



2024 third Bureau Meeting of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat

Hybrid format – Monday, 22 April 2024

15:00-16:30 hrs. East Africa Time (EAT)

Statement by H.E Mr. Mr. Pedro Leon Cortes Ruiz

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Colombia to UN-Habitat and Chair of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary, and administrative matters of the Executive Board

Agenda item 3: Status of draft decisions to be possibly adopted during the first session of the Executive Board in 2024.

Thank you, Madam Chair for giving me the floor.

Excellencies,

Members of the Secretariat,

It is my distinct pleasure to join you at this Bureau meeting and to brief you on Agenda item 3 which is “*Status of draft decisions to be possibly adopted during the first session of the Executive Board in 2024*”.

Let me first confirm that the Secretariat indeed shared with Member States the draft technical inputs towards the draft decisions to be considered by the Executive Board at the forth coming session, as already noted by the Executive Director.

Consequently, the ad hoc ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary, and administrative matters of the Executive Board at its fiftieth meeting held on 17 April 2024, undertook the first informal consultations on the draft decisions.

In particular, there were general comments: on Draft Decision 2024/A which is “*Draft work programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and draft budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for 2025, and financial, budgetary and administrative matters and the strategic plan of UN-Habitat*”

This was then followed by paragraph by paragraph reading of that decision.

On general comments:

1. A number of Member States noted that they were still liaising with their capitals and would revert at the next meeting with their specific inputs.
2. Member States noted that the draft decision language was mostly neutral and encouraged a more proactive language. For example, in circumstances where “Takes note” were used, other verbs such as “Welcomes” or “Acknowledges” would be preferred and in this regard some legal support would be beneficial.

During the reading of the paragraphs in draft decision 2024/A:

1. It became apparent that a number of Member States wished to see an introduction of language related to the “re-costing” of the draft budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2025. This was occasioned by the clear explanation by the secretariat related to the recent increase in staff salaries which would need to be reflected in the draft budget and possibly in the scalability model as well. Some suggestions in this regard have been made by Member States and we hope this can be further discussed at the next information consultations.
2. There is still also debate on whether or not to include the exact amount of the proposed budget for the year 2025 at this early stage in the draft decisions, given the expected changes in the budget and also the fact that the draft budget for 2025 would only be approved at the second session of 2024. That discussion is still quite open.

Madam Chair

Excellencies

Though we did not proceed to the reading of the other draft decisions, there were general comments related to draft decision 2024/C, with particular reference to the Sustainable Urban resilience for the next Generation (SURGe) Initiative.

1. In this regard, Member States have requested the Secretariat to include the language on the particular options for operationalizing the initiative within the draft decisions.
2. Member States also requested further information on the complementarities between SURGe Initiative and the Building Climate Resilience for the Urban Poor (BCRUP) initiative.
3. There was also an emerging debate on the interpretation of the request indicated in paragraph 3 of the Resolution 2/5 of the UN-Habitat Assembly as related to “Options and Recommendations” for operationalizing the SURGe initiative. The understanding of some Member States was that the Executive Director is to provide both options and recommendations, while for others the expectation is that the ED is to provide recommendations on the options for operationalizing the SURGe initiative.

Madam Chair, Excellencies

We look forward to making greater progress at our next informal consultations scheduled for 29 April 2024, both morning and afternoon.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Back to you