

The EU and its MS Statement for the closure of the Executive Board meeting of UN Habitat (30 November 2023)

Dear Executive Director, Chair, Excellences

I appreciate the possibility to address the Executive Board of UN Habitat, on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

We are concluding the third Executive Board meeting of 2023. But looking back, we had a very busy year, with three Executive Board meetings and with a successful completion of the second UN Habitat Assembly.

With the substantive outcomes, the Assembly did set us on a good path for delivering better on the mandate of UN Habitat, but also tasked us with the implementation of these outcomes.

This session of the Executive Board leaves us with some more important decisions. The EU and its MS are pleased with the agreement on the Programme of Work and Budget for 2024, which has bigger budget compared to 2023.

This reflects a better financial situation of UN Habitat and shows a growing Member States trust in the Programme. We express our appreciation to all UN MS that provided financial contributions to UN Habitat.

We are also satisfied with making progress on other matters, such as the decision allowing UN Habitat to enter into a contribution agreement with the Sustainable Human Settlements Foundation. We hope for, and we wish a smooth start for this innovative mechanism.

The EU and its MS also applaud an agreement, giving more resources for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and for better delivery towards the achievement of the SDGs. These are key priorities for all of us and we look forward to make progress on NUA and SDG implementation.

In addition The EU and its MS have high expectations for the role of the UN Habitat on the localisation of the SDGs, to be implemented through the Local 2030 Coalition.

We thank for the roadmap on the development of the international guidelines on people centred smart cities. The EU and its MS are looking forward to engage in the inclusive consultative process.

We also appreciate a clear roadmap to develop the new Strategic plan, and we emphasise our readiness to engage in the preparation of this new Plan together with the other Member States, to deliver a robust and focused outcome with clear priorities. In this way we hope to fulfil the request of the ED Maimunah Mohd

Sharif, where she asked, on the first day of this meeting, the MS to take seriously their oversight role.

The EU and its MS also reiterate our support to UN Habitat in fulfilling its mandate in assisting countries affected by natural disasters and conflicts. We have been witnessing conflicts and disastrous natural events, with devastating impacts on rural and urban areas in the recent past, and we see a role for UN Habitat to help all countries affected.

Finally, Chair, before closing allow me to share our sincere and warm thanks to the Executive Director for her strong and stable leadership of the UN Habitat over her term in Nairobi. We can only agree with all positive words shared by so many countries at the beginning of the meeting and in particular we echo others in saying, that the Executive Director is leaving UN Habitat in a better place and in a much more trusted relation with the MS, than before.

We sincerely thank you Executive Director, on behalf of the EU and its MS, for your excellent engagement with us at your last Executive Board But even more, we thank you for your leadership and for your hard work throughout the last 6 years. We wish you all the best for your future endeavours.

I thank you Chair.