

**Accreditation of CSOs to the Second Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly:
Note by the Secretariat, 9 January 2024**

This Note by the Secretariat responds to a request by member states at the third session of the Executive Board of the year 2023 for a written explanation of what happened when a member state objected to the accreditation of certain civil society organisations to the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly held in June 2023. Below is a chronology of what happened:

1. On Monday, 22 May 2023, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale from a member state expressing objection to the accreditation of two national civil society organisations from two different countries other than the objecting member state. This was the first time this happened in 20 years.
2. Upon review of the request, UN-Habitat considered the following actions:
 - a) Acknowledge receipt of the Note Verbale and to request for additional information from the member state as to the reasons for the objection to enable the Secretariat to prepare an information package to member states about the objection.
 - b) Inform the member states as to where the two organisations are registered.
 - c) Prepare and submit information on the objection to the Bureaux of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
 - d) The Committee of Permanent Representatives to make the final decision as envisaged in Governing Council Resolution 19/8 of 9 May 2003 - *Arrangements regarding the accreditation of local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners*¹.
 - e) Secretariat to inform the two civil society organisations of the outcome of their applications.
3. Subsequent to the above consideration, on 24 May 2023, the Secretariat acknowledged receipt of the Note Verbale referred to above and requested for additional information, especially the reasons for the objection so as to allow the Secretariat prepare information on the objection to member states.
4. The member state had not responded by the start of the open-ended second meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on 29 May 2023.
5. At the meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a member state inquired about the objection to accreditation of some civil society organisations and the need for member states to be officially informed.

¹ *Operative paragraph 4. Decides further that other Habitat Agenda partners referred to in rule 65 of the rules of procedure that were not accredited according to operative paragraphs 1 and 3 above may be invited by the Executive Director and accredited on an ad hoc basis to a session of the Governing Council: the Executive Director shall submit a list of such partners to the Committee of Permanent Representatives on a no-objection basis by final decision of the Committee, and to Governments not represented on the Committee of Permanent Representatives for their consideration, 10 weeks in advance of the Governing Council Session.*

6. The Secretariat, in response, explained that it had sought for additional information from the concerned member state prior to tabling the matter before member states.
7. By the time of the adjourned second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly, the member state had not yet responded to the request for additional information on the reasons for the objection.
8. The Secretariat, therefore, could not confirm accreditation of the two organisations since the matter had not yet been considered by the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
9. After the adjourned second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly, the Secretariat, reached out to the member state to request for a response to the Note Verbale dated 24 May 2023. To-date the member state has not responded.
10. At the twenty second meeting of the ad hoc working group on the stakeholder engagement policy held on 2 November 2023, the Secretariat shared the experience of accreditation at the adjourned second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly including the objection to two organisations by a member state. At that meeting member states requested the Secretariat to provide a written explanation of what happened and a brief with relevant documents on accreditation after the third session of 2023 of the Executive Board.
11. On 4 December 2023 a courteous reminder was sent to the respective member state. UN-Habitat is still waiting for a response from the member state.

It is significant to note that at present there is no guidance in the UN-Habitat rules on how to deal with a situation when member states object to the accreditation of a civil society organisation. The A-Z of what should happen from when member states object to when the Committee of Permanent Representatives decides by final decision as provided for in Governing Council Resolution 19/8 does not exist.

Adoption of a stakeholder engagement policy will provide guidance on how to operationalise the existing UN-Habitat mandate on accreditation and improve the procedures for stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings and other legislative processes.