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United Nations Habitat Assembly of the  
United Nations Human Settlements Programme

**First session**

Nairobi, 27–31 May 2019

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**Adoption of the rules of procedure of the  
United Nations Habitat Assembly**

## **Decision adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly on 31 May 2019**

### **1/2. Rules of procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme**

*The United Nations Habitat Assembly*

*Decides to endorse the rules of procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations  
Human Settlements Programme set out in the annex to the present decision.*

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\* HSP/HA/1/1.

**Annex**

**Rules of procedure of the Executive Board of the United Nations  
Human Settlements Programme**

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## I. Sessions

### Convening of sessions

#### Rule 1

1. The Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme shall meet in regular session two or three times per year, as appropriate, at such times and for such duration as it shall determine.
2. The Executive Board may meet in special session, in addition to its regular sessions, with the agreement of a majority of members of the Board, at the written request of any of the following:
  - (a) A member of the Executive Board;
  - (b) The Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);
  - (c) The President of the UN-Habitat Assembly.
3. When the dates of the sessions of the Executive Board are being set, the dates of meetings of the UN-Habitat Assembly and other United Nations bodies, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, should be taken into account.

### Place of sessions

#### Rule 2

The sessions of the Executive Board shall be held at the UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi.

### Notification of sessions

#### Rule 3

The Executive Board secretariat shall convey to States Members of the United Nations the date, place and provisional agenda of each session no less than 42 days prior to the start of that session.

## II. Languages and records

#### Rule 4

1. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the official and working languages of the Executive Board. Speeches made in an official language shall be interpreted into the other official languages.
2. A representative may speak in a language other than an official language, provided he or she arranges for interpretation into one of the official languages. Interpretation into the other official languages by the secretariat interpreters may be based on the interpretation provided in the first official language.
3. All documents, resolutions and other formal decisions of the Board shall be made available in the official languages.

## III. Functions and competence

#### Rule 5

The functions of the Executive Board shall include, among others, the following:

- (a) To oversee the implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat;
- (b) To ensure accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness;

- (c) To approve and oversee the implementation of the annual programme of work and budget and the resource mobilization strategy, in accordance with the strategic plans and political guidelines provided by the UN-Habitat Assembly;
- (d) To adopt decisions, within the scope of its mandate, on, among other things, programmatic, operational and budgetary issues for the adequate and effective implementation of resolutions and other decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly;
- (e) To guide and support efforts to finance the work of UN-Habitat;
- (f) To oversee the compliance of UN-Habitat with evaluations and support auditing functions;
- (g) To collaborate with the executive boards of other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, in accordance with the management reform programme of the Secretary-General.<sup>1</sup>

## IV. Agenda and documentation

### Rule 6

1. The Executive Board shall adopt its annual workplan at its first regular session each year. Discussion of the workplan should start no later than the last session of the Board held the previous year.
2. The agenda of the session shall be adopted at the beginning of each session.
3. The Executive Board shall approve at the end of each session, on the basis of a proposal by the Board secretariat, a provisional agenda for the next session.
4. The provisional agenda shall include the following:
  - (a) All items referred to the Executive Board by the UN-Habitat Assembly;
  - (b) All items proposed by the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council;
  - (c) All items proposed by a State Member of the United Nations or a member of a United Nations specialized agency;
  - (d) All items proposed by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat;
  - (e) All items required by the rules of procedure or any other applicable rules and regulations.
5. All items referred to in paragraph 4 above shall have a direct link to the mandate, activities and area of competence of UN-Habitat.
6. Any matter within the competence of the Executive Board that is not included in the provisional agenda for a session may be submitted to the Board by a State Member of the United Nations, a member of a United Nations specialized agency, fund or programme or the Board secretariat; the matter will be added to the provisional agenda by decision of the Board. The Board may also decide to amend the provisional agenda or to delete an item or items from it, with due regard to any delay in the distribution of documentation that may occur as a result.
7. The Executive Board secretariat shall inform States Members of the United Nations and members of the United Nations specialized agencies about the availability of official documents and conference room papers.
8. The official documentation relating to items on the provisional agenda shall be made available to all States Members of the United Nations and members of the United Nations specialized agencies in all official languages no less than four weeks before the date of the opening meeting of a session.
9. Conference room papers shall be made available to all States Members of the United Nations and members of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes in English.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 73/239 on Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, which endorsed the findings and recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group established by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme on changing the governance structure of UN-Habitat, as set out in document A/73/726.

10. At least two weeks before each session of the Executive Board, the Board secretariat shall provide a briefing on the matters to be covered under each item on the provisional agenda. The secretariat shall provide electronic means through which members of the Board can participate in the session.

## **V. Composition**

### **Members**

#### **Rule 7**

1. 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.
2. The 36 Member States comprising the Executive Board shall be referred to as “members” of the Executive Board.
3. The members of the Executive Board shall hold office for a term of four years.

## **VI. Representation**

### **Rule 8**

1. Each member of the Executive Board and observers shall appoint and be represented by an accredited representative, who may be accompanied by such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.
2. The names of representatives, alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Executive Board secretariat no less than three days before the session they are to attend.

## **VII. Bureau**

### **Elections**

#### **Rule 9**

1. The Executive Board shall, at its first regular session each year, elect from among its members, taking into consideration the need to ensure equitable geographical representation, a Bureau comprising a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur, who shall hold office until their successors are elected.
2. They shall, subject to the provisions herein, be eligible for re-election.
3. The offices of Chair and Rapporteur shall rotate each year to a different regional group. Each regional group shall occupy the office of Chair and Rapporteur once during a period of five years.
4. If the Chair cannot preside over a meeting or any part thereof, a Vice-Chair shall be designated by the Chair to temporarily preside over the proceedings.
5. If a Member State resigns from the office of Chair, Vice-Chair or Rapporteur, another Member State of the Executive Board from the same regional group shall be designated to fill the vacancy.

### **Functions of the Bureau**

#### **Rule 10**

1. The Bureau of the Executive Board shall meet as necessary. The primary functions of the Bureau include preparation and organization of Board meetings, facilitation of transparent decision-making and promotion of dialogue. The Bureau shall brief the Board on its deliberations. It shall not have the authority to make decisions on any substantive matters.

2. As part of the preparation and organization of Executive Board meetings and in accordance with the workplan of the Board, the Bureau may consider issues related to the agenda and structure of a session and the documentation for the session, and should highlight issues and recommendations that require consideration and action by the Board.

## **VIII. Working groups**

### **Rule 11**

The Executive Board may establish ad hoc working groups as and when it deems necessary. It shall define their functions and refer to them any matters within the scope of its mandate for consideration and reporting.

## **IX. Executive Director of UN-Habitat and Executive Board secretariat**

### **Rule 12**

1. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat or his or her representative shall participate in the deliberations of the Board without the right to vote.
2. The Executive Board secretariat is the focal point of UN-Habitat on Board matters.
3. The Executive Board secretariat shall provide to the Board assistance and information necessary for the Board to fulfil its functions as set out in rule 5 above, and to accomplish the objectives set out in the annual workplan of the Board.
4. The Executive Board secretariat shall be responsible for the organization of meetings of the Board and meetings of the Bureau and for the preparation of reports of the sessions of the Board.
5. Before the Executive Board approves any proposal involving expenditure in excess of the approved budget, the Board secretariat shall provide the Board with a written estimate of the cost of implementing the proposal.

## **X. Public and private meetings**

### **Rule 13**

Meetings of the Executive Board shall be public unless the Board decides otherwise.

## **XI. Reports and sound recordings**

### **Rule 14**

1. Reports of the regular sessions of the Executive Board shall be translated into all the official languages of the United Nations and made available to all States Members of the United Nations and members of the United Nations specialized agencies within one month of the end of each session. The reports shall be presented for approval at the following session.
2. Subject to the approval of the UN-Habitat Assembly, sound recordings of the sessions of the Executive Board shall be made and retained by the Board secretariat for four years.

## **XII. Conduct of business**

### **Rule 15**

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her by the present rules, the Chair shall have complete control over the proceedings of meetings of the Executive Board and over the maintenance of order at those meetings. In the overall exercise of his or her functions, the Chair remains under the authority of the Board.
2. If a document is being considered in respect of the country that is represented by the Chair of the Executive Board, the Chair shall yield the Chair to one of the Vice-Chairs.
3. The presence of representatives of a majority of the members of the Executive Board shall be required for any decision to be adopted.

4. If, in connection with the conduct of a meeting, any procedural question should arise that is not covered by the present rules, it shall be decided upon by the Chair, taking into account the corresponding rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly and/or the General Assembly, if applicable.

### **XIII. Decision-making**

#### **Rule 16**

1. The practice of striving for consensus in decision-making shall be encouraged.
2. In the case of a vote, the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
3. Draft decisions shall be submitted by members of the Executive Board.
4. Draft decisions shall be submitted as early as possible to allow for their thorough consideration. The Executive Board may consider draft decisions and substantive amendments as soon as practicable; however, any member of the Board may request that such decisions and amendments be considered only when 24 hours have elapsed after the distribution of the text to all members in all working languages. Amendments not distributed in all working languages shall be read aloud at the session and thereby interpreted into the official languages of the United Nations.

### **XIV. Participation of non-members**

#### **Rule 17**

1. Any State Member of the United Nations that is not a member of the Executive Board and any member of a United Nations specialized agency may attend Board meetings and may participate in its deliberations in the capacity of observer with the right to make proposals, but such proposals may only be voted on at the request of a member of the Board.
2. Representatives of the United Nations Secretariat; United Nations specialized agencies; any other organizations of the United Nations system, including international financial institutions; and regional development banks may participate in Board meetings as observers for consultation on matters that relate to their activities or those involving matters of coordination, including by invitation of the Executive Board.
3. The Executive Board may also invite, when it considers it appropriate, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or accredited to the UN-Habitat Assembly to participate in its deliberations on matters that relate to their activities.

### **XV. Relations with the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination**

#### **Rule 18**

The Executive Director of UN-Habitat shall, at the request of the Executive Board, convey the views of the Board to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. The views of the Chief Executives Board, when it so requests, shall be conveyed by the Executive Director to the Board, together with any comments that he or she may wish to make.

### **XVI. Amendment of the rules of procedure**

#### **Rule 19**

Any of the present rules may be amended by a decision of the Executive Board, which shall be endorsed by the UN-Habitat Assembly.