

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AGRINA MUSSA, HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI, ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA, NAIROBI CHAPTER, DURING THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES HIGH-LEVEL MIDTERM REVIEW MEETING FROM 29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE TO 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY, 2021**

- Chairperson
- President of UN-Habitat Assembly
- Executive Director
- Distinguished delegates

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (G77&China), Nairobi Chapter.

Chairperson, let me start by thanking the Executive Director, Madame Maimunah Sharif, and her team for the preparations regarding this meeting today. The Group thanks the Executive Director and her team for their collective effort in ensuring continuity and efficiency of the organization despite the challenges caused by the global covid-19 pandemic and limited financial resources. Given the importance of ensuring governance dictates, the group finds this meeting important.

The Group takes note of the various outcomes proposed for discussion and adoption during this meeting. It further takes note, with appreciation, the discussions and engagement that have taken place on the draft outcomes prior to the meeting today. The outcomes on the implementation of resolutions from the first Habitat Assembly, the UN Habitat Strategic Plan and the New Urban Agenda, are a key testimony to the role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in contributing to SDG 11 which is about making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. In fact, let me highlight at this moment the important role played by the CPR of UN Habitat in Nairobi to

enhance the effectiveness of UN Habitat. In this regard, the CPR must be kept in the picture of all the developments taking place within the human settlements' agenda. This active engagement would provide opportunities for member states to design plans and manage sustainable urban and human settlements policies and programmes.

Allow me Chairperson to use this moment to welcome all the new members of the G77 + China thus also the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) of UN-Habitat who have joined us for the first time. We may not meet in person now but we can only hope that very soon we will be able to. Welcome to Nairobi.

Chairperson, the Group recalls that UN Habitat has undergone a governance reform process in which the Group of 77 and China was actively involved. Group members contributed constructively in the work of the Open-ended Working Group that considered the different options of reforming the program. The reform in 2018 led to the creation of three governance bodies namely; the UN-Habitat Assembly with universal membership, the Executive Board with limited membership and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR). Each body has a clearly defined mandate and rules of procedure as adopted by the Assembly. For the CPR there are two key mandates; to review the implementation of outcomes of the Habitat Assembly and secondly to prepare for forthcoming sessions of the Assembly.

The Group stresses the important role of the CPR in the mandate, governance and operations of UN-Habitat in order to achieve sustainable human settlements, urbanisation and rural development. As the group has always maintained, the CPR needs to be kept abreast with all the developments taking place in UN Habitat in order for it to effectively and efficiently deliver its oversight mandate. The

CPR provides an opportunity and platform, where Member States can broadly advance their positions and support their interests.

Distinguished delegates,

The Group notes that we are yet to fully implement and therefore understand and appreciate the new governance structure of UN-Habitat. While the Habitat Assembly held its first session in 2019 and, the Executive Board has been meeting at least twice every year since its inception, the CPR on the other hand is only meeting for the first time to fulfill its mandate. Therefore, as a group we have concerns on tendencies which are meant to minimise and downplay the role of the CPR. This is manifest by attempts and actions that weaken the nature and scope of outcomes of this high-level mid-term review, in this newly formed governance structure as it is supposed to meet twice in between the Assembly meetings, is still in its implementation stage and there is need for time to have it fully manifest.

Chairperson the Group reiterates the importance of the United Nations New Urban Agenda, as a framework that lays out parameters of urban planning, urban governance and sustainable urbanisation for development. On the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA), the Group commends the Secretariat for the follow up actions in the progress of implementation of the New Urban Agenda at country level, including the submission of national reports by member states. The Group would like to re-emphasize its position with regard to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda that careful attention should be given to developing countries and countries in conflict and post conflict situations in addressing unique and emerging urban development challenges. The group would therefore like to encourage all Member States to submit their country reports on the progress of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as requested.

The Group would like to emphasise the importance of implementing in an effective and viable manner, outcomes of the Habitat Assembly, including those on capacity building and resource mobilisation. The Group emphasises the need for UN-Habitat to continue enhancing its capacity building services to Member States especially developing countries by offering inherent solutions to challenges associated with urbanization, creating greater impact, and allowing UN Habitat itself to be a leading organisation that responds to demands from member states. This can be achieved by the effective implementation of the resolution adopted by the Habitat Assembly at its first session.

Chairperson, the Group of 77 and China acknowledges and notes with concern, the financial challenges that the UN-Habitat is facing and calls upon the prioritization of the implementation of the Resource Mobilization Strategy to ensure smooth and sustainable running of the programme.

With these remarks, I thank you for your kind attention.