Introductory Statement by Ms Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Executive Director

Preparations for 27th Session of the Governing Council
Nairobi, 6 December 2018

Agenda Item 8
Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

Pursuant to Decision 26/1 of the Governing Council, the convocation letter for the 27th Session of the Governing Council was shared with Member States on 17 September 2018 notifying Member States of the dates of the 27th Session of the Governing Council scheduled from 8 to 12 April 2019 as well as the Provisional Agenda of the 27th Session of the Governing Council as stated in that decision.

My formal notification to you on the 27th Session of the Governing Council will shortly be sent out following the progress on the discussions on the governance reform of UN-Habitat at the General Assembly, the proposal to alter the date of the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council, and on the discussions on the proposed theme of the session.

Excellencies,

The Second Committee endorsed the findings and recommendations of the open-ended Working Group and is awaiting adoption by the General Assembly. The resolution in part states as follows:

“Decides to dissolve the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and replace it with the UN-Habitat Assembly, in line with the findings and recommendations of the [open-Ended Working Group], and further decides
that the first UN-Habitat Assembly should take place in May 2019, building upon the preparations already carried out for the 27th Governing Council, and decides that this shall take effect upon commencement of the first session”;

“In addition, for 2019, the Executive Board, after the election of its members by the UN-Habitat Assembly, shall meet for its first session in Nairobi for a duration of three (3) days”;

“The Committee of Permanent Representatives of UN-Habitat shall prepare draft rules of procedure for the UN-Habitat Assembly, to be completed no later than April/May 2019, with a view to their adoption at the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly”.

(end of quote)

The operative words being, the decision that the new governance structure will take effect upon commencement of the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly, if the resolution goes through the General Assembly without a holdup.

I have been advised that this means status quo until the establishment of the UN-Habitat Assembly. Accordingly, we will prepare as if we are preparing for the 27th Session of the Governing Council. I am in discussions with our team and with the Chair on what exactly will happen on that day. I will continue to brief you as we prepare and to seek your guidance.
If the General Assembly passes the resolution in its current form, it is expected that in the transition period before May 2019, the Committee of Permanent Representatives will prepare documentation for the UN-Habitat Assembly including its draft rules of procedure.

The Assembly would be expected to take over the work of the Governing Council including its Agenda at its first meeting in May 2019.

Regarding the theme of the Governing Council, I would like to thank you very much for considering title of the theme which I have proposed for 27th Session of the Governing Council. Your guidance in the sharpening the scope of the title of the theme has been very much appreciated.

A final subcommittee meeting on the theme of the GC27 was held on 30 November 2019 and based upon the recommendations from that meeting, I am proposing for your consideration the following title for the theme of the 27th Session of the Governing Council:

Theme Title: “Innovation for Better Quality of Life in Cities and Communities”

Theme Sub-Title: “Accelerated Implementation of the NUA towards localized achievement of the SDGs”
The session will address two key aspects of the theme as follow:

1. **Means of Implementation**;
   - a. **Innovative use of data systems for evidence-based urban policy-making**
   - b. **Innovative partnerships for coordinated and balanced implementation**

2. **Special focus on SDG targets 11.1 and 11.2**;
   - a. **Innovative practices on housing and mobility**.

Distinguished delegates,

Once you endorse the title and areas of focus, a detailed description of the above will be developed for review by the CPR and which will lead to the development of the theme paper towards the dialogue among Governments and Habitat Agenda Partners.

I hope that this Committee concurs with the title of the theme as discussed by the subcommittee and we can now move ahead to communicate the same to Members States of the Governing Council and partners of UN-Habitat.

In preparations towards the 27th Session of the Governing Council, the Subcommittee on Policy and Programme of Work has been concentrating its discussions on the progress made in implementing the resolutions passed during the 26th Session of the Governing Council, and these discussions have gone well.
We have provided progress on implementing all the resolutions where action was required by the secretariat.

The CPR Subcommittee on Policy and Programme of Work has also been engaged in discussing key documents required for approval by the Governing Council at its next session and in line with resolutions of the Governing Council at its twenty sixth session. The documents under preparation are:

i. The draft Strategic Plan 2020-2025
ii. The draft Annual Work Programme and Budget 2020
iii. The draft Stakeholder Engagement policy
iv. The draft UN Systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities

With exception of the discussions on the draft Strategic Plan 2020-2025, the discussions on the draft UN Systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities, the draft Annual Work Programme and Budget 2020 and the draft Stakeholder Engagement policy are not yet complete. I am hoping this meeting will mandate the Subcommittee of the CPR to finalize these priority topics towards the 27th Session of the Governing Council.

The draft Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the Annual Work programme and Budget 2020 are particularly time bound as one informs the other. The Annual plan specifically must be submitted to New York in mid-January 2019 and am confident that this will be possible with the commitment of this Committee and its subcommittees.
Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

We are preparing other key background documents to support Member States discussions at the twenty seventh session of the Governing Council. The documents include the progress report of the Executive Director on activities of UN-Habitat, progress report on the joint activities in the urban environment with UN Environment, Cooperation with agencies and organizations within the UN system and outside, as well as the report of the Executive Director on progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among others.

All the information related to the preparations for the GC27 will soon be available at: [www.unhabitat.org/gc27](http://www.unhabitat.org/gc27)

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,

At the recommendation of the CPR Bureau, you will recall that this Committee at its last meeting held in September 2018 encouraged the change of date of the 27th session of the Governing Council to alter date.

Upon formal receipt of request from five Member states of the Governing Council to alter the date from 8 to 12 April 2019 to 27 to 31 May 2019, and in line with Rule 3 of the rules of procedure, this request was formally communicated to the Members of the Governing Council on 23 November 2018 and shared with all members of the CPR on the same day.
The deadline for Member States of the Governing Council to communicate their agreement to alter the date of the twenty seventh session of the Governing Council is 14 December 2018 in accordance with the rules of procedures which gives Members 21 days to respond to such proposals. The results will be communicated to all.

For further details and clarification, please don’t hesitate to contact Chris Mensah, Secretary to the Governing Council.

Thank you for your attention.