



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## HABITAT II HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 10 JUNE 1996

Delegates to Habitat II heard general statements and statements regarding the observance of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People during Plenary. The Working Groups and Drafting Groups of Committee I, charged with negotiating the Habitat Agenda, met throughout the day and into the night. Committee II held hearings involving representatives of non-governmental and community-based organizations.

### WORKING GROUP I

**C. Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world:** TURKEY introduced a new **95quinquies** (livability of built environment) on quality of life and democracy and a new **98quater** (action by Governments, partnerships and stakeholders) on participation of stakeholders in planning.

In **126bis** (effects of nuclear weapons testing), the US stated that this issue is inappropriate for discussion at this conference and proposed deleting the entire paragraph. The SOLOMON ISLANDS, the HOLY SEE and SYRIA objected. NEW ZEALAND, on behalf of Pacific Island States, proposed an amendment which broadens the scope to include all small Pacific islands affected by nuclear tests and appeals to those countries which conducted tests to consider providing assistance. To **128(g)** (shelter requirements of internally displaced persons), JAPAN, supported by the G-77/CHINA, added "construction of temporary houses with basic facilities." The EU added "taking into account gender specific needs." The G-77/CHINA added a new **128(i)** regarding support for the Red Cross. The US introduced three subparagraphs to **128(i)** regarding land mines. Consultations were undertaken on specific language.

Revisiting **72** (vulnerable groups), CANADA presented language from informal consultations on causes of vulnerability and disadvantage with new references to: access to resources; vulnerability and disadvantage caused mainly by circumstances; housing sector conditions and availability; "enforcement and effectiveness" of legal protection; and disproportionately "adverse" environmental and health impacts. The informal group removed brackets from **72ter** (refugees), adding a reference to loss of "security" resulting from inadequate shelter. References were added on "internally" (EU) "displaced persons" (G-77/CHINA).

**D. Capacity-building and institutional development:** The CHAIR introduced his draft of Section D. In **129** (economic and

social development are interdependent), delegates added introductory references to "human settlements" (CHINA) and "environmental protection" (EU/US). The G-77/CHINA reintroduced references to decentralization and capacity-building. A US reference to protection of human rights, opposed by CHINA, was added in brackets. In **130bis** (accountability, transparency and participation), the G-77/CHINA deleted "good governance." JAPAN proposed replacing "democracy" with "sustainable human settlements development" but the EU objected. The sentence was bracketed. INDONESIA replaced "guarantee" with "ensure" the right to take an active role in community affairs.

In **131(e)** (delivery of public goods and services) and **(i)** (local authorities' performance), the US, supported by the EU and IRAN, added "gender-, age- and income-based" data collection. In **131(j)** (local resources management), the HOLY SEE, supported by the EU, deleted "increase participation of women, children and youth." The US proposed deleting **131(1)** (information network), as it deals with UNCHS. The G-77/CHINA objected and added "transfer of technology." The EU recommended it be deferred to Working Group II.

BOLIVIA added "popular participation" to the title of section 3: "Participation, civic engagement and good governance." The EU and US objected to an IRAN-proposed deletion of "good governance." The EU suggested bracketing the reference in the title and in the chapeau and referring the issue to the High-Level Segment. BOLIVIA added a reference to participation of community organizations in decision making and introduced a new **133(a)bis** on legal recognition of organized communities. In **133(i)** (judicial redress), AUSTRALIA replaced "improving" with "effective" judicial and administrative channels. IRAN opposed an EU-proposed deletion of rights "as defined in national legislation." The reference is in brackets. The **133(i)ter** (intergenerational interests), the US added "while strengthening families." CANADA added a new **133(i)quater** on promoting the full potential of youth as key partners. In **134** (human settlements management), the EU inserted a sentence regarding capacity building and added "effective" and efficient development.

At the CHAIR's appeal, the US and the G-77/CHINA agreed to the EU's earlier proposal that delegates accept Section D as reformulated by the Chair. The Chair presented his draft text for Chapter III (Commitments) for consideration in an evening session.

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## WORKING GROUP II

**F. Implementation and follow-up:** Delegates considered the text sentence-by-sentence. In **158bis** (national level implementation), the G-77/CHINA added a sentence on coordination of national plans through partnerships with international organizations and the UN system. Delegates accepted a sentence noting that governments “may wish to” coordinate their national plans of action through cooperation and partnerships with UN organizations, which play an important role “in a number of countries.”

In **159** (international level implementation), NGOs proposed that the UN Commission on Human Settlements (Commission) be a quadripartite body with representatives from governments, the private sector, local authorities and NGOs. The EU proposed reducing the list of main actors for follow-up to all States and relevant UN bodies. The G-77/CHINA proposed that the main actors be all States, the UN and the General Assembly (GA), which designated the Commission as the global policy forum on human settlements development in accordance with resolution 32/162. The US proposed that the main actors be all States, the UN, as well as all relevant UN bodies, including especially the Commission according to its mandate and roles from all relevant UNGA resolutions. AUSTRALIA and CANADA proposed reference to ECOSOC. AUSTRALIA proposed an additional sentence referring to other actors in the UN system, as well as the private sector, local authorities and NGOs. The G-77/CHINA objected to references to local authorities and NGOs. The final text contains two sentences noting that the main actors are all States, the GA, ECOSOC and, in particular, the Commission, in accordance with GA resolution 32/162 and all other relevant resolutions, and that other relevant UN bodies also have a role to play in implementation.

The G-77/CHINA added a sentence noting that the UN Centre for Human Settlements (Centre) and all relevant UN agencies should take into account the Habitat Agenda. The EU concurred, provided future references to the Centre be confined to three future paragraphs. The US proposed noting that Centre action be “in the context of UN reform efforts,” but agreed to place the text in “mental brackets,” pending subsequent discussion.

In **161** (GA), the G-77/CHINA deleted language noting that the 1997 GA Special Session to review Agenda 21 should give attention to the issue of sustainable development. Delegates agreed to text mentioning reviews by UNGA 51 and 52, but placed language on the Special Session in the final sentence.

In **163** (ECOSOC review), the G-77/CHINA proposed deleting references to ECOSOC oversight on coordination of the GPA and review of implementation. The EU, supported by the US, AUSTRALIA and CANADA, proposed including a review of the mandate of the Commission by ECOSOC. The G-77/CHINA said including this request assumes that something should be done to the Commission. The EU said an ECOSOC review cannot diminish the Commission’s responsibilities and past reviews have strengthened other commissions. The G-77/CHINA proposed a review “with a view to strengthening” the Commission. The US proposed “with a view to reorienting and, as necessary, to strengthening,” but KENYA and ZAMBIA objected. The EU bracketed the reference to the review.

In **166** (GA and ECOSOC), the US added references to “where appropriate” and “within existing resources,” but the G-77/CHINA objected. The references were bracketed. The EU proposed a reference to the participation of financial and technical institutions. In **168** (the Commission and the Center),

the EU proposed replacing the existing paragraph with language on the functions and roles of the Commission, noting that the Commission should promote, review, monitor and assess progress in implementing the goals of the Habitat Agenda. The G-77/CHINA said the contents of the existing paragraph are not an enumeration of existing relations, but an understanding reached that the Commission must be strengthened. The ideas may be relocated, but must be retained because they represent the “heart of the matter.” The US added a reference noting that actions be consistent with ongoing UN reform. The G-77/CHINA said that the Conference should not be limited by a reform process that may take many years.

## IN THE DRAFTING GROUPS

Delegates in the Drafting Group on the Istanbul Declaration received a 14 paragraph redraft during the morning, and negotiated it throughout the afternoon and evening. Chair Kazildeli (Turkey) was asked to redraft the introduction and a paragraph regarding recent UN Conferences. Additional paragraphs discussed dealt with the deterioration of conditions and participation.

At the end of the Drafting Group of Working Group I’s morning and afternoon sessions, all outstanding text in the Preamble except *2ter* (sustainable development) had been resolved. The Group had reached paragraph *22ter* in Chapter II (Goals and Principles) by 6:00 pm, up to which all text was resolved except the first parts of 13 (commitments and principles) and 18 (various forms of the family).

## IN THE CORRIDORS

Observers note that staff from the DPCSD in New York have been working closely with the Habitat Secretariat in preparing drafts for the Chair of Working Group I. The initiative achieved a breakthrough Monday when a text on capacity building was approved, for the most part, without amendments. Chair Kakakhel prompted the advance suggesting that he might vacate the chair and leave Istanbul without an agreed document. While some delegates said they were keeping an open mind about the Chair’s draft on Commitments, it is expected that a number of politically sensitive issues will demand more time. An observer explained that the compilation of ideas on Commitments, including the issue of occupied territories, has been conducted without the advantage of gauging the political temperature surrounding certain issues.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**PLENARY:** The Plenary will meet during the morning and afternoon in the Plenary Hall to hear statements on the state of human settlements.

**WORKING GROUP I:** The Working Group is expected to meet during the morning, afternoon and evening in Conference Room 1.

**WORKING GROUP II:** The Working Group is expected to meet during the morning and afternoon in Conference Room 3.

**DRAFTING GROUPS:** The Drafting Group on the Istanbul Declaration is expected to meet during the morning in Conference Room D. The Drafting Group on Land Mines is expected to meet during the morning in Conference Room B.

**COMMITTEE II:** The Committee is expected to meet in Conference Room 2 during the morning and afternoon to hold hearings involving representatives of the Habitat Dialogues for the 21st Century and of the Forum on Human Solidarity.