



First meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2024, which included the Bureau of UN-Habitat Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

Friday, 2 February 2024

10:00hrs -12:00 hrs, East Africa Time (EAT)

Hybrid meeting- UN-Habitat OED Boardroom

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the provisional Agenda.

1. Mr. Daniel Kotut, Charge d' Affaires a.i of the Republic of Kenya opened the meeting at 10:05 hrs EAT, representing Africa as Chair of the Executive Board.

The following members of the joint Bureaux of the UN-Habitat Governing Bodies were present:

In-person

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

H.E. Mr. Pedro Leon Ruiz, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Colombia.

H.E. Mr. Enrique Martinez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Mexican States.

Mr. Ronney Almeida e Silva Filho, Alternate Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil

Mr. Daniel Kottut, Charge d' Affaires a.i of the Republic of Kenya

Ms. Winnie Mwanjala, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya

Mr. Porfirio Martinez, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Mexican States

Ms. Angelica Gutierrez Galvis, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Colombia

Ms. Tong Guichan, Deputy Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China

Mr. William Anani-Abotsi, Deputy Permanent Representative of Republic of Ghana

Ms. Rena Danso, Focal Point of the Republic of Ghana

On-line

H.E. Mr. Peter Maddens, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Belgium

Mr. Clement Payeur, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of France

Dr. Martin Row, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany
Ms. Felista Rugambwa, Head of Chancery of the United Republic of Tanzania.
H.E. Ms. Joanna Szymanska, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland
Ms. Sprawka Małgorzata, Focal Point of the Republic of Poland

The following UN Habitat Secretariat members were also present :

Mr. Michal Mlynar, Acting Executive Director of UN-Habitat
Mr. Raf Tuts, Director, Global Solutions Division.
Mr. Chris Mensah, Secretary to the Governing Bodies.
Mr. Erfan Ali, Chief of Staff
Mr. Stephen Slawsky, Director, Management Advisory and Compliance
Ms. Edlam Abera Yemeru, Director a.i, External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation (ERSKI)

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: Review of the conduct of the 2023 third session of the Executive Board

3. The Chair first congratulated Mr. Michal Mlynar on being appointed as Acting Executive Director. He recalled that the third session of the Executive Board for the year 2023 took place on 28 November to 30 November 2023 and welcomed the Acting Executive Director to provide his reflections on that session. The presentation by the Acting Executive Director can be accessed [here](#) and his detailed statement can be accessed [here](#).
4. The Bureau took note of the reflections by the Acting Executive Director.

Agenda item 3: Preparations for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board.

5. The Chair recalled that the Executive Board at its third session of 2023 decided that the dates of the upcoming first session of the Executive Board for 2024 to be 6 to 8 May 2024, subject to review by the Bureau. In that respect, the Chair also noted that the Bureau was expected to guide the preparations of that session.
6. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Acting Executive Director provided an update on the status of preparations for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board, with a focus on the dates, provisional agenda and organization of work. The presentation by the Acting Executive Director can be accessed [here](#) and his detailed statement can be accessed [here](#).
7. The Acting Executive Director encouraged the Bureau to confirm the reserved dates for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board as 6 to 8 May in line with the decision of the Executive Board and taking into account the busy United Nations global Calendar of 2024.
8. In addition, the Acting Executive Director shared that in light of the busy United Nations global calendar for 2024, the Secretariat, in consultation with the Division of Conference Services had identified the dates of 26-28 November 2024 and 03-05 December 2024 for the second session of 2024 of the Executive Board, subject to the review and recommendation by the Bureau and expected decision of the Executive Board at its first session.
9. The Acting Executive Director shared the proposed provisional agenda for the first session of the Executive Board based on decision 2023/7 of the Executive Board.

10. Upon inquiry from a Member of the Bureau, the Acting Executive Director confirmed that the request by the Executive Board to report on UN-Habitat's work on urban crisis including the Gaza strip at the upcoming session had been included in the provisional Agenda as part of the agenda item on Normative and Operational activities of UN-Habitat, specifically on agenda item 7.
11. The Acting Executive Director further detailed the proposed organization of work for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board noting that it was subject to further review at subsequent meetings of the Bureau.
12. The Acting Executive Director recalled the progress made in the 2023 third session of the Executive Board and attributed this to the in-person format of that session that allowed Member States to actively engage, and therefore urged the Bureau to consider an in-person format for the upcoming session, also as a cost saving measure.
13. The Acting Executive Director took the opportunity to inform the Bureau about the restrictions on the United Nations Regular Budget and the resulting crisis and noted that the Division of Conferencing Services had notified the Secretariat that as a result of the crises the required resources for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board had not yet been released. He noted that if the situation did not improve, the number of words to be translated for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board documents would be drastically reduced. The Acting Executive Director assured the Bureau that the Secretariat would work closely with the Division of Conference Services to achieve the best possible solution. In that respect, the Secretariat assured that it would provide an update at the next Bureau meeting.
14. Upon the request by the Chair, the Secretariat provided an update to the Bureau generally on the current UN liquidity crisis, noting that the UN arrears from Member States had reached levels of \$800 million. The figure is about 20% of the Regular Budget and the highest level of arrears in the history of the United Nations. The Secretariat further noted that the austerity measures implemented from 19 July 2023 restricted, currently, the hiring of posts funded from the Regular Budget, which at UN-Habitat stands at 10 vacant posts. It is anticipated that spending will be cut by at least 15 % from the Regular Budget allocation and there would be an expected direct impact on the intergovernmental processes which would include documentation for the sessions of the Executive Board.
15. The Acting Executive Director noted that the Secretariat would be transmitting appeal letters to Member States for contributions to the UN-Habitat Assembly Trust fund which would enable the Organization to bridge the gaps towards the efficient preparation and delivery of the upcoming session of the Executive Board.

Recommendations:

16. The Secretariat noted that it would prepare comprehensive feedback on the impact of the liquidity crisis on the work of UN-Habitat and would share with Member States.
 - a. **Confirmation of the dates and Provisional Agenda for the session**
17. The Bureau recommended that the first session of the Executive Board for the year 2024 be held for a duration of three days from 6 to 8 May 2024. The Bureau also recommended the

proposed provisional Agenda for the first session of the Executive Board which can be accessed [here](#).

18. The Bureau further took note of the proposed dates for the 2024 second session of the Executive Board, subject to further Decision by the Executive Board at its first session.

b. Guidance on format of the session

19. The Bureau recommended that the 2024 first session of the Executive Board be held fully in-person at the UN-Habitat Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

c. Impact of UN Regular budget liquidity on the preparations for the first session of the Executive Board

20. The Bureau took note of the United Nations liquidity crisis and recommended that documentation for the 2024 first session of the Executive Board be succinct as possible without compromising the substantive content so as to allow translation of all documents.
21. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to provide an update on the impact of the liquidity crisis on the work of UN-Habitat at the next Bureau meeting to be held on 15 March 2024.

Agenda item 4: Roadmap towards the 2024 first session of the Executive Board including informal consultations on possible outcomes and required briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on status of preparations for the Executive Board.

22. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Acting Executive Director briefed the Bureau on the roadmap towards the 2024 first session of the Executive Board including Bureau meetings, meetings of the ad hoc working groups of the Executive Board, informal consultations on possible outcomes of the 2024 first session of the Executive Board and required briefing by the Executive Director to Member States on the status of preparations for the session. The presentation by the Acting Executive Director can be accessed [here](#) and his detailed statement can be accessed [here](#). The proposed draft roadmap for 2024 meetings of the Governing Bodies of UN-Habitat can be accessed [here](#).
23. The Bureau took note of the key dates within the roadmap including the dates for the Bureau meetings, the up-coming Acting Executive Director's Briefing on 22 April 2024 and the dates for the informal consultations on possible draft outcomes. The Bureau also noted that some of the dates on the roadmap may change but urged the Secretariat to inform Member States accordingly.

Agenda item 5: Update on the joint meeting of the Bureaux of the UN-Habitat Governing Bodies in Mexico

24. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Acting Executive Director briefed the Bureau on the upcoming Joint Meeting of the Bureaux of the Governing Bodies in Mexico.
25. Specifically, the Acting Executive Director confirmed that invitation letters from the President of the UN-Habitat Assembly Honourable Román Meyer Falcón, Minister for Agrarian, Territorial and Urban Development of the United Mexican States had been sent to members of the Bureaux of the Governing Bodies of UN-Habitat to the in-person joint meeting of the Bureaux in Mexico City, United Mexican States from 21 to 23 March 2024.

26. The Acting Executive Director updated the Bureau that the visit to Mexico would include visits to UN-Habitat projects in Mexico and projects being implemented by the Government of the United Mexican States towards the achievement of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.
27. The presentation by the Acting Executive Director can be accessed [here](#) and his detailed statement can be accessed [here](#).
28. A Member of the Bureau requested a personalized invitation letter to the head of her Country's delegation to the meeting.
29. Bureau Members took note of the updates on the upcoming Joint Meeting of Bureaux of the Governing Bodies in Mexico and requested the Secretariat to provide information regarding the logistical arrangements for the meeting, including availability of interpretation at the earliest possibility.

Agenda item 6: Any other matters

a. Proposed field visit to Mozambique.

30. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Acting Executive Director briefed the Bureau on the proposed field visit by Member States of UN-Habitat in May or June 2024 to showcase an integrated normative and operational example of UN-Habitat's work in the field, that is concretely linked to UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan. The field visit will give Member States the opportunity to see how UN-Habitat uses funds provided by donors and how those funds impact the people on the ground. The Acting Executive Director noted that the Secretariat was in discussion with the Government of Mozambique and that further details including exact dates and logistical arrangements would be communicated at the earliest opportunity.
31. The Bureau welcomed the proposed field visit to UN-Habitat Projects in Mozambique.

b. Update on the preparations of the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF).

32. Upon invitation by the Chair, the Secretariat updated the Bureau on the preparations of the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF). The presentation by the Secretariat can be accessed [here](#).
33. The Bureau welcomed the update on the preparations of the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum.

The first meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the year 2024 was adjourned at 12:05 hrs. East African Time (EAT).