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United Nations Habitat Assembly of the  
United Nations Human Settlements Programme  
Second session  
Nairobi, 5–9 June 2023

## **Resolution adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly on 9 June 2023**

### **2/2. Accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030**

*The United Nations Habitat Assembly,*

*Recalling* Governing Council resolution 24/7 of 19 April 2013 on making slums history and Sustainable Development Goal 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, along with its target 11.1 – by 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services, and upgrade slums – which together establish the link between well-managed urbanization and improving the lives of slum and informal settlement dwellers,

*Recalling also* that the New Urban Agenda<sup>1</sup> includes an implementation plan to address sustainable urbanization and human settlements and is a critical lever for accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 11,

*Noting* that a slum<sup>2</sup> is an informal settlement or housing in which the majority of households experience one or more of the following deprivations: lack of secure tenure, lack of access to improved water sources, lack of improved sanitation facilities, lack of security or safety, insufficient living space, poor structural durability of the dwelling,

*Recognizing* that the creation of sustainable human settlements is one of the key developmental challenges facing the global community and that the rapid urbanization being experienced in many countries is often accompanied by an urbanization of poverty as people migrate to cities to escape lack of opportunities, poverty, conflict, lack of access to basic services, the negative impact of climate change and other hardships,

*Recognizing also* that much of urban expansion takes place in slums and informal settlements, that many cities and towns are inadequately prepared for unprecedented levels of population growth and do not have sufficient capacity to accommodate them, and that infrastructure is not always capable of absorbing the influx,

*Acknowledging* that the global spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has exacerbated social, economic and political challenges, as inhabitants of slums and informal settlements are often excluded from wealth, health and socioeconomic safety nets and basic service delivery, are reliant on informal economies, and live in high-density areas with limited security of tenure and often in hazardous environments,

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See Governing Council resolution 24/7.

*Acknowledging* the findings in the United Nations publication *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022* highlighting the fact that Sustainable Development Goal indicator 11.1.1 – reduce the proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing – is one of nine indicators whose implementation has regressed globally, and stressing the need for more concerted efforts to meet the target by 2030,

*Underlining* the need to accelerate action to improve living conditions in slums and informal settlements as one of the most pressing problems of the twenty-first century, including addressing the needs of the estimated 1 billion people currently living in slums, according to the Secretary-General's 2022 report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals,<sup>3</sup> and the additional 2 billion people expected to be living in slums within the next 30 years,<sup>4</sup>

*Acknowledging* efforts by Member States to address the plight of slum and informal settlement dwellers through various programmes, including in-situ upgrades and relocation of dwellers to adequate and affordable housing,

*Appreciating* the contribution of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and recognizing that the Programme has provided a joint vision of what is needed to scale transformative actions in informal settlements and slums, and welcoming the slum upgrading programmes implemented by UN-Habitat in various countries,

*Taking note* of the launch by UN-Habitat of the *Global Action Plan: Accelerating for Transforming Informal Settlements and Slums by 2030*<sup>5</sup> at the international meeting hosted by the Government of South Africa in October 2022,

1. *Calls* for the use of the seven years remaining until 2030 to build the foundation for a transformation meeting the needs of today's estimated 1 billion<sup>6</sup> slum and informal settlement dwellers, a number expected to reach 3 billion by 2050,<sup>7</sup> if no action is taken;
2. *Urges* the transformation of slums and informal settlements by 2030 as part of a long-term, sustainable plan for transforming our neighbourhoods and cities into integrated urban settlements that accommodate, support and enable a decent standard of living for all who inhabit them, thus transforming slums and informal settlements into functional settlements where people can access adequate, safe, liveable and affordable housing and other basic services, including water, education, health and waste management, among others;
3. *Supports* the following 10 key actions towards scaling slum transformation:
  - (a) *Promote multi-level participatory governance:* Adopt a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach involving integrated frameworks with multisectoral horizontal and vertical coordination among government spheres at all levels, enabling democratic and effective participation by all groups, especially communities and civil society, to ensure that the capacities of the public and private sectors and civil society are fully leveraged;
  - (b) *Conduct spatial planning:* Strengthen land management and the statutory planning of land for the citywide recognition of informal settlements and their integration into the urban fabric, maximizing the availability and use of and access to public land for adequate housing purposes; design strategies for balanced densification, including development of city peripheries, to foster rural-urban connections and avoid unplanned urban expansion that negatively impacts the environment; bolster urban development in secondary cities and neighbourhoods vulnerable to sudden and slow onset shocks and stresses; ensure equitable and empowered participation of inhabitants for direct involvement in integrated planning of and decision-making in – considering the role of agency, bottom-up approaches and community networking – these particular territories in the development of local and sustainable solutions to enable culturally adequate and inclusive design of interventions and solutions, following sustainable, people-centred, age-, gender- and disability-responsive integrated approaches to urban development;

<sup>3</sup> E/2022/55, para. 109.

<sup>4</sup> UN-Habitat, *World Cities Report 2022: Envisaging the Future of Cities* (Nairobi, 2022), p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://unhabitat.org/global-action-plan-accelerating-for-transforming-informal-settlements-and-slums-by-2030>.

<sup>6</sup> E/2022/55.

<sup>7</sup> UN-Habitat, *World Cities Report 2022*, p. 79.

(c) *Collect data:* Improve methodologies for mapping and enumeration to more accurately reflect the reality of informal settlements and households and disaggregate data; collect data across all settlements, regardless of tenure status or legal regularization, through an integrated approach that goes beyond the isolated settlement level, including data on transformation costs and affordability as well as the impact of interventions and the dynamics of movements of households after interventions; ensure data availability and the use of available data for decision-making at the national, subnational, local, city and settlement levels;

(d) *Develop policies:* Design and review enabling, user-friendly and simplified legal, regulatory, planning, investment and institutional frameworks at the national, local and city levels, establishing transformation targets with a long-term perspective and midterm benchmarks, to create, mandate and equip institutions for implementation;

(e) *Implement adequate housing:* Target incremental and progressive provision of habitable, accessible, affordable and resilient housing coupled with the creation of socioeconomic opportunities and sustainable livelihoods;

(f) *Diversify finance:* Establish and adequately resource flexible finance models to respond to the needs of lowest-income groups and communities, accommodating mechanisms for localization and responsiveness; apply integrated fiscal transfers enabling slum transformation to be scaled up and leveraging multiple partnerships and investments, including from the private sector, civil society, communities and international financial institutions; strengthen municipal fiscal health in areas such as public financial management, as well as including land-based finance mechanisms and implementation of special vehicles as intermediary instruments especially for smaller municipalities to coordinate and mobilize funds from government, the private sector, financial institutions and other partners; establish accountability frameworks to monitor the application of mobilized resources in the progressive achievement of transformation benchmarks; encourage funding for collective infrastructure and basic services supportive of housing;

(g) *Manage land:* Recognize the social function of public and private land through guaranteeing secure tenure and land regularization and increasing the affordable supply of well-located land for housing by using underutilized and vacant land and buildings, without minimizing their environmental benefits or social functions; recognize the continuum of land rights and property rights and ensure safeguards in cases of relocation, which is to be minimized and negotiated, avoiding forced evictions, in accordance with national legislation;

(h) *Strengthen community resilience and empowerment:* Produce and create new knowledge based on local experiences with resilience and community approaches, including place-based adaptation and mitigation measures for multiple environmental and social risks, establishing platforms to enable horizontal exchange between stakeholders to enhance capacities; support innovation in identifying the potential of the community regarding data generation and solution finding in collaboration with public agencies; implement actions to strengthen community-based organization; support and identify key stakeholders in communities and include them in planning and implementation processes; draw on community capacity and skills for economic development and job creation;

(i) *Advance skills and education:* Collaborate with universities, technical schools, non-governmental organizations and other institutions to develop and promote courses on slum and informal settlement transformation, capturing knowledge and experiences from practitioners, research and case studies;

(j) *Promote collaboration for implementation:* Initiate open and regular dialogue at all levels of governance, engaging with other ministries from the national and subnational levels of government, civil society and communities, the private sector, media and academia to specify and review key action areas and identify key actions; pursue multiple partnership frameworks at different levels – global, regional, national, local – and participate in regional consultations to inform the way forward, expanding and diversifying existing partnerships in consolidated and coordinated structures, and promoting exchanges, including at regularly held international events, such as the biennial World Urban Forum;

4. *Encourages* Member States to accelerate transformative action in slums and informal settlements and take relevant measures in view of the anticipated growth of slums, in line with the 10 key actions outlined in paragraph 3 above, and putting the needs of slum dwellers first;

5. *Urges* the Executive Director of UN-Habitat and Member States to continue to place the transformation of slums and informal settlements at the centre of UN-Habitat strategic planning and programmes;
  6. *Requests* the Executive Director to mobilize the necessary resources to ensure technical support capacities for the transformation of slums and informal settlements;
  7. *Also requests* the Executive Director to consult with Member States and other relevant stakeholders on joint actions for accelerated scaling of the transformation of slums and informal settlements, in line with the 10 key actions outlined in paragraph 3 above;
  8. *Further requests* the Executive Director to, subject to the availability of resources, develop a technical guideline for a multiple partnership approach, building on existing tools and knowledge for informal settlements and slum transformation.
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