

Statement by H.E. Mr. Hazem Shabat, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Republic of Kenya, and Permanent Representative to UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNON, Chairperson of the Group of 77 and China, Nairobi Chapter, Delivered at the 1st Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly (Nairobi, 27 May 2019).

The G77 and China congratulates the newly elected President of the First Session of the UN-Habitat Assembly, the Bureau members, as well as members of the Executive Board on their election, and would like to express its support to them in advancing the work of the UN-Habitat and restoring international trust and excellence of the programme; and we assure them of our full cooperation. We also wish to extend our appreciation to India for the successful completion of its presidency of the last Governing Council of the UN-Habitat.

The Group wishes to highly commend the Executive Director **Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif** for her efforts, dedication, and active engagement with the members of the Bureau and regional groups in dialogue and close consultations regarding the progress of the preparations for the UN-Habitat Assembly.

The G77 and China played a prominent role in the governance reform process of the Habitat, the Group member states contributed constructively in the work of the Open-ended Working Group that considered the different options of reforming the program, that was later presented in its Report on work of the Open-ended Working Group in Nairobi established by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the UN-Habitat in line with General Assembly Resolution A/RES/72/226 of December 2017;

the G77 and China continued its leading role in this governance reform process, when Egypt- as the Chair of the G77 and China in New York for 2018- presented the draft resolution that was finally adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, by Resolution 73/539 of 20 December 2018, endorsing the findings and recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group.

The G77 and China member states continued to play a prominent role in the negotiations of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and its Subcommittee on policy and programme of work, as part of its overall commitment to the governance reform process.

And in this context, we commend and congratulate His Excellency **Mr. Fernando Coimbra** - Chair of the CPR and Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil to UN-Habitat - for his relentless efforts in guiding the process of preparations for the UN-Habitat Assembly, and succeeding in creating consensus on the foundations and framework of the future works of the Policy making bodies of UN-HBITAT, that lead us today in this smooth transition into the 1st session of the UN-Habitat Assembly 2019.

Mr. President, the G77 and China reiterates the importance of the United Nations New Urban Agenda , as a framework that lays out parameters of urban planning, urban governance, and a vision that integrates sustainable urbanization as a key component of development. This Agenda constitutes a key reflection of the urban planning, urban governance, and development actions that correspond to the relevant goals set under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 11 to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". The commitment of the G77 and China to the New Urban Agenda is best reflected by the impact of projects implemented in the Groups' member states. The G77 and China also emphasizes the importance of contextualizing future projects to address both the short and medium term, as well as the strategic urban planning and urban governance's national needs.

The G77 and China also believes that the theme of the first UN-Habitat Assembly "Innovation for better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities" is timely and relevant. We also believe that the first UN-Habitat Assembly shall be a valuable opportunity to further promote the role and mandate of the UN-Habitat in

amalgamating the SDGs in the Universal efforts aiming at tackling urbanization challenges and employing the "leaving no one behind" approach. The G77 and China looks forward to actively engage in the deliberations aimed at adopting the Strategic Plan 2020-2025, take part in reviewing the progress of implementation of the New Urban Agenda, focusing on the various dimensions of urban sustainable development, and to exchange views on how best can national and local authorities invest in urban innovation in order to ensure more prosperous cities. In this regard, the Group underscores the centrality of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAA) as the viable implementation tool in the overall implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Thank you Madam President.