



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY THE DELEGATION OF EGYPT AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON AGENDA ITEM 21 ON THE 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 (UN-HABITAT) (New York, 10 October 2018)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

1. The Group of 77 and China are of a firm believer that sustainable urban development and human settlements can be key drivers of sustainable development in national and sub-national development plans.
2. In this regard, and recognizing the world's rapid growth of urban population, much of it occurring in developing countries, the Group of 77 and China reiterate our unwavering commitment in the implementation as well as the follow up and review of the New Urban Agenda.
3. The New Urban Agenda represents to us a vision of cities and human settlements characterized by quality of life, equity, sustainable environment and an inclusive economy, recognizing the roles of cities and human settlements as a positive force for achieving sustainable development.
4. Since its establishment as the global United Nations programme on urbanization and human settlements in 1976, the responsibilities of UN-Habitat have changed considerably in their scope and complexity. Decisions at Habitat I, Habitat II and Habitat III are indicative of the dynamic nature of UN-Habitat's mandate. As a focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements, UN-Habitat is responsible for implementation and review of the New Urban Agenda and related dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This necessitates continuous re-engineering of the programme to ensure it is fit-for-purpose.
5. UN-Habitat continues to play a critical role in: (i) Developing international norms, values and principles on sustainable urbanization & human settlements; (ii). Assisting countries to address challenges arising from rapid urbanization, and inadequate human settlements; and providing technical expertise and capacity building through domestication and projects' implementation in over 90 countries across the world. However, the challenges of urbanization that existed in the 1970s have multiplied; become more complex often requiring immediate attention. The dynamism and rapid evolution of cities, towns and human settlements vis a vis growing populations and increasing poverty require a more responsive, effective and better resourced UN-Habitat Programme, taking into account the financial situation of member states.
6. Over the years, member States have often raised concerns over UN-Habitat's capacity to carry out its normative and operational work to successfully deliver on its mandate. As a result, UN General Assembly has adopted resolutions since 2001 aimed at establishing a fit-for purpose governance; a strengthened UN-Habitat; increased funds and positioning UN-Habitat as the UN specialist on urbanization and human settlement matters.

7. The August 2017 Findings and Recommendations of the "Independent Panel to Assess, Enhance Effectiveness of UN-Habitat after Adoption of New Urban Agenda" catalyzed faster action for a revamped UN-Habitat. We are convinced that the Panel's assessment that 'the first priority is to save, stabilize and then rapidly strengthen UN-Habitat to equip it for a renewed role based on the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda' - gave impetus to the process.

8. Consequently, the 72nd General Assembly established an Open-Ended Working Group on UN-Habitat (GA resolution 72/226). The OEWG begun its work in Nairobi on 7th March 2018 and the Chair submitted the Group's Findings and Recommendations to the President of the General Assembly on 26th June, 2018.

9. The OEWG's through the able Chairing by Brazil's Permanent Representative to UN-Habitat and, goodwill from Member States involved in the discussions was critical to put forward a set of recommendations and findings for the consideration by the GA with the view to support UN-Habitat to carry out its mandate as a global focal point for urbanization and human settlements, and in the implementation of New Urban Agenda, Agenda 2030, SDG 11 and the urban dimensions of SDGs.

10. The UN-Habitat dire financial straits is of a great concern to the Group. There is urgent need to properly fund UN-Habitat. We need to ensure that there is voluntary contributions towards supporting UN-Habitat's normative and operational work, In a way, that its actions are strengthened at an international and local level

11. The Group of 77 and China are looking forward to engaging in a constructive and fruitful discussions and, consensus- based outcome on this agenda item in the coming days.

Thanks you.