



**THE SECOND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS HABITAT
ASSEMBLY 5-9 JUNE 2023**

SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENT

6 JUNE 2023

UNHABITAT, NAIROBI

(Check against Delivery)

Chairperson
The Executive Director
Your Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The South African delegation is grateful for the excellent organisation by the Government of the Republic of Kenya, United Nations Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT), and the Secretariat.

South Africa aligns itself with the statement of the African Group and is delighted to participate in this assembly. South Africa is also pleased like other African Group members that the issues of adequate and affordable housing, urban climate action, urban crises recovery, localization of the SDGs, finance and prosperity are top on the agenda of the Assembly. All these are issues that are important to Africa and the world. Therefore, it is also our expectation that the assembly will apply its collective wisdom to the said challenges of the modern world and come up with key decisions and concrete actions to address these issues

South Africa believes that the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly will examine major trends, deliberate on norms and standards related to human settlements and sustainable urbanization, review progress and advise on the implementation of the New* Urban Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global agendas scheduled to be held in Nairobi Kenya from 5 to 9 June 2023.

South Africa has been championing the issue of the urgent need to accelerate transformation of informal settlements as a crucial entry point

and catalyst for sustainable development. The South African government hosted an international meeting in October 2022 to launch a process for a Global Action Plan to accelerate the transformation of informal settlements and slums to 2030. The main objective of the South African delegation to the UN habitat Assembly is, therefore, to obtain global support for this initiative during the Assembly.

In this regard, South Africa supported by the member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) initiated a resolution on ***Accelerating the Transformation of Informal Settlements and Slums, to be considered during the Assembly***. The resolution speaks to the core dimensions of the New Urban Agenda with social, economic, environmental and spatial sustainability translated into the reduction of spatial inequality towards spatial justice, fostering social inclusion and integrated governance, reduction of poverty towards economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability and protection. South Africa is of the view that Member States will continue to be the source of funding for implementation of this resolution. On that note my delegation acknowledges with appreciation the commitment by Member States to global action to accelerate efforts for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11, and its target 11.1.

Other resolutions being considered, which my delegation is ready to support, include the resolutions on adequate housing for all, sustainable infrastructure and planning, disaster risk management, climate change, smart cities, biodiversity management, and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, among others.

In partnership with the Government of South Africa, UN-Habitat is in the

process of developing a Country Programme that is based on mutually agreed priorities for the purpose of providing focused technical assistance to the country in its pursuit of sustainable urbanization. South Africa's State law advisors, the UN-Habitat's Legal Services section and the UN-Resident Coordinator's Office in South Africa are exchanging draft legal texts regarding the establishment of the UN-Habitat Country Programme in South Africa.

Executive Director, South Africa is of the view that the development of norms and standards in the International Human Rights system is relevant. Furthermore, South Africa believes that the UN-Habitat activities should be improving urban safety, building urban resilience, supporting municipal capacity and local economic development and the overall implementation and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda, whilst continuing to place improving the living conditions of informal settlement dwellers and ensuring access for all to adequate housing at the centre of its work.

In conclusion, Madam Executive Director, South Africa also aligns itself with the Statement made by His Excellency Beyene Russom, Ambassador of the State of Eritrea on behalf of the 54 member states of the Africa Group. South Africa supports the alignment of UN-Habitat planning cycles and cycle of election of the offices of the governing bodies with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review as recommended by the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat and endorsed by the Bureau of the UN-Habitat Assembly.

I thank you for your kind attention