



## **UN-Habitat – 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Executive Board Meeting - 27.10.2020**

### Statement by Switzerland

Mr. Chair,  
Madame Executive Director,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Many thanks to the Executive Director for her comprehensive presentation and to the Secretariat for the pertinent documentation.

Please allow me also to commend the Executive Director and UN-Habitat's senior management on their commitment to restructuring UN-Habitat, making it a stronger and more efficient organization, and on the results achieved so far. My delegation notes with appreciation UN-Habitat's reaction to the COVID-19 crisis both in terms of duty of care towards its own staff and its contribution to the overall UN response through project work in marginalized urban settings as well as policy work at the global level.

While the Governance reform has been concluded and the Headquarters restructuring seems to be on track, we would like to receive more information on the reform of UN-Habitat's presence at locations away from headquarters, the so-called reform of its regional architecture. Is there a time horizon when decisions will be taken?

As a primarily field- and project-oriented organization, UN-Habitat has a wealth of technical knowledge to enrich the normative and policy discussions. Switzerland encourages UN-Habitat to promote the translation of its technical experience into normative discussion at regional and global level. In particular, we see a lot of opportunities in a closer engagement of UN-Habitat with human rights and humanitarian agencies and actors to achieve maximum impact.

In Geneva, cross-cutting discussions on urban issues and innovative policy developments are taking place under the auspices of the recently created Geneva Cities Hub, which aims to facilitate relations between cities and city networks around the world and the various actors of International Geneva. Switzerland sees a lot of potential in a strengthened co-operation between the UN-Habitat Office and this Hub.

During Urban October, a successful first edition of the Forum of Mayors took place in Geneva. Switzerland welcomes UN-Habitat's role in promoting the work of local

governments and encourages this to be reinforced namely by a strong commitment to the follow-up of the Forum of Mayors.

My delegation notes with concern the challenging financial situation of UN-Habitat, which calls for a realistic budget for 2021.

Switzerland supports UN-Habitat's work on integrated urban planning, effective land management as well as local public financial management and land value capture, in countries like Afghanistan, Egypt and Vietnam. Switzerland also supports thematic work such as the Global Land Tool Network partnership and the work on key international migration-related frameworks through partnerships with Cities alliance and MC2CM (Mediterranean City to City Migration).

Finally, Switzerland has been a long-standing advocate for a well co-ordinated and well aligned UN development system. We see many opportunities for UN-Habitat in the UN Development System Reform, amongst others by injecting its technical expertise into multi-agency programming and projects.

Switzerland has been facilitating the resolution of the UN General Assembly on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Planning Review (QCPR) for many years with the conviction that a well aligned UN Development System is more efficient and more effective. My delegation strongly encourages UN-Habitat to align its strategic planning cycles with the QCPR as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.