

INTERVENTION BY SOUTH AFRICA:

1<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN  
SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME,  
6-8 MAY 2024

Thank you, chair, for giving me the platform for intervention on behalf of South Africa in this important occasion. My delegation and I wish to congratulate you and Nigeria on the chairmanship of the Executive Board.

Since it is the first time to speak, my delegation would like to begin by appreciating the efforts of the secretariat for organising the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the year 2024.

Mr Chair, allow me and my delegation to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of the Republic of Kenya on the loss of lives experienced in the wake of the devastating floods in many parts of the country. Our prayers and thoughts are with the families, friends and loved ones of the deceased while also wishing a speedy recovery of the injured.

Mr Chair, allow me to state upfront that South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 plus China, the statement delivered by Cameroon on behalf of the Africa Group, and many other member states who applauded the Acting Executive Director for the job well done in preparation for this session including meetings with the regional groups prior to this Executive Board meeting.

Mr Chair, South Africa would like to thank, the Acting Executive Director and the Secretariat for the working documents that were presented well in advance to enable member states to participate fully in this meeting.

Mr Chair, in relation to agenda item 9, my delegation has taken note of the Update on the implementation of all the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Regarding, Resolution 2/2: Accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030, my delegation has noted that the implementation of resolution 2/2 has been hindered by declining extrabudgetary resources. However, my delegation welcomes a concept note requesting technical assistance funding that has been developed.

We further underline that synergies exist with the resolution HSP/HA.2/Res.7 Adequate Housing for All, especially with regard to assessing efforts to progressively realize adequate housing for all, documenting policy best practices, developing a framework for measuring and reporting, fostering inter-governmental collaboration, and mapping existing multilateral and bilateral support. We urge the Secretariat to take advantage of these synergies to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

We would like to highlight our joint efforts in implementing the resolutions in the Southern African region, particularly the acceleration of the transformation of informal settlements and slums.

Mr Chair, in support of UN-Habitat implementing the resolution, and with its help, the South African Government has proposed an initiative titled *“Towards the development of the Southern African Development Community Regional Strategy on Accelerated Transformation of Informal Settlements”*. The proposed strategy seeks to present informal settlements as an avenue to achieve sustainable urban development. This initiative is meant to complement and support the Southern African Development Community’s Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, the African Union Agenda 2063, the New Urban Agenda, and the United Nations Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development.

Progress to date includes:

1. The formation of the Technical Working Group, constituted by experts from Southern African Development Community Members States, supported by UN-Habitat and the SADC Secretariat, has been formalised to prepare the strategy with sub-committees in line with the priorities identified.

2. An outline of an indicator framework as part of the diagnostic phase of the strategy preparation has been adopted, as well a proposal for the establishment of a Regional Knowledge Hub for learning exchanges.
  
3. In March 2024, the development of the SADC strategy was officially endorsed by the SADC Council of Ministers. The SADC Secretariat committed to co-facilitate the engagements and lead the regional mobilisation together with the South African Department of Human Settlements and UN-Habitat as a coordinating committee. The activities are in line with a broader partnership agreement with UN-Habitat. As part of the roadmap, Ministerial meetings are planned in September and November.

Chair, South Africa would welcome Executive Board members' support for:

- Other regions to engage in a similar process or build on past strategic frameworks to expand the learning to the global level and elevate it to a global collective undertaking.
- The organisation of an international meeting to further the guidelines and continue the global momentum around the urgency and potential inclusive and tangible solutions to reaching the blueprint for scaling until 2030 as mentioned in the resolution.
- Champion countries and financing partners to support these initiatives financially and in-kind to achieve its maximum impact.

THANK YOU, CHAIR,