

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates, and esteemed Members of the Executive Board,

As we draw this first session of the Executive Board for 2024 to a close, I would like to express my profound gratitude for the dedication and insightful contributions that each one of you has brought to our discussions here in Nairobi. Over the past three days, we have engaged in deep and meaningful dialogues that have not only challenged us but also encouraged us to think innovatively about our common goal to achieve sustainable urban development worldwide.

I am deeply grateful to His Excellency Ahmed Musa Dangiwa, Minister of Urban Housing and Development of Nigeria who has dependably led us through the plenary sessions over the last few days, as well as Honourable Pedro Leon Cortes Ruiz, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Colombia to UN-Habitat, who, as the Chair of the informal consultations on draft Decisions, as provided steadfast support to all delegates in negotiating the language for Decisions that have been adopted. I would also thank Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), who joined us during the opening session, Ms. Paula Narváez, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) who provided strong words of support to the convening of our Executive Board, as well as Honourable Alice Wahome, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development of Kenya who reconfirmed the government's continued support to our mission and Ms. Fatoumata Ndiaye, Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services for their support in proactively improving UN-Habitat's strategic plan and relevance. I also acknowledge all delegations whose time and commitment to UN-Habitat I value tremendously.

We have made several key decisions, and received notable commitments from Country Representatives pledging non-earmarked contribution to UN-Habitat in 2024, and I encourage other Member States to follow suit. The issue of lack of funds has been raised during most of the Agenda items throughout our deliberations, and it is evident that UN-Habitat requires a significant boost in funding in order to effectively deliver on the resolutions and normative commitments in order to truly be a Centre of Excellence on sustainable urban development.

To turn back to a positive note, we are deeply grateful for the strong commitment from our Member States for our resolutions on housing and the SURGE initiative, the upcoming Summit of the Future and 12<sup>th</sup> World Urban Forum, as well as UN-Habitat's involvement in COP29. We are also grateful for your support in our process to develop a new Strategic Plan 2026-2029, built on the lessons from the past, and the practical recommendations made by

OIOS and the MOPAN assessment. As advised, we will make sure that Member States are closely consulted throughout the process.

All these decisions, commitments and actions mark significant steps toward addressing some of the most pressing challenges faced by urban areas around the world—be it climate change, urban poverty, housing, or ensuring equitable access to urban spaces for all. Your engagement and resolutions have demonstrated a unified vision and a shared responsibility that transcends borders and unites us in a common purpose.

On our end, we will do our part to push our key programmes and priorities ahead, ensuring that we remain as strong as ever and that our mission and legacy is truly felt by the cities communities whose lives we impact for the better. We continue to optimize and strengthen our internal management systems, streamlining policies and enhancing operational procedures in order to deliver programmes effectively in all countries around the world.

As we conclude, let us carry forward the spirit of collaboration and urgency that has characterized this meeting. I am grateful for your efforts in contributing to the process of negotiating on our resolutions and decisions, providing direct guidance from your Member States. Let our deliberations here in Nairobi be a catalyst for action as we return to our respective cities and communities. Remember, the work does not stop when we leave this room; rather, it begins anew with renewed vigor and a clearer direction.

Finally, I wish to extend my gratitude to our hosts, the city of Nairobi and the UN Office here in Nairobi, for their warm hospitality and to all supporting staff for their impeccable organization and support that have contributed to the success of this Executive Board meeting.

Thank you all once again for your commitment and hard work. I look forward to seeing the fruits of our efforts as we meet again soon, continuing to build on the solid foundation we have laid here.

Safe travels, good health, and continued success to each of you until we convene again.

Thank you.

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