

BRAZILIAN INTERVENTION  
26TH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UN-  
HABITAT

Mr. President,

As I take the floor, allow me to fully align Brazil to the interventions previously made by the Permanent Representatives of Pakistan and Colombia, respectively, on behalf of the G-77 and GRULAC.

This is the first session of the Governing Council after the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, which added to the growing body of multilateral agreements achieved recently, joining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The New Urban Agenda effectively sets the sustainable urban development agenda for the next 20 years. Naturally, it poses challenges and opportunities which UN-Habitat should be uniquely positioned to deliver on, as reflected in the theme and sub-themes for this high-level dialogue, one of which touches on a topic of particular relevance for my country, namely, the right to adequate and sustainable housing. In the same vein, my Delegation appreciates that “the right to the city” was enshrined in the New Urban Agenda, which recognizes the importance of cities as development promoters.

During the HABITAT-III process, Brazil was amongst the countries that defended assigning a key role to UN-Habitat in coordinating the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and providing the Program

with the conditions to enable it to adequately fulfill this role. We understand, moreover, that UN-Habitat's mandate is a hybrid one, and that it must undertake both operational and normative activities, in a balanced manner.

The discussion about the role UN-Habitat will fulfill in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda is an ongoing one, and naturally the contribution of the High-Level Panel to evaluate and improve the efficiency of UN-Habitat – which has already held its first meeting – will be a decisive one. Without prejudging the results of that exercise, which will culminate in deliberations in New York, Brazil would like to highlight the importance of the voices of Nairobi being factored in, given the familiarity with the challenges that UN-Habitat faces, which is a result of daily engagement with the Program.

The Working Group on Programme and Budget, which we created in the previous session of this Governing Council, has been particularly useful for enhancing this engagement. It has also brought to the fore important - although still incipient - debates about UN-Habitat's management practices. Brazil recognizes the relevance of this discussion, with the view to endowing the Program with the necessary conditions for adequately fulfilling its mandate, particularly in light of the New Urban Agenda. At the same time, we emphasize the need for these discussions to be undertaken in a transparent , and in alignment with the review process taking place in New York.

Mr. President,

UN-Habitat has been facing a gamut of challenges, which range from budgetary shortfalls to inconsistencies between its strategic plan and program of work. At the same time, the adoption of the New Urban Agenda presents an opportunity for all of us to rethink the role and working methods of the Program. The issues that the New Urban Agenda weaves together are essential for the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals. And yet, the capacity of UN-Habitat to deliver on these issues, which are of paramount importance particularly to developing countries, continues to fall well short of expectations.

The moment, Mr. President, calls for strong leadership, capable of strategic vision and constructive engagement with Member States. In this regard, let me conclude by expressing the disappointment of my delegation upon hearing of the announcement of the conclusion of the mandate of the current Deputy Executive Director, Aisa Kacyira, whose command of the issues and openness to dialogue will be missed during this transitional period.

Thank you, Mr. President.