

First meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2023

Wednesday, 8 February 2023

14:30 hrs - 15:30 hrs, East Africa Time

Hybrid meeting-UN-Habitat OED Boardroom

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the provisional Agenda.

1. H.E. Mr. Silvio Albuquerque, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil opened the meeting at 14:30 hrs EAT.

The following Executive Board Bureau members were present:

In-person

H.E. Mr. Silvio Albuquerque, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

H.E. Ms. Jean Kimani, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya

Ms. Ambre Zwetyenga, UN office of Embassy of France

On-line

H.E. Ms. Saqlain Syedah, High-Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Ms. Joanna Szymanska, Deputy Permanent Representative of Republic of Poland

The following UN Habitat Secretariat members were also present :

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director.

Mr. Raf Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division.

Mr. Chris Mensah, Secretary to the Governing Bodies.

Mr. Erfan Ali, Chief of Staff

Mr. Neil Khor, Chief Director of ERSKI

Mr. Stephen Slawsky, Director, Management Advisory and Compliance Service

Mr. Justin Bonongwe, Management Advisory and Compliance Service

Mr. Oumar Sylla a.i Director, Regional Office for Africa, UN-Habitat

Mr. Paulius Kulikauskas, Senior Coordination officer

2. The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting. The provisional agenda was adopted without any changes and can be accessed [here](#).

Agenda item 2: Preparations for the 2023 first session of the Executive Board

3. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Executive Director provided an update on the preparations for the first session of the Executive Board to be held on 28 and 29 March 2023. . The detailed presentation by the Executive Director can be accessed [here](#).
4. The presentation was followed by an exchange of views among Bureau members.
5. Subsequently, the Bureau took note and recommended the proposed organization of work for the two day session as presented by the Secretariat, which can be accessed [here](#).
6. The Bureau further recommended that the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters of the Executive Board be instrumental in the prior consideration of any draft decisions before they are formally discussed and adopted by the Board at its 2023 first session.

Agenda item 3: Elections for the 2023-2024 Bureau of the Executive Board and members of the Executive Board

Elections for the 2023-2024 Bureau of the Executive Board

7. The Chair recalled that the Executive Board at its second session of the year 2022 decided that the second session of 2023 for the purpose of election of the 2023-2024 Bureau will be held on the margins of the second session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UN-Habitat Assembly), in June 2023, once the members of the Executive Board for the term 2023-2027 are elected by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its second session.
8. The Chair mentioned that the Secretariat consulted with the Division of Conference Services which advised to hold the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2023 on the morning of Thursday 8 June 2023. This would imply a suspension of the plenary of the UN-Habitat Assembly in the morning on 8 June 2023 to avoid parallel meetings. The Chair noted that a similar organization of work was followed during the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly held in May 2019, during which the Executive Board held its first meeting on the afternoon of Thursday, 30 May 2019, on the margins of the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly. At that meeting, the Executive Board elected its Bureau and decided to resume its first meeting in November 2019.
9. The Chair further briefed the Bureau that in accordance with the rule 9 of its rules of procedure, the Executive Board at its second session for the year 2023 will elect from among its members and taking into consideration the need to ensure equitable geographical representation, a new Bureau comprising a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, who shall start holding office immediately following the election . The new Bureau of the Executive Board shall comprise of 5 members representing the regional groups as follows:

African States: Chair

Latin American and Caribbean States: Vice-Chair

Eastern European States: Vice-Chair

Western European and other States: Vice-Chair

Asia-Pacific States: Rapporteur

10. The briefing by the Chair was followed by an exchange of views among Bureau members.
11. Subsequently, the Bureau recommended that the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2023 be held on the morning of Thursday 8 June 2023, for the purpose of electing the 2023-2024 Bureau once the members of the Executive Board for the term 2023-2027 are elected by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its second session to be held from 5 to 9 June 2023.

12. The Bureau further recommended that a Note Verbale be sent to the Chairs of the Regional Groups by the Secretariat, inviting all regional groups to start caucusing towards nominations for their respective representatives to the 2023-2024 Bureau of the Executive Board.

Election for the 2023-2027 members of the Executive Board

13. The Chair recalled that in line with rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board, the Executive Board shall consist of 36 Member States, to be elected by the UN-Habitat Assembly in accordance with the following criteria:

10 seats for African States;
8 seats for Asia-Pacific States;
4 seats for Eastern European States;
6 seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; and
8 seats for Western European and other States.

14. The briefing by the Chair was followed by an exchange of views among Bureau members.
15. Subsequently, the Bureau recommended that the Secretariat sends a Note Verbale to the Chairs of the Regional Groups in Nairobi inviting them to start caucusing towards identifying nominations for their respective representatives to the Executive Board for the period 2023-2027.
16. The Bureau further recommended that the Secretariat should provide proper legal advice on the process of elections in case of a lack of consensus on election by acclamation.

Agenda item 4: Any other matters

17. The Executive Director informed the Bureau that she had been invited by the President of the United Nations General Assembly to the Assembly meeting on Zero Waste which is scheduled to take place on 30 March 2023 with the participation of the UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly. She further noted that this invitation would coincide with the second day of the upcoming first session of the Executive Board for the year 2023. The Executive Director noted her commitment to the work of the Executive Board and also outlined the importance of the General Assembly meeting on Zero Waste in relation to the work of UN-Habitat.
18. The Bureau took note of the possible participation of the Executive Director in the General Assembly meeting on Zero Waste and noted in that respect, that the Executive Director would consider following the proceedings of the second day of the Executive Board online.
19. At the request of the Chair, the Secretariat provided an update on UN-Habitat's response to the earthquake which took place in the Republic of Türkiye and the Arab Republic of Syria, indicating that UN-Habitat's engagement is focusing on 2 levels : (i) damage assessment (ii) engagement with respect to urban recovery and reconstruction. The Secretariat updated that UN-Habitat was already engaged with other UN Agencies in mobilisation efforts to support the two countries and further that its experts and response team will be deployed shortly in the Republic of Türkiye and the Arab Republic of Syria, working with with the other UN agencies and the UN country team.
20. In this respect, the Chair suggested to the Secretariat to appeal for donations during the upcoming 2023 first session of the Executive Board to fund UN-Habitat's response in the Republic of Türkiye and the Arab Republic of Syria. He noted that countries with expertise and experience with earthquake responses could be called upon to share their experiences.

The first meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2023 was adjourned at 15:30 hrs. East African Time (EAT).