

UN-Habitat Working Group on Programme of Work and Budget Periodic Report to the UN-Habitat Committee of Permanent Representatives November, 2018

UN-Habitat Working Group on Work Programme and Budget (WG) held its sixth formal meeting on 20 November 2018. The session, chaired by H.E. Ambassador Fernando Coimbra, Permanent Representative of Brazil to UN-Habitat, included participation of representatives of all five regional groups. UN-Habitat's Executive Director (ED) and Deputy Executive Director (DED) and other members of its senior management represented the organization.

The agenda of the meeting and frank and informative discussions centered on: i) financial figures, austerity measures and resource mobilization, ii) management reform and staffing, iii) update on the development of the new Strategic Plan, and (iv) update on the negotiations in UNGA on the governance reform of UN-Habitat.

The Members of the Working Group on Programme and Budget commended the ED on her great progress in making UN-Habitat a transparent, accountable, relevant, partner and results-oriented, and effective organization and expressed optimism that the negotiations on the governance reform of UN-Habitat, currently underway in New York, will – finally – come to a successful conclusion before the end of 2018. While expressing concern about the financial situation of UN-Habitat, there was consensus that successful reform will pave the way for renewing Member States' interest in investing in UN-Habitat.

There was also a debate on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Working Group to the Executive Director in its last session. The secretariat presented a table containing the response to each recommendation which was accompanied by appropriate documentation and/or oral explanation by member of the staff. The group was satisfied with the response.

In the light of the positive discussions at the meeting and the envisaged establishment of an Executive Board, pending the agreement on the Governance reform, the Working Group agreed there was no need to issue actionable recommendations in this session and identified the following standing issues to be addressed on a later date:

- 1) One group of States identified a discrepancy of the number of focal areas between the Programme of Work and the Strategic Plan.
- 2) There might be the need to decide on the appropriate form to conclude the work of the Working Group on Programme and Budget pending the negotiations on the governance of UN-Habitat current underway in New York.
- 3) Should Member States decide on the need to convene the Working Group in the future, WEOG should appoint a chair from among its members.