

Statement
by the delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt
before 1st Session, 2025
of the UN-Habitat Executive Board.

Nairobi, 25 March 2025.

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairperson,
Madame Executive Director,
Excellencies,

Allow me to begin by joining other delegations in thanking you Mr. Chair for ably leading the Executive Board for the past year.

Mr. Chair,

Egypt aligns itself with the statements of the Group of 77 and China and the African and Arab Groups.

Egypt appreciates the leadership of H.E. the Permanent Representative of Colombia of the Ad-hoc working group on Programmatic, Budgetary and Administrative matters, and takes note of his briefing on the work of the group.

The delegation of Egypt also takes note of the briefing by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Portugal on the work of the Ad-hoc working group on the development of the stakeholders' engagement policy.

Egypt calls for the continuation of consultations to finalize the policy, with full respect to the intergovernmental nature of the Programme, and in line with the legal opinion submitted by the Secretariat, and in this regard, would like to join voices with the delegations of Morocco

The legal opinion affirmed the sovereign right of a Member State to object to the accreditation of a Non Governmental Organisation, in accordance with the rules and regulations and the established practice within the ECOSOC, and the entire UN System.

The delegation of Egypt remains ready to engage within the new format of the friends of the chair, with a view to finalizing the policy before the resumed session of UN-Habitat Assembly.

Mr. Chair,

Egypt welcomes the consultative process that led to the development of the current Draft Strategic Plan, and calls for further consultations to improve it, addressing the concerns raised by different delegations. Egypt stresses the need to refrain from insisting on including controversial terminologies, and asks for a Strategic Plan that focuses on the technical mandate of the Programme, and that is comprised of definitive and universally agreed terms.

In the same vein, Egypt highlights the need for developing regional implementation frameworks for the Strategic Plan, which focuses on measurable impactful outcomes, in accordance with the recommendations of the different assessments undertaken on the current Strategic Plan, including by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services. Egypt further underscores the urgency for the New Strategic Plan to contribute to better capacity-building for developing countries, including on reporting on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Egypt values the work of the Programme in countries, territories and areas affected by urban crises, where the work of the Programme is direly needed to provide guidance and better urban recovery.

With reference to the Executive Board decision 2024/6, Egypt urges the Executive Director to conclude the comprehensive report on the Status of the Development of the Efforts to Reconstruct the Human Settlements in the Gaza Strip before the third session of this year. Egypt wishes in this regard to highlight the Gaza Reconstruction Plan, which to-date represents the only viable plan to restore the livelihood of the Strip and ensures the Palestinians' use of their own land. the Plan prioritizes emergency relief, reconstruction, recovery, and long-term economic development. Adopted by the Extraordinary Arab Summit earlier this month, the plan is gradually garnering broad international support. Egypt

calls on UN-Habitat to align its recovery work with the plan, ensuring sustainable technical and financial support for the reconstruction efforts in Gaza.

On the other hand, Egypt condemns attempts to classify forcible displacement of the Palestinians from Gaza as a voluntary departure. Deportation of populations under fire, systematic starvation and blockage of assistance is nothing but forcible displacement, an abhorrent crime under International Law and International Humanitarian Law.

Egypt urges UN-Habitat to work with other UN agencies and the international community on the urban recovery and reconstruction of the human settlements in Gaza, restoring hope for the Palestinians.

Egypt stresses that the work of the Programme in countries, territories and areas affected by urban crises, should be conducted without prejudice to other countries, territories or areas in similar situations, including the Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr. Chair,

Egypt notes the different levels of implementation of the UN-Habitat Assembly resolutions, and reiterates the call for their implementation on equal footing. Moreover, with regard to resolution 2/1, and while acknowledging the value-added of the new Guidelines to establish new smart cities, Egypt stresses that further deliberations are needed before presenting it for adoption by the UN-Habitat Assembly.

Egypt is not in a position to endorse the Guidelines in their current structure, and is of the view that neither the Experts Working Group nor the Secretariat has the expertise to draft certain sections, particularly the one on Human Rights. Egypt stresses that UN-Habitat should be careful not to encroach on the role of the Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures, nor the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. Egypt seizes this opportunity to warn against introducing human rights as a new conditionality in the work of Programme, and

urges different delegations to refrain from politicizing its work, avoiding discussions on issues beyond the Programme's mandate.

Finally, Egypt continues to call for stepping up efforts to realize equitable geographical representation across all staff categories within UN-Habitat, particularly in the professional posts, as well as to expand the visibility of the Programme in developing countries.

I thank you.