

Habitat for Humanity statement to the Second Session of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UNHA2) plenary

(Nairobi, June 7th, 2023)

Mr. President, Madame Executive Director, Excellencies and Ministers, distinguished delegates, colleagues, and friends, I am Stephen Seidel, Senior Director at Habitat for Humanity International. We appreciate the opportunity to address the plenary of this Assembly.

Habitat for Humanity's vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Since 1976, Habitat for Humanity has helped more than 46 million people in over 70 countries build or improve the place they call home. In addition to our direct work with inadequately housed individuals, households and communities, Habitat for Humanity supports market approaches that increase products, services and financing for affordable housing, and advocates for policies and systems that improve access to adequate housing for all.

As part of our commitment to the implementation of the NUA and the SDG target 11.1, we recently launched a five-year global advocacy campaign, Home Equals, dedicated to achieving policy change, at all levels, to ensure that people living in informal settlements have equitable access to adequate housing.

As pointed out by the ED's thematic paper for this assembly, ensuring access to adequate housing in all its dimensions can have significant impacts on health, education, and economic growth. Investing now in the transformation of slums and informal settlements offers the opportunity of a tremendous outcome for national governments, local governments, the private sector, civil society – and most importantly, for the residents of informal settlements themselves. We call on governments, Overseas Development Assistance, and all stakeholders to consider the following recommendations:

1. Prioritize housing as infrastructure for equitable human development.
2. Assure that housing solutions are integrated and comprehensive.
3. Elevate informal settlements upgrading as a lever for international development and transformation.
4. Prioritize knowledge and data on housing and its impacts *by, about and for* informal settlement communities.

In alignment with this, Habitat for Humanity commits to collaborate with member states, and all other allies in a spirit of multilateralism to implement this Assembly's resolutions on "Accelerating Transformation of Informal Settlements and Slums by 2030" and "Adequate Housing for all".

Thank you very much.