

Summary of discussions and recommendations emanating for the Bureau meeting held virtually on 19 March 2020 from 14:30 to 15:30

Agenda item	Discussion	Recommendation from the Bureau
1.	Adoption of the Agenda	
	Continuation of the discussions on the impact of COVID-19 in Kenya on the scheduled first session of 2020 of the Executive Board to be held on 31 March and 1 April 2020.	Adoption of the Agenda
2.	Continuation of the discussions on the impact of COVID-19 in Kenya on the scheduled first session of 2020 of the Executive Board to be held on 31 March and 1 April 2020.	
	<p>a) The Chair updated the Bureau on his consultations with WEOG and non WEOG Member States with respect to the upcoming first session of the Executive Board, after the Bureau meeting on 18 March 2020. He informed that the result of his consultations was a recommendation that a the upcoming first session of the Executive Board be postponed and that he further agrees with that recommendation.</p>	The Bureau took note of this information.
	<p>b)Some members of the Bureau expressed flexibility on the way forward with respect to postponing or holding virtually the upcoming first session of the Executive Board. Member States noted concerns raised by some Permanent Missions and Embassies that most of their staffs are now focused on the management of the Covid-19 outbreak and may not have the time or capacity to prepare for the upcoming session of the Executive Board, even if held virtually.</p>	The Bureau took note of the concerns expressed.

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	<p>c)Some members of the Bureau expressed the preference that the technical feasibility of a virtual session should be fully explored so that Member States could remain fully engaged with UN-Habitat’s activities even in these difficult circumstances, notably in light of the difficult financial situation of the Organization. They noted that UN-Habitat would need a stable financial base to fully fulfill its mandate.</p>	<p>The Bureau took note of this concern and agreed that Member States should remain involved in UN-Habitat’s activities.</p>
	<p>d)Virtual informal consultations on draft outcomes to be adopted by the upcoming session of the Executive Board would be technically challenging, notably when negotiating specific and technical language.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
	<p>e)Conference Services provided the following additional information with respect to interpretation in all six languages during a virtual meeting:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">For participants to benefit from interpretation in the event of a virtual session, the session should be web streamed in all six languages. Conference Services would need to create a dedicated Youtube channel for the six languages.</p> <p>The provision of interpretation services will depend a lot on the participants end connection speed and equipment readiness. Interpreters will need to hear very clearly all the speakers to be able to translate accurately. The interpreters may stop at any given time should the quality of the interpretation be affected. Moreover, the possibility of interruption of interpretation is considerably high. The technical setting may not allow the interpretation of oral</p>	<p>The Bureau took note of the additional information provided by Conference Services.</p>

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	<p>contributions made by Member States in two of the official languages.</p> <p>The Secretary to the Governing Bodies would have to be physically present in the same meeting room where interpreters are working and acts as a moderator. Remote participants would have to inscribe themselves on the list of speakers directly with the Secretariat by other means such as SMS, WhatsApp message, or chat within the VTC system.</p>	
	f)In light of the information provided by Conference Services on the interpretation in all six official languages during a virtual session, ensuring interpretation during the first session could be technically challenging.	Agreed
	g)Some Members of the Bureau also emphasized that in the event of a virtual first session of the Executive Board, it should be in full compliance with the rules of procedure of the Executive Board.	Agreed
	h)In the event a virtual session of the Executive Board is held, it should be in full compliance with the requirement of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board as it pertains inter-alia to interpretation of the discussions in all six official languages and with respect to the decision making process.	Agreed
	i)In light of the possible technical challenges in the event of a virtual first session of the Executive Board and in light of the uncertain and evolving situation of Covid-19 in Kenya, the upcoming first session of the Executive Board should be postponed to a later date..	The Bureau agreed to postpone the upcoming first session of the Executive Board for the year 2020 to a later date.

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	j)Considering UN-Habitat’s current financial situation and the status of voluntary contributions, it is however crucial that Member States remain fully engaged with the Organization, especially on the funding situation, on the draft work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2021 and on UN-Habitat’s activities.	Agreed
	k)Until new dates of the first session of the year 2020 of Executive Board are confirmed, the Executive Director should provide briefings to Member States every three or four weeks with Questions & Answers sessions.	Agreed
	l)The briefings by the Executive Director could be held virtually and in English language only.	Agreed
	m)The Executive Director should provide a briefing to Member States on Tuesday 31 March 2020 with a specific focus on administrative, budgetary and administrative matters of UN-Habitat and the current financial situation.	Agreed
	n)The Secretariat should share with Member States, a short and concise document on the budgetary situation of UN-Habitat and detailing in a simple manner scenarios and consequences of lack of funding and its effect on the Organization and on the implementation of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan for the period 2020-2023. This paper brief should be transmitted to Member States before the briefing by the Executive Director to be held on 31 March 2020. This would allow for a better understanding of the situation.	Agreed
	o)In addition, UN-Habitat has been requested to do a brief paper on the funding situation for Permanent Missions to share with their capitals so as to raise awareness on the financial situation of UN-Habitat	Agreed

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	and on the importance of contributing to the budget of the Organization.	
	p)The Ad-Hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters of the Executive Board could meet virtually to ensure the continuity of the discussions on technical matters, with a specific focus on the financial situation of UN-Habitat and the draft work programme and budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2021. The Chair of the Executive Board will liaise with the Chair of the Ad-hoc working group to ascertain her thoughts on the possibility of holding virtual meeting during these exceptional circumstances.	Agreed
	q) On the issue on election, the legal adviser recalled Rule 9.1 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board which provides that ‘Executive Board shall, at its first regular session each year, elect from among its members, taking into consideration the need to ensure equitable geographical representation, a Bureau comprising a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, who shall hold office until their successors are elected’ and therefore confirmed that the current Bureau has the mandate to continue its work until the next Bureau is elected at the next session of the Executive Board.	The Bureau took note of the legal advice with respect to the mandate of the current Bureau.
	r) Current members of the Bureau should hold office until the next session of the Executive Board.	Agreed