



**BRIEFING BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON THE PREPARATIONS  
FOR THE 2026 FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD TO BE  
HELD ON 21-22 APRIL 2026**

**1 April 2026, 9:00 – 10:30 am EAT**

**Statement by the Executive Director**

**SLIDE 1: MEETING TITLE**

**SLIDE 2: OPENING REMARKS AND OVERVIEW**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

Good morning,

A warm welcome to all delegations joining us for this briefing on the preparations for the first session of the Executive Board for 2026, to be held from 21 to 22 April here at the UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi.

It is my pleasure to provide an overview of the upcoming session, highlighting key expectations and the main substantive agenda items that will be presented for the Board's consideration.

As you are aware, this pre-session briefing is standard practice, in line with the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board, which require that a briefing for Member States on matters to be addressed be held at least two weeks prior to each session.

I look forward to your continued guidance and close cooperation as we approach the first session of the Executive Board this year, including through the informal consultations with the five regions held last week and continuing this week.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Your steadfast support to UN-Habitat, particularly at a time of profound global uncertainty and shifting multilateral dynamics, is more important than ever. As the Secretary-General continues to emphasize, we must remain resolute in strengthening international cooperation. Our shared commitment to the Pact for the Future and the UN80 initiative clearly demonstrates that multilateralism delivers.

Excellencies,

Following the adoption of our new Strategic Plan by the UN-Habitat Assembly, we have realigned our organizational structure to better deliver on our core priorities, placing access to adequate housing, secure land tenure, and basic services for all at the center of our work.

In 2026, our focus is on stabilizing the organization, fully operationalizing the Strategic Plan, and strengthening our monitoring framework to track results and impact. We are doing so through a co-creation approach, working closely with Member States, local authorities, communities, and partners, while intensifying efforts to mobilize predictable and flexible resources, including for our normative mandate.

This year also presents key opportunities through major global milestone events that will reinforce UN-Habitat's role in the multilateral system. We are engaging closely with the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly on preparations for the high-level meeting on the New Urban Agenda, contributing to the Secretary-General's report and supporting the co-chairs leading negotiations on a political declaration. We are also preparing a synthesis report on the implementation of SDG 11 for the High-Level Political Forum.

The World Cities Report 2026, focused on housing, will further strengthen our leadership in global urban monitoring. At the same time, platforms such as next week's Africa Urban Forum, the World Urban Forum in Baku, Innovate4Cities, COP31, and the UN Water Conference offer important opportunities to deepen synergies between housing, climate action, and sustainable development.

With your continued support and partnership, we will seize these moments to advance inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities for all.

Excellencies,

When preparing for the upcoming first session of the Executive Board we remain guided by the Bureau in our preparations. The Bureau has reviewed the provisional agenda and recommended some important adjustments to that agenda, in line with its mandate. The Bureau

has also guided us on the documentation for the session, taking into account the regular budget reductions in line with the UN80 initiative.

**SLIDE 3: FORMAL NOTIFICATION, DOCUMENTS AND AGENDA FOR THE SESSION (TITLE SLIDE)**

**SLIDE 4: NOTIFICATION AND AGENDA FOR THE SESSION**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

Formal notification and provisional agenda for the session was shared with Member States on 10 March 2026 – 42 days in advance of the meeting, in accordance with the rules of procedure.

Pre-session working documents for the session have been translated and made available online on 24 March 2026, four weeks prior to the session.

**SLIDE 5: PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE SESSION**

The provisional agenda for the session, as endorsed by the Executive Board in Decision 2025/8 and further reviewed and revised by the Bureau, is now shown on screen.

**SLIDE 6: BRIEFING ON KEY AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE 2026 FIRST SESSION TITLE SLIDE)**

**SLIDE 7: AGENDA ITEM 3. REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON PROGRAMMATIC, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS AND UPDATE BY THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON ADEQUATE HOUSING FOR ALL**

Excellencies,

As you are aware, the working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters has met several times to support preparations for the upcoming session. Most of the substantive agenda items have already been considered during these meetings, and the working group is now undertaking informal consultations on the draft decisions. We are very grateful to Kenya for its leadership as Chair of the working group.

Accordingly, under agenda item 3 of the upcoming Executive Board session, it is expected that the Chair of the PBA ad hoc working group will brief the Board on the work carried out during the intersessional period.

Excellencies,

Under the same agenda item, agenda item 3, as required by resolution 2/7 of the UN-Habitat Assembly on “Adequate Housing for all”, the Board will also hear a briefing from the co-Chairs of the of the open-ended expert working group on Adequate Housing for All. Their briefing will be based on a substantive report from the second session of the working group, which has also been made available to the Board as a working document.

As you may be aware, Member States have endorsed a multi-year roadmap which is guiding the work of the Working Group towards the third UN-Habitat Assembly in 2029. The new Co-Chairs Azerbaijan and Somalia are currently planning for several important events and activities for this year, in preparation for the third session to be held in November 2026.

Work is advancing through a series of intersessional expert meetings and consultations, including a session to be convened on the margins of the thirteenth session of WUF13, focusing on housing sustainability and climate resilience.

Please know that all Expert Working Group activities rely on additional voluntary financial contributions. I call on all interested Member States to consider a financial contribution to support this important work.

**SLIDE 8: AGENDA ITEM 4. FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS, INCLUDING AN UPDATE ON THE SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES’ FOUNDATION**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

The interim financial status report of UN-Habitat as at 31 December 2025 was made available to Member States on 24 March 2026 in document HSP/EB.2026/2. The final financial statements were finalized and submitted to the Board of Auditors on 31 March 2026.

While UN-Habitat at the time of preparation of the interim report anticipated a deficit of \$0.73 million in Foundation Non-earmarked, the final financial performance report is about \$0.38 million which is fully covered by the un-restricted fund balances.

The final financial position and financial performance of UN-Habitat will be contained in the audited IPSAS compliant financial statements to be released and presented to you in November 2026. We express great appreciation to all the thirty (30) Member States which contributed in 2025.

On the Sustainable Cities and Communities Foundation, this matter is still under careful consideration. I will revert at a later stage with more information on this topic.

**SLIDE 9: AGENDA ITEM 5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2026–2029:**

- (a) UPDATE ON THE STRUCTURE AND THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES;**
- (b) UPDATE ON THE MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN;**
- (c) RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN.**

Excellencies,

Following the adoption of the strategic plan in 2025 and requests from the Executive Board at the 2025 third session, we have prepared several key background documents related to the strategic plan, for consideration of the Executive Board. They will be presented under this agenda item 5.

**SLIDE 10: UPDATE ON THE STRUCTURE AND THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

First, the structure and the division of responsibilities remain as presented in the third Executive Board Meeting in November 2025. The four subprogrammes are as follows:

- Subprogramme 1 “Housing, Land, Basic Services and Urban Environment” aligned with the strategic focus of the Plan and contributing primarily to the impact area on urban environment;
- Subprogramme 2 “Planning, Finance Policy, Localization and Governance”, aligned with the first two Means of Implementation of the Strategic Plan;
- Subprogramme 3 “Knowledge, Data, Digitalization and Capacity Development”, aligned with means of implementation 3; and
- Subprogramme 4 “Partnerships, Coalitions, Advocacy and Communication” aligned with the means of implementation 4.

Under this sub item, we will also provide an update on the implications of the UN80 initiative for the structure, staffing, budgetary planning and work of UN-Habitat.

## **SLIDE 11: (b) UPDATE ON THE MONITORING FRAMEWORK FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

Second, on the baseline and targets of our monitoring framework for the strategic plan, I am pleased to report that the methodological work is nearly fully complete, and the baseline values and targets have been established through extensive consultations across the headquarters and field offices.

The baseline values and targets were shared with Member States twice during the Ad Hoc Working Group meetings – on the 25th of February and the 25th of March. Additional detailed information for each indicator is explained in a complementary methodological guide, which has been made available recently on the Executive Board portal for information.

## **SLIDE 12: (c) RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

Finally, under agenda item 5(c), we have prepared a draft Resource Mobilization Strategy for the Strategic Plan 2026–2029, which provides a unified framework to secure the resources needed for UN-Habitat to deliver on its new Strategic Plan.

The draft Strategy has been developed through a co-creation process with Member States, benefiting from substantive exchanges in the PBA Working Group and refined in response to your guidance. We view this as a shared framework, shaped by Member States' priorities and perspectives, and we look forward to the Board's further guidance as we take this work forward. We greatly value your continued engagement in this process.

## **SLIDE 13: AGENDA ITEM 6. STATUS OF AND DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME OF UN-HABITAT AND DRAFT BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS HABITAT AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS FOUNDATION FOR 2027**

Excellencies,

Turning now to Agenda item 6: The Annual Work Programme and Budget for 2027 is structured into two parts: Part A, which covers the programme of work, and Part B, which presents the post and non-post proposed budget for 2027. As requested by the Executive Board in paragraph 13 of its decision 2025/6, the draft Work Programme and Budget for 2027 has been discussed by the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters on 18th February 2026. An update on its status will be provided to the Board during the upcoming session.

The proposed work programme for 2027 is the first to be fully aligned with the Strategic Plan 2026–2029. Its structure is informed by the Plan’s strategic focus and means of implementation.

Excellencies,

Regarding the budget for 2027, as you are aware, UN-Habitat budget is prepared in two versions - one in the General Assembly format and another in the Executive Board format. The GA version is considered by ACABQ, which provides a report with recommendations.

The UN-Habitat draft budget for 2027 is being finalized based on the draft work programme and will be presented to the Executive Board only in November 2026.

**SLIDE 14: AGENDA ITEM 7: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NORMATIVE AND OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF UN-HABITAT, INCLUDING REPORTING ON PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES IN 2025 AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUBPROGRAMMES, FLAGSHIP PROGRAMMES AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES.**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

Agenda item 7 will offer in-depth insights into UN-Habitat's implementation of normative and operational activities. It will highlight examples of its country programmes in support to Brazil and Tunisia and will provide updates on the support from UN-Habitat in areas affected by conflicts and disasters, including Gaza and Ukraine. We will also provide an update on our work under the UN Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities, UNITAC.

**SLIDE 15: AGENDA ITEM 8. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS HABITAT ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME.**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

Agenda item 8 covers the update on the implementation of resolutions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first and second sessions, in 2019 and 2023 respectively. Member States may recall that, during the third open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in May 2025, UN-Habitat introduced a new approach to reporting on the implementation of these resolutions.

The report clusters implementation highlights across all relevant resolutions according to their strongest alignment with the **five** outcome areas of the Strategic Plan for 2026–2029: integrated urban and territorial planning, management, investment and finance; participatory multilevel governance and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals; knowledge, data, digitalization and capacity development; partnerships, coalitions, advocacy and communication; and effective resource mobilization—alongside the strategic focus on housing, land and basic services.

This approach demonstrates how the Strategic Plan contributes to advancing the mandates given to UN-Habitat through these resolutions. More detailed information on the financial and programmatic status of each resolution is available through the UN-Habitat online resolution tracker.

**SLIDE 16: AGENDA ITEM 9: PREPARATIONS FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE MIDTERM REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA.**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

Under agenda item 9, I will provide an update on the preparations for the General Assembly High-Level Meeting on the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda, which is scheduled for 16 to 17 July 2026, just after the High-Level Political Forum.

I am very pleased to inform you that the appointed co-facilitators, Malawi and Poland, will attend both the next session of the Executive Board and WUF13 to brief Member States and other stakeholders on the preparations for the high-level meeting.

We expect that Secretary-General report on the review of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda be made available in all six UN official languages by end of April 2026.

**SLIDE 17: HLM on the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda- ROADMAP**

This slide outlines the key milestones in the roadmap. In the interest of time, I will not go into these in detail. UN-Habitat remains fully committed to supporting Member States, the co-facilitators, and all partners throughout this process, and will continue to provide regular updates as preparations advance.

**SLIDE 18: AGENDA ITEM 10. PREPARATIONS FOR THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

Under agenda item 10, I will provide an update on the status of preparations for the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum, scheduled to take place from 17 to 22 May 2026. Preparations for WUF13, to take place in person, are well underway.

I wish to confirm that:

- formal invitations to line Ministries, Governors, Mayors and other stakeholders towards WUF13 have been sent.
- a global advocacy campaign has been leveraged, through which I presented the WUF at several forums and provided dedicated briefing to diplomatic communities. We've ensured continued engagement with stakeholders. Global stakeholder engagement will remain significant with close to 30 sessions and hundreds of participants planned so far.
- commitment and interest remain significant with over 15,000 registered participants, 40 % being international, 97% of partners confirming their partner led events, and over 120 exhibitors already selected for the Expo. The deadline for the expo has been extended to April 10th, providing a few more days to express interest.

Excellencies,

A central outcome of WUF13 will be the Baku Call to Action - an action-oriented declaration intended to guide policies and actions at the local, national, and global levels, and to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in its second decade.

We count on your continued guidance and engagement as we approach WUF13, and I encourage you to continue supporting the mobilization of stakeholders at the country and regional levels.

As I conclude on this item, I would like to sincerely thank the Government of Azerbaijan for its strong support and efforts as we advance preparations for WUF13 in Baku. I also encourage your Ministers to participate in the Ministerial Meeting at WUF13, focusing on the New Urban Agenda, to be held on Sunday, 17 May 2026. I kindly request that you share confirmations of participation from your delegations, including Ministers, to enable us to plan accordingly.

**SLIDE 19: AGENDA ITEM 11: IMPLEMENTATION BY UN-HABITAT OF THE REFORM OF THE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM AND MANAGEMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Under this agenda item, I will provide updates on UN-Habitat's continued efforts towards providing support to the repositioning of the United Nations development system, in line with General Assembly resolution 76/4.

Despite system-wide challenges, including resource constraints, I am pleased to note that UN-Habitat has met most performance indicators under the UN development system reform.

UN-Habitat has strengthened its contribution to Common Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks, engaging in at least 82% of all countries, in close collaboration with UN Country Teams under the leadership of Resident Coordinators. Details will be provided during the Board session.

**SLIDE 20: AGENDA ITEM 12: ACTION BY UN-HABITAT TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUAL OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE AND AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE.**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

Under agenda item 12, I will report on actions taken by UN-Habitat to strengthen its protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment policy in the workplace in 2025-2026.

As part of my Compact with the Secretary General, I undertake to advance the Secretary General's zero-tolerance policy relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment. I have certified in my management letter to the Secretary-General, covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2025, that UN-Habitat has fully and accurately reported all SEA allegations, ensured mandatory training for staff and affiliated personnel, and strengthened preventive and response measures. Key actions taken include enhanced inter-agency participation in the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse initiatives, strengthened accountability for implementing partners to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, continuous awareness-raising initiatives including reminders of the obligation of all personnel to complete mandatory courses on PSEA and increased the number of PSEA focal points at headquarters to three 3 Global focal points and 8 focal points for Country Offices.

UN-Habitat will continue to expand awareness campaigns, provide targeted training for outposted offices and strengthen participation in inter-agency SEA referral mechanisms. UN-Habitat reaffirms its zero-tolerance policy for any form of harassment, discrimination, or abuse of

authority and remains fully committed to implementing the UN system's highest standards in prevention, response, and accountability. I will share the detailed presentation on progress made during the main session.

**SLIDE 21: AGENDA ITEM 13: REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES.**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

On this agenda item regarding the OIOS report, you would recall that at the third session of the Executive Board in 2025, the Secretariat already provided a briefing. However, at that point the formal report of the OIOS was not yet published. That report is now part of the pre-session documents shared with Member States on 24 March 2026 and is available online. OIOS will attend and brief the Board directly on this matter.

**SLIDE 22: AGENDA ITEM 14: ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO UPDATE AND IMPROVE THE INTERNAL MANAGEMENT, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF UN-HABITAT.**

Excellencies,

Under agenda item 14, I will highlight key initiatives undertaken by UN-Habitat to strengthen its internal management policies and procedures during the year 2025. Our efforts are aimed at improving efficiency, transparency, and accountability across our operations, focusing on areas such as financial and human resource management, delegation of authority, procurement guidance, and digital workflow management, communication procedures, and legal and compliance oversight. For example, the Oversight and compliance were strengthened with the updated UN-Habitat Implementing Partnership Risk Management Policy.

**SLIDE 23: AGENDA ITEM 15: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE SESSION, INCLUDING THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF 2026.**

Excellencies,

As per standard practice, the Executive Board will also agree on a set of decisions at the upcoming session.

To facilitate these deliberations, and as requested by the Bureau, the secretariat has provided technical inputs as a basis for possible decisions to be considered by the Executive Board at the upcoming session. The ad hoc working group on PBA will meet immediately after this briefing to continue its informal consultations on the draft.

#### **SLIDE 24: AGENDA ITEM 16: ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE BUREAU.**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,

The Executive Board is also expected to elect a new Bureau. As requested by the current Bureau during its meeting on 13 February 2026, regional groups have been invited to nominate representatives for the next Bureau, covering the period 2026 to 2027.

The chairpersonship and composition of the next Bureau are now displayed on the screen and is as follows:

**Chair:** Asia-Pacific States  
**Vice-Chairs:**  
Latin American and Caribbean States  
African States  
Western European and other States  
**Rapporteur:** Eastern European States

The election will take place at the final plenary meeting of the Executive Board session, on 22 April.

#### **SLIDE 25: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

*(Possible Q&A)*

#### **SLIDE 26 TO 29: LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EXECUTIVE BOARD SESSION (TITLE SLIDE)**

Mr. Chairman, with your permission allow me to hand over to Secretariat for a quick update on logistical arrangements

#### **List of delegations and Registration for the session.**

Excellencies,

Online Registration for the session opened on Tuesday, 17 February 2026 and will close on Thursday, 16 April 2026. Registration is through UN-Habitat's Global Events Management System (GEMS) registration portal. The link is shown on the screen: <https://events.unhabitat.org/>

We request all delegates to register for the session and in addition, we would be grateful to receive formal communication from the Permanent Missions on the list of respective delegations as required by the rules of procedure. We appreciate that quite a number of Missions have already sent in their lists.

As you can see on the screen, onsite badging following online registration will take place on:

- Monday, 20 April 2026 from 08:00 to 16:00, East Africa Time (UTC + 03:00).
- Tuesday, 21 April 2026 from 08:00 to 14:00, East Africa Time (UTC + 03:00).

The location for delegates not holding a UNON ground pass to collect their badge is the at UNON Pass & ID office right by the entrance to the complex.

### **Regional Consultations and Additional Information on the session**

Excellencies,

The Secretariat has assigned rooms for possible regional consultations during the session, during the morning, prior to the start of the first plenary meeting of each day.

Additional information on the session including pre-session documents, programme and information for participants is available on the dedicated website for the session as shown on the screen.

<https://unhabitat.org/meetings/first-session-of-2026-of-the-executive-board>

\* \* \*