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HABITAT II PREPCOM III HIGHLIGHTS FRIDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 1996

Delegates continued negotiations in three Subgroups. All Working Group Chairs announced the expanded Bureau's decision that NGOs can express their views in oral and written form and work through national delegations, but they may not negotiate directly with governments while the compilation texts are under review.

WORKING GROUP II SUBGROUP A

The US proposed a single drafting group because the procedure of having several small drafting groups was chaotic and depleting many delegations. The EU proposed two parallel groups, but the G-77 objected. The group established will refine the paragraphs.

PART II. GOALS AND PRINCIPLES: In written proposals on **13** (adoption of goals), the EU recommended references to human rights. The G-77/China suggested language on equitable economic and social development and sustained economic growth. During discussion, some developed countries objected to "sustained economic growth" and equitable development as language not previously accepted.

In written proposals on **14** (equality), the EU suggested a reference to "equal rights between women and men," and the right to inheritance and land ownership. The G-77 proposed including sustained economic growth. Canada included a separate paragraph on gender equality. Some delegates objected to any reference on inheritance or ownership. Other delegations said sustained economic growth warranted a separate subgroup.

In written proposals on **15** (eradication of poverty), the G-77 noted the acute level of poverty in developing countries. The US suggested references to the special problems of women in poverty. During discussions, delegates suggested referring to all people, rather than low-income groups. One delegation proposed including a paragraph on employment, and an NGO suggested addressing the issue of debt relief. One delegation said that the conference should focus on Habitat issues and not mirror the Beijing agenda. Another said Habitat cannot compartmentalize issues.

In written submissions on **16** (sustainable development), the EU added the precautionary principle, the G-77/China added consideration of needs for economic growth in sustainable development, and Romania added language on science and technology. Delegates added the precautionary principle and debated adding language on science and technology or a new principle.

In written proposals on **17** (livability), the EU suggested renaming the principle "diversity." UNICEF proposed a new principle on children. Although many delegates supported the EU's

proposal, "and diversity" was bracketed. Delegates debated whether the language regarding children should be added or addressed in a new principle; consensus was reached on the former.

The proposals of the EU, Canada and the Holy See on **18** (family) suggested language agreed to in Beijing. The US noted that the worldwide process of rapid socio-economic change has influenced patterns of family formation. Delegates accepted the previously-agreed language. Some delegations said the US proposal focused too heavily on rural to urban migration.

In written proposals on **19** (civic engagement and government responsibility), the EU and Canada proposed deleting the first sentence on basic rights. Canada's proposal also stated that the participation of NGOs is indispensable. The G-77 proposal would retain the first sentence, but change "basic" to "fundamental" rights. During discussions, some delegates objected to the NGO reference. Consensus emerged on an amended EU draft.

In written proposals on **20** (partnerships), Canada suggested language from Agenda 21. The G-77 noted the need for partnerships between and within countries. During discussions, delegations preferred limiting the paragraph to partnerships within countries and accepted adding "cooperatives" to the actors.

The written proposals on **21** (solidarity) state that the EU suggested "non-discrimination" and a reference to "the household and family in all its forms." During discussions, delegations objected to "household" because it was not defined. It was suggested that "solidarity" be replaced with "interdependence," but one delegate noted that while rich people need friendship, poor people need "solidarity."

In submissions on **22** (international cooperation and coordination), the EU replaced "new and additional" resources with external financial resources and the G-77/China referred to common but differentiated responsibilities. Delegates discussed cooperation mechanisms and an enabling international economic environment.

WORKING GROUP II SUBGROUP B

Edmundo Hermosilla chaired negotiations Friday but returned to Chile in the evening. An emergency meeting of Working Group II elected Gaston Ibañez (Peru) as the new Chair.

SECTION B. Adequate shelter for all: In **47** (international cooperation), the EU added a reference to national level cooperation. Delegates also added a revised Croatian-proposal noting the need for cooperation in areas affected by war or natural, industrial or technological disasters where reconstruction needs surpass national resources. Delegates assigned **48** (national shelter policy) to a drafting group.

In **49** (integrate shelter policies with macroeconomic, social and environmental policies), Canada and the EU proposed deleting

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"national" policies, but the G-77 objected. Delegates agreed that shelter and "demographic" policies should be integrated. In **49(a)** (consultative mechanisms), delegates added references to "organizations of the civil society, and the private sector" (Canada). In **49(b)** (impacts of macroeconomic policies), delegates agreed to "constantly monitor" policies and take into account effects on "vulnerable and disadvantaged people." In **49(c)** (contribution of shelter policies to employment), delegates called for strengthened "linkages between" policies (Israel) and added reference to the "maximization of resource efficiency" (India).

In **49(d)** (policies stimulating shelter markets), delegates identified "expenditure, taxation, monetary and planning" policies. The EU opposed a G-77/China proposal for corporate responsibility to ensure equal access for marginalized groups. The Holy See added "particularly those who lack shelter." In **49(e)** (integrate shelter policies with poverty reduction and job creation), delegates called for: integration of "land" and shelter policies (G-77/China); provision of clean water and sanitation (Australia); education and health (EU); and the empowerment of members of disadvantaged groups (US), particularly those who lack shelter (Holy See).

The EU amended **49(f)** (shelter-related information systems) to read "Strengthen shelter-related information systems (Israel), including the dissemination of information (Canada), and make use of relevant research activities in policy development, including gender disaggregated data. (Norway)" The G-77, supported by the EU, amended **49(g)** (shelter policies) to read: "Periodically evaluate and, as appropriate, revise shelter policies, taking into consideration the needs of those who lack shelter and the impact of such policies on the environment, economic development, and social welfare."

Delegates asked the Secretariat to redraft **50** (policies that promote the enablement approach) and include their amendments to: promote the supply of rental housing (Australia); develop and support institutional frameworks (EU); establish priorities for resource allocation (EU); and review and adjust the regulatory framework (EU).

In **51(a)** (integrate shelter policies with other policies), delegates agreed to a Canadian reformulation and added references to rural planning (G-77/China) and human resource development (EU). In **51(b)** (sustainable development principles), the US, Norway and the EU objected to "sustained economic growth." Delegates added an EU-proposed **51 new(d)** (exchange of information on environmental health aspects of construction).

In **52(a)** (enabling approach to shelter development), delegates added reference to "renovation, rehabilitation, upgradation and strengthening of existing housing stock." In **52(e)** (review shelter policies), delegates called for evaluation, and where necessary, revision of policies (EU), especially as they affect vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Delegates added two US subparagraphs regarding environmentally sound construction and labour-intensive technologies. An informal-informal met on Saturday morning. Delegates considered text up to **56(f)**.

WORKING GROUP II SUBGROUP C

SECTION B. Adequate shelter for all (paragraphs 66-75): Subgroup C commenced with paragraph **67** (infrastructure provision). In paragraph **67(a)** (management mechanisms), delegates agreed to services at the local level. In paragraph **67(b)** (private sector), the G-77/China preferred community-based enterprise, and the US, the non-profit sector. In paragraph **67(c)** (infrastructure and services), Israel proposed ESTs. Chair John Zetter summarized paragraph **67(d)** (partnerships): Promote (Egypt) partnerships with the private sector and non-profit organizations (US) for the management (G-77/China) and delivery of services, and improve regulatory capacity. The US added economic sustainability (EU), efficiency and access.

In **68** (improving construction, maintenance and rehabilitation), the G-77/China added planning and design improvement to the subheading, and cost-effective building materials. Canada,

supported by the G-77/China, added access for persons with disabilities. Regarding industrial standards and quality control, the EU added energy efficiency and the US added accessibility. The G-77/China recommended provision of adequate social services and improvement and rationalization of urban planning and shelter design. Action **(a)bis** refers to promotion of indigenous approaches, **(b)bis** to encouragement of public participation in assessing user needs and **(c)bis** to exchange of experience of best practices and technology transfer.

Paragraph **69** (effective response) was reformulated: To respond effectively (US) to planning and design (G-77/China), construction, maintenance and rehabilitation needs (US) Governments should act at appropriate levels (EU). In **69(a)** (training) Canada and the EU deleted "wage" adjustments. The US introduced diversification of the supply of work skills, and provision for women. In **69(b)** (community contracts) the US preferred CBOs. The EU introduced **69(c)bis** to promote information exchange on technologies. In **69(d)** (incentives for energy efficiency), the US added accessible structures and facilities. The US introduced **69(d)bis** (participation of women, the disabled and disadvantaged). The US specified appropriate planning, design, construction and maintenance in the EU-proposed **69(d)ter** (standards enforcement). In **69(f)** (technical assistance for community and NGOs), Canada deleted "subsidized." In **69(i)** (participation of women), the US added "people with disabilities" and "construction to suit individual and family requirements."

In the chapeau of **70** (locally produced building material) the EU introduced "environmentally sound, affordable and durable" building materials. In **70(a)** (support small-scale building materials industries), the EU added "environmentally sound," the G-77/China introduced "small-scale local building materials industries and the expansion of their production and commercialization." Canada added research, development and information. In **70(b)** (market competition), the G-77/China added "provide policies and guidelines to facilitate" fair market competition. In **70(c)** (information exchange), the US supported accessible technologies. The US introduced adequate attention to safety needs in the new **70(d)** (building standards). The new **70(f)** (evaluation of progress) was accepted without amendment.

In paragraph **72** (competing on equal basis), EU and Australian amendments that attribute vulnerability to exclusion from the socio-economic mainstream and decision making were bracketed. The G-77/China added access to basic social services. The US qualified a reference to categories of vulnerable people, including [documented] migrants; and added lack of basic services and disproportionate environmental and health impacts as conditions of special risk. Canada added language on access. Delegates convened informal informals over the weekend.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The pace of negotiations has reminded some delegates of WSSD Working Group Chair Richelle's comment about his Working Group's pace: the speed of a snail taking a curve with full brakes applied. Processes used to aid negotiations at previous UN conferences are being considered for Habitat II. Contact groups for specific subjects, such as the right to housing, is one idea. Names being considered to chair such groups include Ambs, Butler (Australia) and Razali (Malaysia), who held similar jobs during the WSSD. An intersessional meeting, similar to the additional week held for the Women's Conference, has been considered, but given the state of UN finances, is not likely.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

SUBGROUP A: The subgroup will continue informal informals on Part III (Commitments) in Conference Room 2.

SUBGROUP B: The subgroup will meet in Conference Room 3. Negotiations will begin on **56 (g)** (existing infrastructure).

SUBGROUP C: Negotiations on Section C (sustainable human settlements) are expected to proceed in Conference Room 6.