

1. Opening of the session.

-Honorable Chair, thank you for giving me the floor. I want to extend Brazil's warmest wishes for your chairmanship of this second session of the Executive Board in 2024. We are confident that, under your guidance, this session will conclude with a strong sense of accomplishment and meaningful outcomes.

-We commend the Secretariat for diligently preparing this session. Madam Executive Director, as Brazil addresses the plenary for the first time during this session, we warmly welcome you to your inaugural Executive Board meeting. We also congratulate you on the remarkable work accomplished in your initial months at the helm of UN-Habitat.

As President Lula recently highlighted at the Urban 20 meeting in Rio de Janeiro, we are confident that your leadership will be pivotal in supporting national and local governments in tackling the urban crisis through science-based, effective public policies.

-With approximately 85% of Brazil's population residing in urban areas, we recognize both the significant challenges and the transformative opportunities in urban development. The New Urban Agenda and the SDGs continue to serve as guiding frameworks for our national policies.

Lastly, we reaffirm Brazil's steadfast support for UN-Habitat as the leading entity in promoting sustainable urbanization and human settlements. We look forward to working in partnership with the Program to build cities that leave no one behind.

2. Organizational matters:

1. Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the second session of 2024;

2. Adoption of the report of the Executive Board on the work of its first session of 2024.

3. Reports of the ad hoc working groups established by the Executive Board.

-Regarding agenda item 3, Brazil congratulates Colombia and Portugal for their outstanding leadership of the ad hoc working groups on PBA and stakeholder engagement policy.

-We acknowledge the constructive discussions that have taken place throughout the year within these groups, allowing us to reach this session of the Executive Board with a mature understanding of the accomplishments and challenges that lay before us.

-Brazil is pleased with the progress achieved on the development of a stakeholder engagement policy. We wish to emphasize the need to reform the accreditation system and the importance of exploring new mechanisms to promote transparency and the effective engagement of civil society, in line with Governing Council Resolution 26/7.

-Brazil strongly supports stakeholder engagement in the work of UN-Habitat. We firmly believe that the active involvement of civil society strengthens the Programme and enhances its capacity to deliver impactful outcomes on the ground.

-Thus, we are hopeful that Member States will continue constructive negotiations toward finalizing a draft stakeholder engagement policy, with a view to its presentation to the United Nations Habitat Assembly for consideration and possible adoption in 2025.

4. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters.

-Brazil commends the Secretariat for its diligent efforts in maintaining control over UN-Habitat's expenses in alignment with available revenue, ensuring sound financial management of the Programme.

-Although the formal report of this session is on the financial situation as of 30 June 2024, we are pleased to have learned that the updated figure of non-earmarked contributions stands at approximately USD 4.6 million. Furthermore, we note with optimism that this amount could potentially reach USD 6 million if all pledges made by Member States are realized before the end of the year.

-We take note of the projection that the USD 3 million loan, undertaken by the Foundation's non-earmarked fund in 2017, is expected to be fully repaid by 2027, assuming annual repayments of USD 0.5 million. In this regard, we would appreciate confirmation on whether UN-Habitat has made a repayment in 2024 and whether it intends to make another in 2025. Additionally, we seek clarification on the potential benefits of increasing the annual repayment amount, should circumstances permit, to expedite settlement of the debt before 2027.

-Concerning the Financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended in 31 December and Report of the Board of Auditors, we would like clarification from the Secretariat on the measures being implemented to address the deficiencies identified by the Board of Auditors in the three-fold implementation framework of the New Urban Agenda.

-Finally, Brazil would like further clarification on the timeline for implementing the outstanding recommendations of the Board of Auditors, especially those that have been pending for over a year.

5. Consideration and possible approval of the draft work programme of UN-Habitat and the draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2025.

-Brazil expresses its support for the draft non-earmarked budget for 2025. Recognizing the sustained financial stability UN-Habitat has achieved in recent years and the importance of maintaining the ambition to expand the Program, we endorse the implementation of the first package of the scalability model.

-In this regard, we are confident that the provisions set out in Annex III of the draft work programme and budget will receive the approval of this Executive Board. Furthermore, we are optimistic that non-earmarked contributions will reach the required threshold for the first package to be effectively operationalized.

-The implementation of the first package of the scalability model in 2025 will provide Member States with valuable insights into its applicability and utility within the broader framework of the next strategic plan. Therefore, Brazil requests the Secretariat, in line with Decision 2023/4, to address the observations of the ACABQ, particularly regarding the need for further refinement of the scalability model.

-Lastly, regarding the report of the ACABQ on the draft work and programme budget, we request clarification from the Secretariat on instances of underexpenditure and overexpenditure related to resource requirements for 2023 and 2024. This follows the ACABQ's specific recommendation that justifications for such variances should be provided to the Executive Board during its consideration of the report.