



**2025 Seventh Bureau Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat**  
**Monday, 8 September 2025**  
**10:00 – 12:00 EAT**

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**Draft Meeting Summary**

**Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and Adoption of the provisional Agenda**

1. Mr. Martin Row, Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to UN-Habitat, on behalf of H.E. Mr. Sebastian Groth, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany to UN-Habitat and Chair of the Executive Board, opened the meeting at 10:10 EAT.

**The following members of the Bureau of the Executive Board were present:**

- Mr. Martin Row, Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to UN-Habitat
- H.E. Mr. Maros Mitrik, Ambassador of Slovakia and Permanent Representative to UN-Habitat
- Mr. Francisco de Souza, Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to UN-Habitat
- Ms. Zhao Wenhua, Deputy Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to UN-Habitat
- Dr. Vivian Nain Kuma, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to UN-Habitat, Rapporteur of the Bureau of the Executive Board
- Mr. Taleng Aristide Faha, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Cameroon
- Ms. Ivy Mburu, Multilateral Affairs Officer of the Permanent Mission of Germany
- Mr. Simon Matu, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to UN-Habitat
- Mr. Geoffroy Savet, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to UN-Habitat, co-chair of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (Observer)
- Ms. Beatrice Karago, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to UN-Habitat, co-chair of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (Observer)

**UN-Habitat secretariat members were present:**

- Ms. Anaclaudia Rossbach, Under Secretary-General and Executive Director
- Mr. Michal Mlynar, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director
- Mr. Erfan Ali, Chief of Staff
- Mr. Rafael Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division
- Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Secretary of the Governing Bodies
- Ms. Edlam Yemeru, Director (a.i.), External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation Division
- Ms. Shipra Narang Suri, Senior Policy Advisor to the Executive Director
- Mr. Justin Bonongwe, Director (a.i.), Management Advisory and Compliance Service and Chief, Budget and Finance Unit
- Ms. Ombretta Temptra, Chief of Section, Land, Housing and Shelter Section

2. The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting.
3. The provisional [agenda](#) was adopted without any changes.
4. The Executive Director delivered opening remarks highlighting key milestones and priorities that will shape UN-Habitat's working in the months ahead.

## **Agenda item 2: Preparations for the third session of the Executive Board in 2025**

5. The Executive Director briefed the Bureau on the preparations for the third session of the Executive Board, scheduled to take place on 25 and 26 November 2025. The statement delivered by the Executive Director is available [here](#), and the presentation by the secretariat is accessible [here](#).
6. Members of the Bureau welcomed the briefing and provided the following guidance and observations:
  - Requested that documentation under agenda item 6, “*Implementation of the strategic plan of UN-Habitat*,” be made available well in advance, and further requested a presentation on this item within the framework of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters;
  - Enquired whether the session would accommodate general statements;
  - One Bureau Member suggested to consider deferring agenda item 8, “Normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat”, taking into account the limited duration of the session;
  - Upon further consideration, the Bureau decided to maintain the agenda unchanged, while underscoring the need for efficient time management for each agenda item;
  - Requested additional information regarding agenda item 10, “*High-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda*”;
  - Enquired about the number of decisions expected from the session.
7. In response, the secretariat provided the following clarifications:
  - Committed to the timely dissemination of background documentation;
  - Took note of the guidance from the Board on time-saving measures to avoid overburdening the agenda and suggested using the platform of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters to deliver the deep-dive presentations in preparation for the Board’s consideration of agenda item 8 “normative and operational work of UN-Habitat”;
  - Underlined that the Chair and the Bureau will recommend the appropriate format for general statements, recalling that previous sessions have prioritized substantive discussions over general interventions;
  - Clarified that the high-level meeting on the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda in 2026 stems from a decision of the United Nations General Assembly;
  - Indicated that, as per established practice, one decision is anticipated per substantive agenda item.
8. The Bureau endorsed the draft provisional agenda for the third session of the Executive Board in 2025 as proposed by the secretariat, and requested the secretariat to proceed with preparations, taking into consideration the recommendations and guidance provided at the meeting, including with regard to time management.
9. The Bureau recommended that, in line with established practice, general statements at the Executive Board sessions should be discouraged, and if possible be limited to regional groups and agreed to convey this guidance to their respective constituencies.
10. The Bureau endorsed the proposed organization of work for the session, with the understanding that it remains subject to further review prior to and during the session.
11. The Bureau endorsed the nomination of Kenya to serve as Chair of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters. The Bureau expressed its sincere appreciation of the leadership and dedication of H.E. Dr. Pedro Leon Cortes Ruiz, Permanent Representative of Colombia as former Chair of the working group.
12. Ms. Beatrice Karago, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to UN-Habitat, expressed appreciation for the confidence placed in Kenya’s nomination, and emphasized that the role would require close coordination with both the Bureau and the secretariat. She reaffirmed Kenya’s

commitment to multilateralism and underscored the importance of inclusive preparation to support the Executive Board in fulfilling the Organization's mandate on sustainable urbanization and human settlements.

**Agenda item 3: Roadmap of meetings towards the third session of the Executive Board in 2025, including informal consultations and briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on preparations for the session**

13. The secretariat presented an updated roadmap of meetings leading to the third session of the Executive Board in 2025, including planned informal consultations on draft decisions and the scheduled briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on the status of preparations. The roadmap is available [here](#).
14. Members of the Bureau expressed appreciation of recent improvements made to the roadmap, including the extended time frame and the inclusion of dedicated meeting pages accessible through links directly from the roadmap. The following comments and questions were raised:
  - Enquired about the timeline for submission of technical inputs by the secretariat as a basis for draft decisions;
  - Proposed to reschedule the Joint Bureaux meeting, tentatively planned for 21 October, to avoid a clash with meetings of the United Nations Environment Programme;
  - Emphasized the importance of keeping Member States well informed of the roadmap and any changes to the meeting dates, schedules and agendas.
15. The secretariat provided the following responses:
  - Informed that technical inputs into the draft outcomes will be submitted to Member States no later than 5 November 2025 and pointed out that additional informal consultation meetings may be scheduled upon request by the Chair. Such meetings would be scheduled in close coordination with UNEP to avoid scheduling conflicts;
  - Informed that the date of the Joint Bureaux meeting is under consideration with the President of the Assembly and that the Bureau will be kept updated;
  - Reiterated the commitment to ensuring timely circulation of the roadmap and all related documentation in support of the third session.
16. The Bureau took note of the key dates outlined in the roadmap of meetings towards the third session of the Executive Board in 2025.

**Agenda item 4: Consideration of dates for the first session of the Executive Board in 2026**

17. The secretariat informed the Bureau that, following consultations with the United Nations Office at Nairobi, the proposed dates for the first session of the Executive Board in 2026 are 21 to 23 April 2026. The proposed dates for the second session are 10 to 12 November 2026.
18. The Chair took note of the proposed dates and informed the Bureau that the availability of the Ambassador to preside over the session would be confirmed at a later stage.
19. One Bureau member referred to the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, which state that the Board "shall meet in regular session two or three times per year," and requested clarification on how the number of sessions is determined.
20. The secretariat explained that, based on past practice, the Executive Board typically meets twice per year, unless there is a procedural requirement—such as the election of the Bureau—or a request by a majority of Board members. It was further clarified that the Executive Board adopts its annual workplan at its first session of the year, and the frequency and duration of sessions are determined within the framework of that decision.

21. The Bureau took note of the proposal to hold the first session of the Executive Board in 2026 from 21 to 23 April and requested the secretariat to begin preparations accordingly.
22. The Chair invited Bureau members to communicate the proposed dates to their respective regional groups, with a view to receiving recommendations during upcoming meetings.
23. The Bureau also took note of the proposal to hold the second session of the Executive Board in 2026 from 10 to 12 November, with the understanding that the dates would be confirmed at a later stage. The secretariat was requested to begin initial preparations.

**Agenda item 5: Update on preparations for the second session of the Open-ended expert working group on adequate housing for all (OEWG-H)**

24. The co-chairs of the Open-ended expert working group on adequate housing for all provided an update on preparations for the second session of the working group (OEWG-H2), scheduled for 22 and 23 October 2025. The statement of the co-chairs is available [here](#).
25. Bureau members expressed appreciation for the co-chairs' work and raised the following points:
  - Requested an update on the funding status;
  - Enquired about expected participation in OEWG-H2;
  - Sought clarification regarding interpretation of the session into all six official United Nations languages, noting that not all interpretation services were available during the preparatory intersessional thematic meetings;
  - Emphasized the importance of receiving relevant documentation well in advance of the meeting.
26. The secretariat responded as follows:
  - Clarified that OEWG-H2 will be funded through extrabudgetary resources and confirmed that the Executive Director has allocated contributions received from the Government of Germany to support the session. Due to financial constraints, not all documents may be translated into all six official languages;
  - Informed that Member States are expected to nominate participants, including both technical experts and diplomatic representatives;
  - Clarified that due to the financial situation, OEWG-H2 will be fully funded by extrabudgetary resources and confirmed that the Executive Director has decided to allocate part of contributions received from the Government of Germany to support the session. However, due to the lack of additional resources, not all documents will be translated into all six official languages.
27. The Chair encouraged Bureau members to inform their respective groups about OEWG-H2 and to advocate for participation, funding support, and expressions of interest to serve as co-chairs.
28. The Bureau took note of the update on preparations for OEWG-H2 and requested the secretariat to continue its preparatory work and keep the Bureau informed.

**Agenda item 6: Any other matters**

29. One Bureau member requested information on the relocation of UN-Habitat offices. The secretariat confirmed that relevant information would be shared with all Member States via email.
30. A Bureau member enquired about the way forward regarding the implementation of the *International Guidelines on People-Centred Smart Cities*. The secretariat recalled that, as discussed during the Joint Bureaux meeting in June 2025, the United Nations Habitat Assembly took note of the presentation by the Executive Director of the guidelines – which does not imply either endorsement or rejection of the proposal. Further reflection as well as guidance from Member States

will be needed to consider the way forward for the guidelines, taking into account that Member States retain the sovereign right to apply the guidelines as a technical document at national or local levels, as appropriate.

31. The meeting was closed at 12:10 p.m. (EAT).