

Statement
by the delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt
before the Third Open Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives
of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme
26-28 May 2025.

Nairobi, 26 May 2025.

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairperson,

Madame Executive Director,

Excellencies,

Allow me to begin by joining other delegations in thanking Pakistan for ably leading the Committee of Permanent Representative (CPR) over the past four years.

Mr. Chair,

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

Egypt welcomes the consultative process undertaken in Nairobi by the Executive Director in preparing the New Strategic Plan, and calls to initiate similar processes on all matters related to the future work of the Programme. We are hopeful that the adoption of the new plan, and then the regional implementation frameworks, will contribute to better impact on the ground, especially in developing countries.

On the draft international guidelines on people-centered smart cities, Egypt is not in a position to approve the current draft. Egypt aligns itself with the positions expressed by the African and Arab groups, and other delegations, to delete the chapter on “Digital Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion”.

While acknowledging the value-added of the new Guidelines to establishing new smart cities, and being cognizant that the right to adequate housing is a strong pillar for the mandate of the Programme, Egypt is of the view 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. The Programme should not overstep its mandate by engaging itself in setting normative standards on Human Rights. In addition, venturing in this practice runs counter to the efficiency called for by the UNSG in his briefing to the UN General Assembly 2 weeks ago. As we say in Egypt, let the bakery make the bread.

Egypt also notes that the methodology employed does not meet the inclusive consultation requirement, as stipulated in paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 of UN-Habitat

Assembly resolution 2/1, with Member States and members of the United Nations specialized agencies and other stakeholders, in order to inform the drafting process of the international guidelines of best practices, guidelines and lessons learned from different contexts and at different scales.

Moreover, my delegation wishes also to know how the establishment of an Expert Working Group, and the selection of more than one expert from the same country, contributes to the prescribed inclusive consultation.

On the possible Stakeholders' Engagement Policy, Egypt stresses the need to fully respect the intergovernmental nature of the Programme, and reiterates the right of Member States to object to the accreditation of an NGO, in line with the established UN ECOSOC practice and the legal opinion submitted by the Secretariat. Egypt affirms that ad-hoc mechanisms used for the accreditation of Stakeholders to once-off events, cannot be adopted and mainstreamed as the UN practice.

Finally, my delegation is ready to constructively engage with other delegations to finalize the outcomes for possible adoption by the Assembly, and is hopeful that the same flexibility will be shown by others, in order to achieve consensus and preserve the unique "Nairobi Spirit".

I thank you