



STATEMENT BY THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT MR. CHARLES HINGA, MBS DURING THE FIRST OPEN-ENDED HIGH-LEVEL MIDTERM REVIEW MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (CPR) ON 29TH JUNE 2021

**The President of the United Nations General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir
President of the UN-Habitat Assembly, Ms. Martha Delgado
Director General UNON, H.E. Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura
Executive Director, UN HABITAT, Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Honorable Ministers and Heads of delegations
Excellences
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Kenya delegation, I take this opportunity to welcome and thank the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. **Volkan Bozkir** for taking time off his busy schedule to participate in this Midterm review. This is a demonstration of the importance the United Nations attaches to the realization of transformative change in cities and human settlements.

Allow me on from the onset to commend the Executive Director and her team, the Bureau of the CPR and the Executive Board for effecting the new governance structure of UN-Habitat. I also wish to recognize UN-Habitat's role in supporting Member States in the implementation and reporting of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular SDG 11, the New Urban Agenda, as well as other global commitments.



Distinguished delegates

This meeting is aimed at reviewing the implementation of the strategic plan of UN-Habitat for the period 2020-2023, progress made in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the implementation of the resolutions and decision adopted by United Nations Habitat Assembly at its first session in 2019. It will also receive and consider the report of the Executive Director on the implementation of the UN-Habitat COVID-19 response plan among other agenda items. This review is fundamental as it will provide useful feedback that will improve the visibility and performance of UN-Habitat in promoting sustainable urbanization.

Urbanization is real, inevitable and irreversible. More than half of the world's population presently live in urban areas. However, urban settings are a constantly evolving phenomenon in human history. Just under 1-in-3 people in urban areas globally live in slums and informal settlements. Africa's urbanization rate continues to grow rapidly compared to other continents. Further, Kenya like other African countries is experiencing a rapid urbanization rate, estimated at 4.23% per annum. By 2030, urbanization in Kenya is estimated to be at 54%. This trend has serious negative effects with regard to demand for urban land and services. Achieving the desired balance of services in the urban space calls for integrated urban development.



The five flagship programs under UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan which include: People centered smart cities, Resilient settlements for the Urban Poor, Inclusive vibrant neighborhood and communities, enhancing positive impacts of Urban Migration and Sustainable Development Goal Cities are relevant and critical in guiding Member States to achieve sustainable urban development. Kenya supports the implementation of UN-Habitat Strategic Plan for the period 2020–2023 which aims at positioning the organization as a Global Centre of Excellence and innovation. We note that the scope of this midterm review is limited to the period, **1st January 2020** to **31st March 2021** (15 months), and are hopeful that the objectives of the plan will be fully realized in the remaining period.

Kenya takes note of financial constraints faced by UN-Habitat occasioned by the imbalance between the Non-earmarked and earmarked funding. We call upon Member States to honour their contribution to the UN-Habitat Non –Earmarked fund to enable UN-Habitat carry out its normative and operative activities and enable resources and programmes to be spread to areas where they are needed.

Ladies and gentlemen

The New Urban Agenda represents a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future. Kenya fully supports its implementation. To this end, we pioneered the development of a popular version of the New Urban Agenda in 2017. This document contextualized and unpacked the global agenda to reflect Kenya's realities and priorities on human settlement matters.



The template provided a framework for engagement of stakeholders in implementation and provision of feedback for the quadrennial voluntary report which Kenya submitted as required. In this regard, I call upon all Member States to demonstrate a high level of commitment towards the implementation and reporting of the New Urban Agenda

I have taken note of the progress made in the implementation of resolutions and decisions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its First Session in 2019. Kenya is keen on progressively implementing the resolutions, and I am proud to report that in line with resolution 3 on enhancing capacity-building on the New Urban Agenda, we conducted a capacity building training of our National Habitat Committee members, on monitoring human settlements indicators of SDG 11 and the New Urban Agenda. I wish to thank UN-Habitat for facilitating the training which enhanced the competence of Kenyan stakeholders in reporting on the New Urban Agenda.

As the State continues with the interventions aimed at actualizing inclusivity in urban development affairs, the Kenya urban development legal framework, namely the **"Urban Areas and Cities Act"** institutionalized citizen participation fora through the county Governments. The process of strengthening urban institutions with the support of development partners has achieved key milestones amongst which was the establishment of 59 municipalities and supporting them to deliver basic urban services under the Kenya Urban Support Programme (KUSP 1).



Distinguished Guests,

COVID-19 pandemic has continued to ravage world economies, and has further negatively impacted people's livelihood through job losses and restriction of movement. It has demonstrated the critical role of sanitation, hygiene and access to clean water in preventing and containing diseases and pandemics. I wish to take note of the efforts of the Executive Director in launching the COVID 19 response plan which rolled out 75 projects in 37 countries and 300 cities. The plan benefited close to 10 million people. Kenya was among the beneficiaries.

The Government of Kenya also put in place a robust COVID 19 response approach to address the Pandemic. This includes the deepening of the National Hygiene Programme (NHP), setting up of a COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, re-designing urban markets to be more responsive to Covid-19 and reviewing planning instruments to improve business and investment in urban areas among others. I am glad that a dialogue on Cities and Pandemics has been scheduled as part of this meeting. Our participation at the dialogue will provide greater insights on the recovery trajectory of our cities and urban areas against the impacts of Covid-19 and other future pandemics.



Distinguished Guests,

As I conclude, I take this opportunity to encourage all member states to continue supporting UN-habitat in making it the organization of choice in regards to matters Sustainable Human Settlements and further congratulate the City of Katowice, Poland for agreeing to host the forthcoming 11th Session of World Urban Forum (WUF 11) scheduled for June 2022 in our endeavour as Member states to address the most pressing issues around rapid urbanization and its impact on cities, communities, economies and the environment.

I THANK YOU