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Governing Council
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Resolution 20/7: Gender equality in human settlements development

The Governing Council,

Recalling paragraphs [15, 40 and 46 of the Habitat Agenda](#)¹⁵ emphasizing the provision of legal security of tenure and equal access to land to all people, including women, and the commitment by Governments to the goal of gender equality in human settlements development,

Recalling also [paragraph 24 of the Habitat Agenda](#) which, among other things, states that its implementation is the sovereign right and responsibility of each State in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms and taking into account the significance of and the need for full respect for various religious and ethical values,

[15 Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements \(Habitat II\), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996 \(United Nations publication, Sales No.E.97.IV.6\), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.](#)

Recalling also the Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session as orally amended¹⁶ and the review of the implementation of the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action¹⁷ adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,¹⁸

Recalling the linkage between the Habitat Agenda, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Declaration, which recognize the importance of land, housing and property to women's livelihoods and draws attention to the important link between women's poverty and homelessness, inadequate housing, and lack of access to economic resources such as credit, land ownership and inheritance,

Taking into account [General Assembly resolution 59/168 of 20 December 2004](#), calling on Governments, the United Nations system and other relevant actors to integrate gender perspectives into the implementation of and follow-up to recent United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions,

Concerned by the persistence of discriminatory practices, wherever they exist, that limit women's participation in political and administrative decision making and prevent women's ownership of land, housing and other real property in the human settlements context and prevent equality of the work force,

Noting the need to build the capacity of local authorities in gender mainstreaming in local governance, including in municipal planning and management and strengthening linkages between women's organizations, community groups and local authorities, documenting lessons emerging from grassroots women's efforts to cooperate with local authorities and by strengthening women's networks, bearing in mind women's contribution to sustainable human settlements development, the urbanization process, slum upgrading and basic services delivery, especially in the implementation of water and sanitation programmes,

Recognizing the need to incorporate gender perspectives in disaster management policy and practice, from vulnerability reduction to relief, and rehabilitation to development,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Director on progress made in the implementation of [Governing Council resolution 19/16 of 9 May 2003](#) on women's roles and rights in human settlements development and slum upgrading, 19

[16 E/CN.6/2005/L.1.](#)

[17 Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995 \(United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13\), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.](#)

[18 General Assembly resolution 55/2.](#)

[19 HSP/GC/20/2.](#)

Recognizing that women, particularly those living in extreme poverty and suffering from domestic violence, continue to suffer multiple forms of discrimination, among other things, with respect to ownership of property and access to adequate housing;

Recalling the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,²⁰

1. Requests Governments and local authorities to involve women in decision-making at all levels of government and to encourage their participation in human settlements development planning, strengthen gender mainstreaming in local governance, including in resource allocation and delivery of basic services including water and sanitation programmes;
2. Encourages Governments and local authorities to adopt appropriate policies and to provide mechanisms and resources for addressing violence and causes of violence against women in human settlements in all its forms and to develop partnerships with relevant organizations;
3. Urges Governments and other partners to recognize and address in a non-discriminatory way, in post-conflict and disaster situations, the special needs, vulnerabilities, priorities and capacities of women;
4. Urges Governments to review and if necessary to revise policies, laws and other practices that are discriminatory against women, especially with regard to property rights and to promote proactive policies in favour of strengthening effective women's rights to land and shelter;
5. Calls upon the Executive Director to ensure that all normative and operational activities developed and implemented by the various divisions, branches and units of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme address gender equality and women's empowerment in human

settlements development by incorporating gender impact assessment and gender disaggregated data criteria in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these activities;

6. Requests the Executive Director in cooperation with Habitat Agenda partners to prepare information material and disseminate best practices on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in human settlements development at the local, municipal and national levels;

7. Also requests the Executive Director to include a report on the implementation of the present resolution in her progress report to the Governing Council at its twenty-first session.

20 [General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.](#)

8th meeting
8 April 2005