



Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat

15 and 16 November 2021

Statement by Switzerland

Mr. Chair

Let me start by commending all countries and cities that contributed to a successful Urban October. In particular, allow me to express my gratitude to UN-Habitat's Executive Director for her visit to Geneva during Urban October. UN-Habitat's engagement with Geneva-based actors is mutually beneficial and strengthens UN-Habitat's normative role.

The UN Secretary General's new report 'Our Common Agenda' puts an emphasis on the strengthened co-operation with sub-national authorities. Switzerland suggests that relevant parts of this report and possible implication on UN-Habitat's work are presented at the next meeting of this Executive Board.

Switzerland remains concerned about the funding situation of UN-Habitat. While the donor base has been extended, the overall contributions, in particular to the Habitat Foundation Fund are still insufficient. Switzerland invites UN-Habitat to elaborate on possible impact on its Programme of Work 2022 of another deficit of the Habitat Foundation Fund at the end of this year.

Switzerland has made significant contributions this year by signing multi-year project agreements of the value of some USD 5 mio. In addition, my Government and UN-Habitat have recently agreed on soft earmarked contribution of some USD 3.3 mio. USD towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Central. This is the first soft-earmarked contribution of my country to UN-Habitat and we invite other delegations to examine this kind of innovative contribution as well.

My delegation strongly supports the alignment of UN-Habitat's planning cycle with the overall UN planning cycle, the so-called Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), which will allow for a closer integration of UN-Habitat in the UN family. My delegation takes note of the different proposals prepared by the ad-hoc Working Group on financial, budgetary and administrative matters and expects a decision to be taken by the next Habitat Assembly.

Switzerland would prefer the following alignment process: an extension of current MTS until 2025 and the holding of a short Habitat-Assembly in 2025 in lieu of the CPR meeting to adopt the new Mid-Term Strategy and Programme of Work. Having a Habitat Assembly and a CPR meeting in the same year is not justified in terms of substance and of costs. The next CPR meeting to review the strategy should be held in 2027 and the subsequent Habitat Assembly in 2029. With this schedule in mind, my delegation would like to caution against any recommendation or request of this Executive Board to the Secretariat to start preparing a new Mid Term Strategy starting in 2024.

Finally, Mr. Chair, my delegation welcomes the proposed closer linkages of UN-Habitat's normative and operational work as a result of this year's Mid-term Review of the CPR. We expect to receive some more clarity in terms of concrete consequences of the so called recalibration strategy during this session.