



2025 first Bureau Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat

Hybrid format – Friday, 31 January 2025

10:00-12:00 hrs. East Africa Time (EAT)

Statement by the Deputy Executive Director

SLIDE 1: Title slide

Slide 2: Provisional Agenda

Adoption of the Agenda to be led by the Chair.

1. Adoption of the provisional Agenda.
2. Preparations for the 2025 first session of the Executive Board, 25 to 27 March 2025:
 - a. Review of the Provisional Agenda for the upcoming session.
 - b. Proposed organization of work during the upcoming session.
3. Consideration and possible recommendation by the Bureau on the rotation of the offices of Chair and Rapporteur in line with rule 9.3 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board.
4. Roadmap of meetings towards the 2025 first session of the Executive Board including informal consultations on possible outcomes and briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on the status of preparations for the session.
5. Consideration of dates for the third session of the Executive Board in 2025.
6. UN-Habitat's engagement in key United Nations events in 2025 including Beijing +30, the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), the World Social Summit and COP 30.
7. Any other matters.

SLIDE 3: AGENDA ITEM 2 (TITLE SLIDE): - Preparations for the 2025 first session of the Executive Board, 25 to 27 March 2025

- a. Review of the Provisional Agenda for the upcoming session.**
- b. Proposed organization of work during the upcoming session.**

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

A very good morning to you all.

It is my pleasure to join you all at this very first meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2025, though online. I apologise for the absence of our Executive Director at this meeting and for my inability to join you physically in Nairobi today due to other important official engagements we both have currently. I thank you for your understanding and assure you that this is an exception as we will always prioritise the work of this Bureau and our Governing Bodies.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by expressing my sincere thanks to you, Mr. Chair, to all Members of the Bureau and to all Member States for the solid support we have received throughout 2024 and for the valuable guidance you have continuously provided. We look forward to working closely with you as we approach the first and second sessions of the Executive Board this year.

Slide 4: Item 2a. Review of the Provisional Agenda for the upcoming session.

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to item 2, I wish to confirm that following the review and recommendation of the date of the upcoming session to be held from 25 to 27 March 2025, we have already prepared the ED's notification communicating these dates and we are now processing it for translation. The notification will be finalized in all six UN official languages and shared with Member States by

12 February 2025, taking into account further guidance provided by the Bureau today, as needed.

Excellencies

In our view, the provisional Agenda as agreed by the Executive Board at its second session of 2024 is very comprehensive and we see no need for any further amendments.

The provisional agenda, as proposed by the Executive Board, is reflected on the screen.

Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the session.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2025;
 - (b) Adoption of the report of the Executive Board on the work of its second session of 2024.
3. Reports of the chairs of the ad hoc working groups.
4. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.
5. Update on the draft work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2026.
6. Update on the preparation of, and possible recommendation of, the draft strategic plan of UN-Habitat for the period 2026–2029.
7. Briefing on the Sustainable Cities and Communities Foundation.
8. Implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including reporting on the programmatic activities of UN-Habitat in 2024 and the implementation of its subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities.
9. Update on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly.
10. Implementation by UN-Habitat of the reform of the development system and management of the United Nations.
11. Action by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual or any other type of exploitation and abuse and against sexual harassment in the workplace.
12. Annual report on action by the Executive Director to update and improve the internal management, policies and procedures of UN-Habitat.

13. Consideration and adoption of the outcomes of the session, including the provisional agenda for the second session of the Executive Board of 2025.
14. Other matters.
15. Closure of the session.

Slide 5: Request from the Executive Board as aligned with the Agenda

In this context, I would also like to refer to a few specific requests to the Executive Director as reflected in the decisions of the Executive Board at its second session in 2024. We would like to assure you that these are adequately reflected in the provisional agenda.

This includes requests related to **reporting on the sustainable cities and communities foundation**, and finalization of **the draft strategic plan**, which as you can see are included as stand-alone agenda items 6 and 7.

In addition, the request related to our **efforts to reconstruct the human settlements** is covered under agenda item 8 on “Normative and operational activities”.

Excellencies,

You will recall that at the last session, the Executive Board also requested us to **“report on the status of the implementation of recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors”** at the upcoming session. This will be covered under agenda item 3 on “Financial, budgetary and administrative matters”. In support of this discussion, we are preparing a dedicated document reflecting the status of the implementation of these recommendations.

Slide 6: Item 2b. Proposed organization of work during the upcoming session.

Excellencies,

With regards to agenda item 2b, we would like to propose the organization of work for the three days of the session, as is now reflected on the screen.

You can see that on **Day 1 - 25 March 2025** - we propose to address **Agenda items 1 through to 5.**

On **Day 2 - 26 March 2025** - we propose that the Executive Board considers **Agenda items 6, 7, 8 and 9.**

On **Day 3, 27 March 2025**, we propose that the Executive Board will address **Agenda items 10, 11, and 12 in the morning**, and that the final plenary in the afternoon **will consider item 13** - “Consideration and adoption of the outcomes of the session, including the provisional agenda for the first session of the Executive Board of 2025”.

Following the adoption of the outcomes, the plenary will **conclude by addressing agenda items 14 and 15** which are “Other matters” and “Closure of the session”, respectively.

Excellencies.

As per established practice, we also expect that informal consultations on the draft decisions take place during the lunch hours and evenings of Day 1 and Day 2, and conclude during the lunch hour of day 3, on 27 March 2025.

Proposed organization of work for the first session of 2025 of the Executive Board (25–27 March 2025)

<i>Day/date</i>	<i>Time (UTC + 3)</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
Tuesday, 25 March	9 a.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening of the session. 2. Organizational matters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2025; (b) Adoption of the report of the Executive Board on the work of its second session of 2024. 3. Reports of the chairs of the ad hoc working groups. 4. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters. <i>Informal consultations on draft outcomes.</i>
	2 p.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Update on the draft work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2026. <i>Informal consultations on draft outcomes.</i>
Wednesday, 26 March	9 a.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Update on the preparation of, and possible recommendation of, the draft strategic plan of UN-Habitat for the period 2026–2029. 7. Briefing on the Sustainable Cities and Communities Foundation. <i>Informal consultations on draft outcomes.</i>
	2 p.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including reporting on the programmatic activities of UN Habitat in 2024 and the implementation of its subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities. 9. Update on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly. <i>Informal consultations on draft outcomes.</i>
Thursday, 27 March	9 a.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Implementation by UN-Habitat of the reform of the development system and management of the United Nations. 11. Action by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual or any other type of exploitation and abuse and against sexual harassment in the workplace. 12. Annual report on action by the Executive Director to update and improve the internal management, policies and procedures of UN-Habitat. <i>Informal consultations on draft outcomes.</i>
	2 p.m.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Consideration and adoption of the outcomes of the session, including the provisional agenda for the second session of 2025. 14. Other matters. 15. Closure of the session.

Slide 7: (TITLE SLIDE) AGENDA ITEM 3: Consideration and possible recommendation by the Bureau on the rotation of the offices of Chair and Rapporteur in line with rule 9.3 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board.

[NOTE: This agenda item about elections will not need any secretariat presentation and will be managed by the chair.]

Slide 8: (TITLE SLIDE) AGENDA ITEM 4: Roadmap of meetings towards the 2025 first session of the Executive Board including informal consultations on possible outcomes and briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on the status of preparations for the session.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,

Key priority issues for the upcoming session will be the consideration and possible recommendation of the final draft of the strategic plan for the year 2026 to 2029, as well as the draft stakeholder engagement policy, for possible recommendation to the UN-Habitat Assembly, among other outcomes.

To prepare and facilitate these discussions, both the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters (PBA) and the ad hoc working group on the development of a stakeholder engagement policy will hold a number of meetings prior to the session.

The Secretariat will also propose utilise the ad hoc Working Group on PBA to hold consultations on the draft international guidelines on smart cities which are being developed by experts in line with Resolution 2/1 of the UN-Habitat Assembly. An update on that resolution will be provided to the Board under item 9 of the agenda – “Update on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly.”, in view of the expected consideration of the draft guidelines at the resumed second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly in May 2025.

Slide 9: Dates of informal consultations on the draft outcomes

With the understanding that the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters would continue to lead the informal consultations on draft decisions prior to each session, at least **three informal consultations on the draft outcomes** of the upcoming session of the Board are currently scheduled as follows:

- Monday, 24 February 2025 – (in the afternoon).
- Wednesday, 5 March 2025 – (morning and afternoon)
- Wednesday, 12 March 2025 – (morning and afternoon)

Slide 10: Dates of Bureau meetings and Briefing the Executive Director

We have also scheduled **Bureau meetings** prior to the session as follows:

- Friday 31 January 2025 – today
- Friday 28 February 2025
- Monday 24 March 2025 – one day ahead of the session

The mandatory **briefing by the Executive Director prior to the session** on the preparations and matters to be covered under each item is proposed to be held on **7 March 2025**, at least two weeks prior to the session.

As Secretariat, we stand ready to provide the technical inputs soonest to enable the informal consultations to proceed as scheduled.

Mr. Chairman,

As I conclude in this item, I also wish to inform you that we intend to open online registration for the session on 5 February 2025 and close on **21 March 2025**.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Back to you.

Slide 11: (TITLE SLIDE)AGENDA ITEM 5: Consideration of dates for the third session of the Executive Board in 2025.

Excellencies,

As you will already be aware, 2025 promises to be yet another very busy year in the UN global Calendar globally and in Nairobi, not the least due to our own third meeting of the OECPR and the resumed second session of UN-Habitat Assembly, but also UNEA-7, COP 30 and many other meetings – some of which we will revert to under agenda item 6.

For this reason, we are strongly advised by the UNON Division of Conference Services, who services our meetings. to lock the dates of the third session of the Executive Board for the year 2025 as early as possible.

In this regard, UNON has given us **three options** for your consideration, with a view to recommend one of them to the Executive Board for decision. The available dates are:

- **11-13 November 2025**
- **18-20 November 2025 or**
- **25-27 November 2025**

In our view, the 3rd option might be preferable, because it falls outside the depth of COP30 where our Executive Director is expected to lead UN-Habitat's activities. I believe it is a strong common interest to give a clear recommendation on the date in order to ensure a timely and successful third session of the Executive Board in 2025. Once we are made aware of your preferred date, we will plan accordingly and immediately communicate them to the Division of Conference Services.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Back to you.

Slide 12: (TITLE SLIDE) AGENDA ITEM 6. UN-Habitat's engagement in key United Nations events in 2025 including Beijing +30, the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4), the World Social Summit and COP 30.

Excellencies,

2025 marks a roadmap of critical opportunities where UN-Habitat is aiming to position adequate housing in milestone events influencing its outcomes together with Member States, local governments, and critical key actors.

69th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69 / Beijing +30)

ED scheduled for NYC, the first week of the event, 10th March.

UN-Habitat is hoping for a side event during the first week in partnership with OHCHR and Huairou Commission on innovative approaches to adequate housing for all women and girls. During the second week, UN-Habitat will hold a side event focused on women's participation in urban decision-making and the empowerment of women leaders at the local level. UN-Habitat is also developing a publication on its gender impact and lessons learnt over the past five years.

A communication campaign is also being planned that will likely focus on women's access to adequate housing. Beyond Beijing+35, and as the finalization of the Sustainable Development Goals are just around the corner, we see our key added value in enabling all women and girls in their diversity to be able to access an adequate standard of living, with a strong focus on adequate housing as a part of this.

4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4)

ED scheduled for Sevilla, 30 June – 3 July

UN Habitat is actively engaged in the process towards FFD4, with a PrepCom3 Side Event approved.

Title: *Highlighting the Sustainable Urbanization Gap in the FFD4 Agenda: Harnessing the Potential of Subnational Finance to Accelerate Investment in Urban Development.*

UN-Habitat will be the lead organizer with World Bank, SDSN Global Commission for Urban SDG Finance as co-organizers, and Brazil, Spain and Mexico as co-sponsors. The format will be mainly in-person with options for hybrid participation. The side event will be held on Wednesday 12 February 2025 from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

UN Habitat wishes to join forces to actively engage in the process towards FFD4 and emphasise the role of cities and local finance.

The Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD)

ED is scheduled for Doha – Qatar, from 4 to 6 of November 2025.

UN Habitat is actively engaged in the process towards the Second World Social Summit. We have provided inputs on the Initial thinking on UN system strategy for substantive contributions and are actively working in the contributions for the Food for Thought Paper.

The second World Summit on Social Development presents an opportunity to place adequate housing at the centre of the political agenda and leverage the opportunity to advance inclusive social development in all its forms.

Beyond four walls and a roof, adequate housing is the cornerstone of people's health, safety, inclusion, and wellbeing—a place to live in peace, with security and dignity. When addressed through holistic policies, which are grounded in the recognition of its social function, adequate housing has shown its potential as a driver of inclusive and sustainable development, closely linked to other SDGs, particularly addressing poverty (Goal 1), reducing inequality (Goal 10), and gender (Goal 5).

COP30

ED is scheduled for Belem – Brazil in 10-21 November 2025.

UN Habitat is actively engaging in the process of COP30, with our Climate Change, Local2030 and OED teams working together. The Agency is participating at the “Meeting of New Mayors of Brazil” to take place in Brasilia from 11 to 14 of February, where ED will engage with the Federal Government, the newly appointed COP30 presidency, as well as local and regional governments. UN-Habitat aims to bring the urban agenda to the forefront of COP30 by demonstrating that cities and regions are pivotal to delivering climate solutions that keep the 1.5C target alive. This includes building political will across all spheres of government, increasing urban ambition, and paving the way for enhanced local climate finance mechanisms.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Back to you.

Slide 13: AGENDA ITEM 7 -ANY OTHER MATTERS:

(to be led by the Chair)

(ED/ DED may add any AOBs here)