should point out clear categories of the vulnerable groups targeted by Strategic Plan. We should avoid generalities; ALT would be acceptable: instead of gender-based violence, use violence against women and girls

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

- Grateful to the team for the development of the document
- Supports shorter and more concise document
- Noncontroversial document is needed; some inputs are inconsistent with many Member States and should not be in the Strategic Plan
- Including controversial elements that are not in the mandate of UN-Habitat will dilute the main topics and delay the approval process as consensus is required
  - o Interconnection of peace and security in paragraphs 28 and 30: The language has evolved, but solutions for peace are relevant to UN-Habitat. We cannot support mentioning of peace and stability
  - o We should avoid using the language of interconnection. It may not offer anything useful.
  - o Avoid using non-agreed terms on vulnerable groups as Algeria has said
  - o Footnote 45 is noting all genders. It should be explicit and not carry any unintended meaning. There needs to be a clear definition of what gender is. We support referring to men and women and the use of gender equality
  - o The notion of marginalised groups cannot be supported, it is innocent at a first glance but is also referred to as LGBTQ community in NY

- Climate: if UN-Habitat wants to make difference, there should be a focus on adaptation to climate change in cities. UN-Habitat has limited resources to address mitigation in the urban rural continuum.

## COLOMBIA

- Reiterates support for the draft
- Recognises the inclusion of coordination with other UN entities
- Supports a well-designed results framework, and the inclusion of the results framework in the document
- Supports the impact areas
- Encourages outcomes aligned with SDG 11 and NUA
- Welcomes the reduction of indicators
- Monitoring indicators: beyond numbers, suggesting having indicators which are not quantitative only (e.g., capturing community participation to transform slums).
- Stronger focus on urban rural linkages needed
- Suggests considering how the Strategic Plan will be implemented regionally through action plans
- Questions on outcomes 1 and 2: How are you planning to monitor the word “effective “? It appears more aspirational and is difficult to measure; suggests reformulation, e.g. outcome 1: “Spatial development plans that improve access to services and reduce inequality”

## MOZAMBIQUE

- The document is a good base of discussion
- Need to simplify and keep concise
- Need for alignment of the Strategic Plan with national housing and urban plans of Member States
- Climate change affects Mozambique, especially tropical cyclones and floods We cannot overemphasise the effects of the same. We need to put in place actions to alleviate the effects of climate change
- Strategic Plan should guarantee measures and actions that ensure the delivery of affordable, resilient and adequate housing, especially for the youth, the eldest and people living in informal settlements
- Emphasizes the need for the Strategic Plan to ensure the quality of the housing settlements in accordance with the level of climate vulnerability of each region and country
- The strategy must embrace the linkage between urban and rural areas
- Need for Strategic Plan to prioritize capacity building and resource mobilization for housing
- The Strategic Plan should contribute to poverty reduction and should support interconnectivity between rural and urban areas in terms of trade and connectivity
- The Strategic Plan should prioritize capacity building and financial mobilization

## NIGERIA

- Aligns with Algeria ´s statements

- On paragraph 39 on secure housing and land tenure rights which are particularly vital for women and girls, our concern is practical. In the implementation of the Strategic Plan, we want to know more about the HOW. How does UN-Habitat want to engage to protect rights of women and girls. This should be made clear in the engagement process with Member States

#### IRAN

- On the means of implementation: the Strategic Plan should allow for checking on financial challenges and how to overcome the challenges, and how to access resources needed
- The financial part of the Strategic Plan should be strengthened to make it responsive to the needs of the Member States
- The Strategic Plan should be aligned to the needs of developing countries
- On the terminology, as raised by Russia and the Africa group, we need to return to agreed terminology in New York. In terms of vulnerable groups and marginalised people, based on culture and Islamic teaching, we recognise women and girls

#### EGYPT

- Aligns with the comments from Algeria for the Africa Group
- The Strategic Plan must be responsive to needs of developing countries
- Suggests to align the Strategic Plan with outcomes from the World Urban Forum and the African Urban Forum, and reflect this in a more comprehensive manner
- Supports keeping the Strategic Plan concise
- We cannot accept use of controversial language: marginalised groups is not accepted as it is defined in footnote 45; we must revert to agreed upon language, the document should abide by UN agreed terminology and expressions

#### AZERBAIJAN

- Referring to comments made from Russia, there is a direct intrinsic link between urban development and housing and climate change. Yet, how it should be worded can be worked on further
- while housing may not be directly linked to peace and stability, it is of paramount importance because issues related to taking care of slums, making sure that people have access to affordable housing are contributing directly to social compact
- Announces USD 150.000 non-earmarked funding for UN-Habitat

#### SAUDI ARABIA

- Draws attention of Member States on the need to a successful 2026-2029 plan in response to global challenges it outlines
- In this context we recall the Quality of life initiative
- We recall the Cairo Call for Action and outcomes of WUF to build coalitions through a Quality of life lens
- Integrating Quality of life into Strategic Plan would enhance key elements to achieve desired impact

#### PORTUGAL

- Thanks the team for the evolution of the document

- There are not a lot of changes since the Executive Board in December.
- we see the document in general terms mainly concluded, it is now about refinement of language
- Recognise the need for the Strategic Plan to answer to needs in developing countries, without forgetting UN-Habitat is a global agency and thus needs to answer to all Member States
- The outcomes are a good basis, welcome as they are. Shares observation of outcome 1: heavy when compared to other means of implementation. There is space for refinement of language. However, this can be better understood when we see the indicators
- Language: the paragraph on human rights-based approach disappeared and is diluted to remaining paragraphs. However, it was good where it was placed originally
- Paragraph 36: what does the term sustainable territories and urban development encompass? Is this still within UN-Habitat's mandate?
- On peace and security and climate change, we are in agreement with Azerbaijan. UN-Habitat has a lot to offer for climate change mitigation (e.g., help cities to better develop transportation systems)
- Basis for language must be NUA.

#### BRAZIL

- Expresses gratitude for the new draft and its critical role for years to come
- Commends continued alignment with NUA and SDGs
- Appreciates the sustained focus on housing, land, and basic services for all and the transformation of informal settlements and slums; it resonates strongly with Brazil's priorities
- As mentioned at the EB, we note with concern that impact area 2 is still on humanitarian crisis context. We note that other delegations have echoed Brazil's concern. The new Strategic Plan should address all urban crises, not only humanitarian crisis
- Expanded draft on Resource Mobilisation is appreciated.
- Encourages UN-Habitat to provide more practical examples to support the implementation strategies and a more structured monitoring
- Encourages a more structured monitoring framework, including indicators linked to the SDGs and the Global Urban Monitoring Framework
- Currently, the Strategic Plan does not allocate responsibility to the actors involved
- Committed to engage constructively with UN-Habitat to provide support needed for UN-Habitat to achieve its mandate

#### COSTA RICA

- Comments on agreed language concerns: Agreed language is already used in other UN documents, especially UNODC and UN women which were developed in an intergovernmental process.
- Recommends not to deep-dive into definitions

#### GERMANY

- Thanks for the draft which we see it as advanced draft as outcome of evolution and reiteration
- Good to see requests being addressed
- Commends the clarity of the document as a whole, it is now better accessible

- Good to see analysis of other Strategic Plans
- Agreed language should be kept: Germany supports UN-Habitat role in promoting gender equality (women and girls); Notes that use of standard UN language like gender-based violence and vulnerable or marginalised groups, is not only justified but necessary.
- Global housing crisis: this terminology needs to be better understood; how is it used elsewhere in UN system?
- Interconnectedness of means of implementation, impact areas and strategic focus has to be better elaborated
- Appreciates to know if the strategic plan could delineate more clearly UN-Habitat role from other key actors, such as the Cities Alliance, particularly on issues such as informal settlement or addressing the needs of the urban poor

#### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- Appreciates the opportunity to come together and the Strategic Plan evolution
- Impact areas should be readjusted to align with UN-Habitat mandate since they do not clearly identify the urban or subnational linkage to UN-Habitat's mandate. E.g., climate change and environment are within UNEP's mandate. The impact area should highlight the connection to UN-Habitat's urban mandate.
- Equitable and inclusive prosperity: is there an agreed understanding of them?
- Outcomes are well aligned to UN-Habitat's mandate. Outcome 1 could be simplified as this document will not just be leveraged by urban planners and practitioners and policy makers

#### EUROPEAN UNION

- Reiterates: bring back stronger language on human rights approach
- Sustainable urbanization is an important part of the mandate; we support the housing focus. However, it is important to be clear in the impact areas on sustainable urbanization
- Urban areas are economic engines: need to stress more that it relates to prosperity; this needs to be better connected
- Agrees with Germany, that linkages between means of implementation and impact areas must be better explained
- The outcomes have to be more precise
- The results framework should be defined in action plans; when will we discuss this?

#### PERU

- Commends the Strategic Plan as a good document with good outcomes
- Aligned with NUA and SDGs
- Helpful that it is focused on housing, land and basic services for all.
- Supports its mention of climate change, poverty and gender equality
- Can support terminology of gender-based violence and empowerment of marginalised groups

#### MEXICO

- Is not in a position to support deletion of gender-based violence

- The seven elements of adequate housing, with tenure of land as one of them, is also related to women 's rights, marginalised people and vulnerable groups
- Supports terminology agreed in NUA
- In relation to climate change, the vulnerability language cannot be neglected
- Supports the request to reinstate the text in the human rights-based approach

#### NETHERLANDS

- Agrees with Portugal that most of the document is there, it is now about refinement
- The Strategic Plan must say more on how outcomes can be measured, and how implementation will be set up
- On the role and mandate there has been improvement but it can be even further enhanced, especially in the impact areas, by using action-oriented formulations
- an integrated approach is mentioned frequently, for example of human rights and climate change. The draft should mention those action areas of other agencies

#### FRANCE

- Reiterates support to approach and focus, impact areas and means of implementation
- Compared to previous version it is comprehensive and the priorities are clear; it is encompassing all work by different divisions
- the length keeps growing and there is room for reduction, especially on the mandate and role. Here the history can be removed without harm
- Why has there been an inversion between focus and impact? It is more logical to start with the strategic focus
- an equitable approach between the three impact areas is needed in length

#### UNITED KINGDOM

- Thankful for the changes made. Agrees that we are nearly there
- Document needs to be as clear as possible to external readership
- Global challenges are clearer now
- In the mandate part, we can shorten by removing the history
- The strategic focus should come up earlier
- Reminds that on terminology, we are not here to renegotiate
- Brevity is needed: impact areas are now clearer but a lot of narrative is already mentioned in the section on global challenges
- Supports bringing back human rights approach as it is already stated in the NUA
- There is no need to explain the SDGs

#### RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- Reminds that consensus needed for approval of the Strategic Plan
- The human rights approach is outside of UN-Habitat 's mandate
- Regarding marginalised groups, there is no agreed definition of this term
- The Strategic Plan should not define these terms unless they are consensually agreed upon

#### NIGERIA

- Aligns with Russia on marginalised groups and supports their stand on this issue

#### EGYPT

- Marginalised groups are mentioned only once in the NUA, and in conjunction with homelessness. This is not aligned with footnote 45.
- The Strategic Plan is not the space to make definitions

#### ALGERIA

- Some language is already used in other fora and documents, but there is no agreed upon definition
- Recommends to mention exactly which are the vulnerable groups targeted (disabled people, women and children) to avoid this discussion

#### IRAN

- Terminology: we use the terms here and there in all forums
- It is not in the hand of few countries to change the position
- This is not constructive and was already raised in discussions of NUA
- Are we ready to include human rights everywhere? We need to be constrained within mandate of UN-Habitat

#### PORTUGAL

- Notes a dilemma: for some delegations is not acceptable to have certain language, whilst other countries cannot accept the Strategic Plan without it
- We suggest to go for constructive ambiguity
- Suggests to go with language formulated in the NUA

#### RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- Constructive ambiguity is a wide intention, including things which are not acceptable to us.
- Ambiguity not an option here and many delegations made their position clear.

### [Session II: Implementation and monitoring of the Strategic Plan 2026-2029](#)

#### **REACTIONS BY MEMBER STATES**

##### PORTUGAL

- There is a need for symmetry between field and HQ, between normative and operational; Need for strong HQ to avoid proliferation of normative tools and strengthen accountability, but also need for impact on the ground
- Can you elaborate on responsibilities and two tiers: alignment between programme structure and organisational structure.
- On the transition between subprogrammes and new workstreams – what is the difference between them? Will there be sub-programmes aligned with the five means of implementation?
- Pilot programmes: what difference to flagships programmes, will these be diluted and mainstreamed?
- Supports the inclusion of existing indicators from UN-Habitat and global frameworks. Must be as simple as possible and measurable
- Recommends to avoid duplication on reporting

## EUROPEAN UNION

- Question on the targets: in addition to indicators, we need targets to understand what we are trying to achieve. Will these be included in the work programme?

## COLOMBIA

- Supports the addition of targets to be able to assess progress.

## PORTUGAL

- Responsibilities: difficult to understand where specific areas would fall; e.g. action on climate; conflict and natural disasters
- It is fundamental that UN-Habitat keeps working on these issues; how would they be incorporated if the five means of implementation are aligned to subprogrammes?

## ALGERIA

- What are the elements to implement the means of implementation in terms coordination and collaboration with the regional offices?
- In adequate housing, notes indicators from SDGs; is UN-Habitat also including indicators from Open-ended Working Group on adequate housing for all?

## [Next steps](#)

## **Q&A and guidance of the Member States**

### FRANCE

- If we are serious of the new strategic focus, it should be mentioned first to sell it to donors
- insists on the structure around strategic focus – impact areas – means of implementation

### EUROPEAN UNION

- including information in the Strategic Plan on how monitoring and assessment will be done would be good
- also, information as to how the means of implementation help to achieve impact areas

### PORTUGAL

- Establishing a word limit for the Strategic Plan has no merit
- The part of the mandate and some of the paragraphs can be reduced
- On the rest, there is not a lot of margin without losing Member State positions