

MEMORANDUM

To: All Staff

Ref.: UNH-SGC-0-190114

CC: Chris Mensah
Secretary to the Governing Council

Kazumi Ogawa
Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive Director

Christine Musisi
Director, External Relations Division

From: Mr Victor Kisob
Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy
Executive Director

Date: 11 March 2019

Subject: **Note 1 - Information to Staff on the first session of the UN- Habitat
Assembly, 27-31 May 2019**

1. I am sure by now you are all aware that the up-coming first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly will take place from 27th to 31st May 2019. This is pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 73/239 of 20th December 2018 which abolished the UN-Habitat Governing Council as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and replaced it with the UN-Habitat Assembly, a universal body consisting of 193 Member States of United Nations.
2. The same resolution maintained the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) and called for the establishment of an Executive Board of UN-Habitat which shall consist of 36 Member States elected by the UN-Habitat Assembly. The first Meeting of the Executive Board is expected to take place for one day on the margins of the UN-Habitat Assembly.
3. I would like to stress that the full name is the 'First Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly', which will serve as the United Nations Human Settlements Programme's governance body and abbreviated as "UN-Habitat Assembly".
4. I would be grateful if all references should reflect this terminology and the use of any other unofficial acronym including UNHA for official purposes should be discouraged for now.
5. The UN-Habitat Assembly as you know, is open to all Member States and relevant Habitat Agenda Partners, including subnational governments, parliamentarians, civil society organizations, local authorities, professionals and researchers, academia, foundations, women and youth groups, trade unions, indigenous peoples organizations, financial institutions, and the private sector, as well as organizations of the United Nations system and Intergovernmental Organizations.

6. The special theme and subtheme for UN-Habitat Assembly is as follows:
Theme: **“Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities.”**
Sub theme: **“Accelerated implementation of the New Urban Agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.”**
7. The Executive Director has previously communicated to you regarding the UN-Habitat Assembly task force under my leadership, and I am happy to report that the task force is progressing with its mandate and has currently created various task teams to support with the preparations. These include budget and finance, substantive review of all documents, host country and UNON Conference Services, as well as information and logistics task teams with additional teams to be created when the need arises. Updates of the general progress of preparations will be shared with staff regularly.
8. With respect to the status of preparations for the UN-Habitat Assembly, convocation letters and notification by the Executive Director have been sent to Member States of the United Nations including Observer States and we are progressing on the finalisation of the official documentation for the UN-Habitat Assembly. The notification is attached for your information. You may also visit <https://unhabitat.org/habitatassembly-pre-session-documents/> where the official documents are being uploaded as they become available.
9. Habitat Agenda Partners have been informed of the UN-Habitat Assembly and their expected participation as Observers. I would be grateful if you could urgently forward to the Partners and Inter Agency Coordination Branch via lucia.kiwala@un.org, contact details of any Habitat Agenda Partners that you would like to be invited to the UN-Habitat Assembly not later than **15 March 2019**. These include NGOs and the private sector.
10. Applications for ad-hoc accreditation for NGOs is now open online at <https://unhabitat.org/habitatassembly-accreditation/> with a deadline of **21 March 2019**. Information on the procedure for ad-hoc accreditation for those Habitat Agenda Partners interested in attending the UN-Habitat Assembly but were not accredited to Habitat II, Istanbul+5, Habitat III or are not in consultative status with ECOSOC is available on the same site. Grateful if you could guide any partners accordingly.
11. Summary information on all organizations seeking ad-hoc accreditation to the UN-Habitat Assembly will be sent to Member States for approval on a no objection basis as required by the Governing Council resolution 19/8 and 26/7. Successful applicants for ad-hoc accreditation will be informed directly by **15 April 2019**. Any enquiries on accreditation should be directed to Lucia Kiwala: Lucia.Kiwala@unhabitat.org.
12. All focal points of thematic areas and various Habitat Agenda Partner categories are encouraged to rally their constituencies in order to prepare adequately to participate in the UN-Habitat Assembly.
13. Participating organizations and Member States wishing to exhibit during the UN-Habitat Assembly may apply online. The deadline for application to exhibit is **31**

March 2019. Additional information on the exhibition and the application form for exhibition can be found at: <https://unhabitat.org/habitatassembly-exhibitions>. The contact person is Victor Mgendi: Victor.Mgendi@un.org.

14. Branches and offices wishing to hold side events, including with their partners, during the UN-Habitat Assembly can find information at <https://unhabitat.org/habitatassembly-side-events/>. The deadline for submitting requests for side events is **8 April 2019**. For further information please contact Zahra Hassan: Zahra.Hassan@un.org.
15. Prior to the commencement of the UN-Habitat Assembly, there will be a global stakeholders engagement forum and a private sector dialogue on Saturday, 25th May 2019 and Sunday, 26th May 2019 respectively. If you would like to contribute to these activities for example by ensuring partners you work with are invited or suggest speakers, please contact Christine Musisi: Christine.Musisi@un.org, Doudou Mbaye: Doudou.Mbaye@un.org or Raf Tuts: raf.tuts@un.org .
16. In addition, Branches, Regional offices, Liaison offices wishing to propose any relevant meetings which may not be categorized as either exhibitions or side events and which may include high-level dialogues, book launches, training events prior to or, in exceptional circumstances, during the UN-Habitat Assembly may send such requests directly to Chris Mensah, Chris.Mensah@un.org copying Christine Musisi, Christine.Musisi@un.org by **22 March 2018** for consideration by the task force. It being understood that no meeting whatsoever may be held on the UNON Complex during the official meeting period of the UN-Habitat Assembly, namely, 10 am to 1 p.m. and 3-6 p.m. every day during the session of the UN-Habitat Assembly.
17. Registration for the conference is now open online at <https://unhabitat.org/habitatassembly-registration/>. Onsite registration will start on 23 May 2019.
18. As has been practice, the UN-Habitat Assembly will be a paper smart meeting with minimal hard copy documentation. UN-Habitat will operate a web-based paper smart conferencing system for the session. The paper smart portal will be accessible only at the United Nations Gigiri Compound. It will provide the following:
 - i. Access to drafting committee documents and information documents;
 - ii. Access to all in-session documents, including “L” documents, conference room papers, statements, publications and the daily journal;
 - iii. Information on venues of contact group meetings, side and parallel events and administrative announcements.
19. You are invited to visit the UN-Habitat Assembly website at <https://unhabitat.org/habitatassembly/> which provides general information for participants, registration, accreditation, exhibition and much more. The website is continuously being updated throughout the preparatory period.
20. An internal working Concept Note for the UN-Habitat Assembly is attached for your information.

21. Chris Mensah, Secretary to the Governing Council is available to answer all questions related to the preparations for the UN-Habitat Assembly at; UNHabitat-GCSecretariat@un.org or Chris.Mensah@un.org.
22. I take this opportunity to thank you for taking part in the poll that determined the first logo for the UN-Habitat Assembly which is expected to remain the same over the years.
23. I encourage your involvement in the preparations for a successful UN-Habitat Assembly.

Thank you.