



2026 First Bureau Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat
Friday, 13 February 2026
10:00 – 12:00 EAT

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
- Dr. Vivian Nain Kuma, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to UN-Habitat, Rapporteur of the Bureau of the Executive Board
- Mr. Francisco de Souza, Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to UN-Habitat
- Ms. Ivy Mburu, Multilateral Affairs Officer of the Permanent Mission of Germany
- Ms. Yang Qi, Second Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to UN-Habitat
- Mr. Chen Yuheng, Third Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to UN-Habitat
- H.E. Ms. Susan Nakhumicha, Permanent Representative of Kenya to UN-Habitat, Chair of the ad hoc working group on PBA (observer)
- H.E. Ms. Beatrice Karago, Deputy Permanent Representative of Kenya to UN-Habitat (observer)
- H.E. Mr. Sultan Hajiyev, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to UN-Habitat, co-chair of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (observer)
- H.E. Mr. Jabril Ibrahim Abdulle, Permanent Representative of Federal Republic of Somalia 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
 - Ms. Rositsa Todorova, Chief of Staff
 - Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Secretary of the Governing Bodies
 - Ms. Edlam Yemeru, Director a.i, Global Knowledge and Advocacy Division
 - Ms. Annette Waweru, Director, Corporate Management Division
2. The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting and the [provisional Agenda](#) was adopted without any changes.
 3. The Executive Director delivered opening remarks highlighting key milestones and priorities that will shape UN-Habitat's work in 2026.

Agenda item 2: Preparations for the 2026 first session of the Executive Board to be held from 21 to 22 April 2026

4. The Executive Director provided a briefing to the Bureau on the status of preparations for the first session of the Executive Board scheduled to take place on 21 and 22 April 2026. The statement is available [here](#) and the presentation is accessible [here](#).
5. Bureau members welcomed the briefing and provided the following guidance and observations:
 - Requested clarification of the criteria used to prioritize documents for translation, including for the draft work programme.
 - Emphasized the importance of translating documents relating to UN Reform.
 - Suggested to reduce document length to keep within the allocated number of translated pages for UN-Habitat governing bodies documents.
 - Inquired whether external dedicated speakers, such as Mayors, representing the selected countries under agenda item 8 would be invited to intervene.
 - Reiterated the principle to discourage general national statements at the upcoming Executive Board meeting, to manage the available time efficiently, and invited Bureau Members to inform their regional groups accordingly.
6. In response, the Secretariat provided the following clarifications:
 - Explained that the rationale for the proposed list of documents to be prioritized for translation is to promote cost savings in line with the UN80 initiative and to ensure that UN-Habitat stays within the limited and reduced number of translated pages as allocated through the UN Regular Budget for 2026, while preserving as far as possible basic translation services for Member States.
 - Clarified that the main criteria for the prioritization is to provide translated working documents for items where the Board is expected to adopt substantive decisions, whereas document for other items may be issued in English only.
 - Confirmed that the secretariat already strictly adheres to the word limit per document (7650 words), but that this efficiency measure must be complemented with efforts to limit the actual number of translated documents to keep within the Regular Budget.
 - Confirmed that document HSP/EB/2026/12 on the implementation of the UN development system reform in UN-Habitat, in support of agenda item 12, will be included in the list of documents prioritized for translation, as requested by the Bureau.
 - Clarified that, in line with UN rules and established practice, the current draft work programme is submitted to the Board for consultation, and that the final version will be translated and submitted for decision at the second session of the Executive Board 2026.
 - Explained that no additional external speakers are planned, although Brazil and Tunisia may provide inputs under agenda item 8.
- 7. The Bureau recommended the proposed provisional Agenda for the 2026 first session of the Executive Board and the organization of work during the session, as presented by the secretariat, noting that the organization of work is flexible and subject further review during the session.**
- 8. The Bureau took note of the proposed list of documents for the first session of the Executive Board 2026, agreed in principle with the proposal to limit the number of translated documents in accordance with the list, to promote cost savings and ensure that UN-Habitat stays within the limited budget of translated documents as allocated through the Regular Budget for 2026, and requested the secretariat to add document HSP/EB/2026/12 to the list of documents prioritized for translation.**
- 9. The Bureau welcomed a proposal from the Chair to consult with the Secretariat to develop a possible proposal to streamline and standardize the agenda for future Executive Board meetings, for consideration by the working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters.**

Agenda item 3: Election of the Bureau of the Executive Board for 2026-2027

10. The Executive Director proved a briefing on [the elections of the Bureau of the Executive Board](#) for the period 2026-2027, noting that in line with the rule of the rotating chairpersonship of the board, the next Chair for the Executive Board will be representing the Asia Pacific region.
11. Bureau Members welcomed the briefing, noted that several groups had already initiated consultations on the nomination of new Bureau Members, requested clarification on the timeline and next steps for the elections, and encouraged the Secretariat to support the regional chairs as appropriate.
12. The Secretariat clarified that nominations and elections are the responsibility of Member States, with the Secretariat serving a facilitative role, including informing regional Chairs to coordinate nominations or re-nominations within their groups and monitoring timelines to issue reminders as necessary to ensure a smooth process, preferably by acclamation.
13. **The Bureau requested the Secretariat to notify the Chairs of the regional groups about the upcoming elections and to invite them to nominate one Bureau Member per region to fill the seats of the five Bureau Members. The Bureau also recommended that Bureau Members consult within their respective regional groups and provide an update at the next Bureau meeting.**

Agenda item 4: Roadmap of meetings towards the 2026 first session of the Executive Board including informal consultations and briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on the status of preparations for the session.

14. The Executive Director provided a briefing to the Bureau on upcoming meetings, as reflected in the latest [roadmap of meetings](#).
15. The representative of Kenya, in the capacity as Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Programmatic, Budgetary and Administrative issues, welcomed the work of the secretariat in advancing preparations towards upcoming meetings, and reaffirmed its commitment to support the work of the Executive Board.
16. Bureau Members took note of the secretariat's efforts to reduce meeting costs, including convening meeting in smaller conference rooms such as CR9, and enquired about the possibility of organizing meetings online or hybrid.
17. The secretariat clarified that, in line with the relevant decisions of the UN General Assembly, all formal governing body meetings must be held in person, while informal and regional group meetings may be conducted in hybrid format, and noted that informal meetings such as the intersessional meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group on Adequate Housing for All, may take place fully online.
18. **The Bureau took note of the roadmap of meetings, including the dates for the Bureau meetings, the Executive Director's briefing and informal consultations on possible draft outcomes, as presented by the secretariat, and confirmed that the Working Group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters will consider draft decision before they are considered by the Board for adoption. The Bureau also welcomed the plans to organize regional consultations with the Executive Director and encouraged Bureau members to promote active participation from their respective regional groups.**

Agenda item 5: Consideration of dates for the second session of the Executive Board in 2026

19. The Executive Director proposed that the second session of the Executive Board in 2026 will be held from 24 to 25 November 2026, back-to-back with the third session of OEWG-H scheduled for 26 and 27 November 2026, with the view to minimizing workload and to save on interpretation costs.
- 20. The Bureau recommended the dates of 24 to 25 November 2026 for the second session of the Executive Board in 2026, subject to further review and formal decision by the Executive Board at its first session of 2026.**

Agenda item 6: Consideration of dates and possible arrangements for the third session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All

23. The Co-Chairs of OEWG-H briefed the Bureau on the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on Adequate Housing for All, including on the state of preparations for the third session of the Working Group and proposed that it be held on 26 and 27 November 2026. The full statement by the Co-Chairs is available [here](#).
24. Bureau members commended Co-Chairs' work, expressed their support for the Working Group, noted the need for effective resource mobilization, and encouraged the secretariat to enhance its visibility, particularly in light of upcoming high-level events.
25. The secretariat noted that 2026 offers a key opportunity to raise the visibility of the Working Group, including at WUF13, the General Assembly High-level Meeting on the review of the New Urban Agenda, and the review of SDG11 under the High-level Political Forum, and underscored the need for additional resources to support these intergovernmental processes, including for conference services, documents translation, interpretation and travel support for representatives from least developed countries.
- 26. The Bureau took note of the briefing and recommended the dates of 26 and 27 November 2026 for the third session of Open-Ended Working Group on Adequate Housing for All.**

Agenda item 6: Any other matters

27. The Bureau reflected on the implications of the decision by one Member State to withdraw from UN-Habitat.
28. The Chair noted that two seats in the Executive Board from the Western Group and Others Group of States were currently vacant, and that consultations within the regional group were ongoing to fill both vacancies as soon as possible.
29. The meeting was closed at 12 p.m. EAT.