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Social development

Madagascar:* draft resolution

Inclusive social development policies and programmes to address homelessness, including in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The General Assembly,

Recalling the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly,

Reaffirming that the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development¹ and the further initiatives for social development adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session² constitute the basic framework for the promotion of social development for all with people at the centre, and encouraging the continued global dialogue on social development issues,

Recalling article 11 (1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,³ which, inter alia, recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself or herself and his or her family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and noting its relevance to the formulation of family-oriented housing and social protection policies and measures,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the Assembly adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching set of universal, people-centred and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets ensuring access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing, basic services and social protections,

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States.

¹ *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution I, annexes I and II.

² General Assembly resolution [S-24/2](#), annex.

³ See General Assembly resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.



including floors for all, and affirmed its commitment to the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030 and its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

Recalling further the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,⁴ which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Reaffirming Economic and Social Council resolution 2020/7 of 18 June 2020, entitled, “Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness”, and the commitments thereto,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary General,⁵ entitled “Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness”, in which he encouraged Member States to develop comprehensive national strategies and specific policy interventions to address all categories of homelessness, build broad-based partnerships to prevent people from falling into homelessness, and to combat stereotypes and discrimination against people experiencing homelessness,

Reaffirming the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁶ the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway⁷ and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants,⁸ as each document contributes to the improvement in the situation of homelessness and the right of undocumented individuals to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, without discrimination,

Recalling the importance of supporting Agenda 2063 of the African Union, as well as its first 10-year implementation plan (2014–2023), as a strategic framework for ensuring a positive socioeconomic transformation in Africa within the next 50 years, and its continental programme embedded in the resolutions of the General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa’s Development⁹ and regional initiatives, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme,

Reaffirming the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹⁰ in which States parties recognized the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development,

Reaffirming also the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women,¹¹ which advances the full recognition of the human rights of women, including the right to social protections, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action¹² towards advancing the goals of equality, development and peace for all women in the interest of all humanity,

Recalling the New Urban Agenda,¹³ which, inter alia, promotes cities and human settlements that fulfil their social function, including the social and ecological function of land, with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the

⁴ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

⁵ E/CN.5/2020/3.

⁶ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

⁷ General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.

⁸ General Assembly resolution 71/1.

⁹ A/57/304, annex.

¹⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

¹¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

¹² *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.

¹³ General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex.

right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, without discrimination,

Noting the importance of aggregated and disaggregated data for formulating effective policies to address homelessness and the need to make concerted efforts to identify people experiencing homelessness, both temporarily and chronically,

Reaffirming Economic and Social Council resolutions [2016/7](#) and [2016/8](#), of 2 June 2016, in which Governments were encouraged to continue to develop, improve, extend and implement inclusive, effective, fiscally sustainable and nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures and in which it was acknowledged that social protection floors can provide a basis from which to address extreme poverty, vulnerability and homelessness, and are therefore essential to end the marginalization of persons experiencing homelessness and help them to integrate into society,

Recognizing that addressing homelessness through affordable housing and other targeted policies and social protection systems for all assists Member States in realizing the right to adequate housing as part of their implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the achievement of various Sustainable Development Goals,

Noting with concern that individuals and families can become homeless temporarily or for prolonged periods as a result of conflicts, migration, natural disasters or humanitarian emergencies, that climate change is predicted to increase the frequency, irregularity and intensity of the sudden onset of natural hazards, heightening the risk of disaster-related displacement and homelessness, and that armed conflicts are a cause of homelessness because they force people to become refugees and internally displaced,

Noting with concern also that youth living in poverty experience other deprivations to their standard of living, including lack of access to decent jobs, education and health, putting them at greater risk of bearing the negative economic consequences of shocks such as pandemics, and that homelessness among adolescents and youth is a major concern in many countries,

Mindful of the need for gender-responsive and locally relevant responses to homelessness and ending the increased violence against women and girls exacerbated by COVID-19,

Recalling its resolution [74/270](#) of 2 April 2020, entitled “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)”, and its resolution [74/274](#) of 20 April 2020, entitled “International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19”, and Security Council resolution [2532 \(2020\)](#) of 1 July 2020, which all call for multilateral and multi-sectoral approaches to address the global pandemic,

Noting with concern that individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness are already vulnerable and disproportionately affected by serious health concerns, which further increase their vulnerability to global pandemics such as COVID-19, and recognizing that this is influenced by a lack of housing and housing inadequacy, food and water insecurity, inequalities and poverty, particularly in the wake of lockdowns,

Stressing the urgent need to build on COVID-19 recovery efforts and to accelerate action at all levels and by all stakeholders to fulfil the vision and goals of the 2030 Agenda, and emphasizing the need for concerted action pursuant to all relevant major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields and their outcomes, including the World Summit for Social

Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030¹⁴ and the New Urban Agenda,

1. *Notes with concern* that homelessness is a global problem, affecting people with diverse economic, social and cultural backgrounds, in both developed and developing countries, that the last time the United Nations attempted to count the global number of homeless people, in 2005, it estimated that 100 million people were homeless, and that, according to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), globally, 1.6 billion people live in inadequate housing conditions, with about 15 million forcefully evicted every year;

2. *Notes* that homelessness is not merely a lack of physical housing, but is often interrelated with poverty, lack of productive employment and access to infrastructure, as well as other social issues that may constitute a loss of family, community and a sense of belonging, and, depending on national context, can be described as a condition where a person or household lacks habitable space, which may compromise their ability to enjoy social relations, and includes people living on the streets, in other open spaces or in buildings not intended for human habitation, people living in temporary accommodation or shelters for the homeless, and, in accordance with national legislation, may include, among others, people living in severely inadequate accommodation without security of tenure and access to basic services;

3. *Notes with concern* that the COVID-19 crisis has exposed the fact that housing can be unsafe and inadequate for much of humanity and that housing is the front line in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic;

4. *Stresses* that the primary responsibility to protect, promote and fulfil the realization and full enjoyment by all people of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹⁵ and relevant international human rights instruments, lies with Member States;

5. *Reiterates* that the eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition, in particular as they affect homeless peoples, specifically children, women and other people in vulnerable situations, is crucial for the advancement of global sustainable development;

6. *Invites* Member States to include homeless individuals and families as they fulfil their commitment to leaving no one behind and to further emphasize the importance of implementing, following up on and creating strategies to give people everywhere real opportunities for full, effective, constructive and sustainable participation in society and access to permanent, safe and adequate accommodation;

7. *Stresses* that developing integrated, holistic, inclusive and effective homeless policies and programmes, as well as coherent multisectoral and multilateral efforts globally, and evaluating them regularly as part of follow-up action lie foremost with Member States and local governments, in consultation with individuals and families with a lived experience, civil society organizations, especially those currently serving the identified demographic, and other relevant stakeholders;

8. *Welcomes* the implementation of social and public housing programmes, especially in developing countries, and encourages Member States to continue to enable all lower-income households to access adequate housing by constructing, maintaining and managing housing programmes at affordable prices and costs, as a means to prevent homelessness and to share best practices, such as “Housing First”;

¹⁴ General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II.

¹⁵ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

9. *Urges* Member States to ensure that policies and programmes to address homelessness, and the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and review of such policies and programmes are compliant with their international human rights obligations and consistent with development needs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹⁶ include the views and perspectives of homeless individuals and families, and are adequately resourced;

10. *Invites* Member States to consider, as appropriate, the indicators proposed in the report of the Secretary-General for their selection and adaptation in monitoring and assessing the implementation of programmes to address homelessness in all its forms;

11. *Calls upon* Member States to collect disaggregated data on demographics such as by age, sex and disability, related to homelessness and establish categories of homelessness, accompanying the existing measurement tools, and encourages Member States to harmonize the measurement and collection of data on homelessness to enable national and global policymaking;

12. *Urges* Member States to promote equal opportunities for all, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against all individuals and families experiencing homelessness, to decriminalize homelessness and to foster social integration for social groups such as young persons, people with disabilities, migrants and indigenous peoples;

13. *Emphasizes* that poverty eradication requires that Member States implement and strengthen nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, substantially extending coverage of the poor and the vulnerable, including people in informal employment, in an effort to prevent and address homelessness;

14. *Recognizes* that the international community faces increasing challenges posed by climate change, including but not limited to increased natural disasters and environmental degradation, which have increased vulnerabilities and inequalities with direct and indirect implications for all peoples, including individuals and families experiencing homelessness, particularly in developing countries and small island developing States, and stresses the need to mitigate homelessness through the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, while ensuring that the right to adequate housing is observed and met when people are displaced because of climate change and natural disasters;

15. *Urges* Member States to address the structural and personal or familial drivers of homelessness through appropriate means, noting with concern that homelessness is a global problem, affecting people of different ages and with diverse economic, social and cultural backgrounds, in both developed and developing countries, and that, while homelessness is mainly driven by structural causes, including inequalities, poverty, a loss of housing and livelihood, a lack of decent job opportunities, lack of access to affordable housing, including owing to negative impacts of the commodification of housing, lack of social protection, lack of access to land, credit or financing, and high costs of energy or health care, as well as lack of financial and legal literacy, it could be also related to a number of contributing factors, and social issues including drug and alcohol abuse and mental disorder and other mental conditions;

16. *Emphasizes* that addressing the specific needs of homeless people and their intersections with communicable diseases, including COVID-19, HIV and AIDS, will

¹⁶ Resolution [70/1](#).

require the further development of accessible, publicly available and affordable primary health-care services of a high quality;

17. *Recognizes* the need to implement measures to promote and improve the mental health and well-being of all people, specifically individuals and families experiencing homelessness, taking into account relevant cultural contexts, by scaling up comprehensive and integrated trauma support services for the prevention and treatment of mental disorders and other mental health conditions, including suicide prevention, substance abuse, and domestic and other abuse, through psychosocial support, including resilience training; raising awareness of mental health issues; tackling stigma and social pressure; promoting well-being; addressing the social determinants of health; and fully respecting their human rights;

18. *Urges* Member States to address violence against women and children, especially the challenges faced by those experiencing or at risk of homelessness, as well as gender stereotypes that perpetuate all forms of discrimination and violence, including harmful practices;

19. *Recognizes* the importance of strengthening intergenerational programmes, partnerships and solidarity among generations, and in this regard the importance of targeted programmes throughout the life cycle to mitigate and address homelessness, including the provision of support services, assistance in locating housing, health, and mental health services, employment counselling, child care, food and trauma services to all individuals and families experiencing homelessness, giving special attention to interventions with families, women and children who are at risk of violence, to break the cycle of intergenerational homelessness and poverty;

20. *Calls upon* Member States to accelerate their efforts to close the digital divide and promote innovation for all homeless peoples and other vulnerable populations by ensuring that information and communications technologies are fully and appropriately integrated and accessible during service access and provision, education and training at all levels and institutional administration and management, specifically through reliable access to computers, cell phones and Internet connection for persons surviving on the streets, so that accurate information about adequate shelter or housing, resources, social services, health care, including information on COVID-19, and legal services is readily available;

21. *Urges* Member States to take concerted action, in conformity with international law, to remove obstacles to the full realization of human rights, including the realization of access to safe and adequate housing for all people, through increased availability of adequate housing, resources and basic services in order to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

22. *Also urges* Member States to address legal, administrative, social, economic, digital and cultural barriers, irrespective of geographic location, inter alia, forced evictions, land ownership, personal identity documentation, access to information and communication technology, housing discrimination, which limit people experiencing homelessness, in all its forms, from full participation, representation and input at all levels, while enabling the capacities, resources, information, technology, support, space and skills needed to empower and ensure the full participation of low-income peoples, women-headed households and others in vulnerable situations;

23. *Encourages* Member States to substantially increase the pool of affordable housing with social support, particularly in urban areas, upgrade slums and take steps to end forced evictions and the commodification of housing, through such actions as taxing empty units, requiring a certain percentage of new housing construction to

include affordable housing, provide access to affordable legal remedies, promoting housing cooperatives, promoting caps on rental costs and moderating housing costs;

24. *Also encourages* Member States to ensure, in the midst of COVID-19 and other crises, that persons without homes have access to personal protective equipment, health care and testing, and access to easily comprehended information about the situation through the implementation of sound disaster management, including the provision of sufficient water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, enabling persons without a home to comply with mandated health recommendations without fear of persecution or personal risk;

25. *Encourages* close collaboration and the sharing of good practices between Member States as well as other relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, to educate, raise awareness and support and empower people in vulnerable situations and individuals, including families and youth;

26. *Requests* the Statistical Commission to establish global indicators on social protection and access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing, as well as statistics to monitor homelessness, inclusive of a recommendation to collect aggregate data and data disaggregated especially by sex, race, mobility, families and other relevant characteristics of homelessness, in an effort to avoid the risk of excluding those who are not “visibly” homeless, through quantitative and qualitative data;

27. *Invites* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including on progress that has been achieved and challenges that remain, to be prepared in consultation with Member States as well as the relevant specialized agencies, funds, programmes, and regional commissions, taking into account the work done by the United Nations system.
