



## ISTANBUL +5 PREPCOM II HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2001

The second and final substantive session of the preparatory committee for Istanbul +5 (PrepCom II) commenced in Nairobi at the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS) with opening speeches and adoption of the agenda. Plenary then heard statements on the preparation of a draft report on the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The Committee of the Whole (COW) considered proposals on structuring discussions among the various Habitat Agenda partners, and on the recommendations of the Commission on Human Settlements (CHS) at its 18th session and of the year 2000 coordinating segment of the Economic and Social Council.

### OPENING PLENARY

PrepCom Chair Germán García-Durán (Colombia) opened PrepCom II and introduced a UN choir, which sang three songs. In his opening remarks, Chair García-Durán outlined expectations of the PrepCom, called for concrete and practical outcomes, and asked delegates to show flexibility and tolerance during negotiations. He highlighted draft resolutions submitted to the PrepCom on the special session's organization of work and on the promotion of family support policies in the review and appraisal of the Habitat Agenda. William Morogo, Kenya's Minister for Public Works and Housing, welcomed delegates to Kenya and wished the PrepCom success in its deliberations.

Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat), discussed the preparation of the draft report on the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (HS/C/PC.2/2) and outlined the progress report on the preparations for the special session (HS/C/PC.2/2/Add.1). She said Istanbul +5 must address the need for new political realities and partnerships in an era of global technological innovation, and highlighted various initiatives, including: efforts to improve and revitalize the CHS; new approaches to issues of secure tenure and urban governance; the establishment of an Advisory Committee of Local Authorities; and improved coordination with UNEP.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK:** The PrepCom adopted the agenda and organization of work as contained in HS/C/PC.2/1 and HS/C/PC.2/1/Add.1/Rev.1. Chair García-Durán said a COW, chaired by PrepCom Vice-Chair Cheikh Sadibou Fall (Senegal), and a drafting committee, chaired by Vice-Chair Manfred Konukiewicz (Germany), would be established.

### PLENARY

The Plenary began its consideration of the preparation of a draft report on the overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

INDIA, on behalf of the G-77/China Nairobi Chapter, supported resolving controversial issues before their inclusion in the draft documents and strengthening UNCHS to ensure full implementation of the Agenda.

Urging for equal legitimacy of all government levels, the ADVISORY COUNCIL OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES called for discussion on the concept of subsidiarity and the role of local authorities, and said decentralization goes with good governance. He called attention to two issues: strengthening local authorities, leading to the elaboration of a local autonomy charter; and adopting resolutions to guarantee social advancement. SWEDEN, on behalf of the EU, said the special session's outcome will provide contributions to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. He supported, *inter alia*: empowering people and communities through decentralization; good governance as a prerequisite for sustainable development; better coordination between different levels of governments; and the World Charter on Local Self-Government. CANADA supported a structure for the special session that avoids sterile debate and maximizes opportunities for real dialogue. He advocated effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities, but said the proposed World Charter on Local Self-Government was not an appropriate vehicle to this end. CHINA highlighted shortcomings of the draft report, including a lack of analysis of globalization's impact and an unbalanced emphasis on decentralization and local governments, and opposed references to the World Charter on Local Self-Government. He hoped the Secretariat would revise the draft report based on proposals made by delegations.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION lamented the lack of attention given to countries with economies in transition in the draft report. KENYA said the draft declaration should draw from regional declarations, and avoid issues on which no consensus has been reached. CAMEROON highlighted the importance of effective financing, urbanization management programmes and reforming habitat policy.

ETHIOPIA emphasized institutional capacity building and increasing social and economic development through defined operational activities. NORWAY highlighted, *inter alia*, an increased awareness of the issues since Habitat II and the need to empower women in order to address social inequality. He said addressing poverty required strong local governance, and called on countries able to contribute financially to the success of the Habitat Agenda to do so.

NIGERIA, on behalf of the African Group, emphasized new and additional resources for human settlements development in Africa. BAHRAIN said the recommendations of the regional conference in the Western Asia region, held in October 2000, is contained in the Manama declaration. CHILE, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group, presented results of its regional preparatory conference and noted new challenges arising

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from globalization. MEXICO called for: modalities and indicators to monitor the implementation of the Agenda; and strengthening collaboration between the UNCHS and Latin American and Caribbean ministers. NEW ZEALAND urged that attention be given to the Pacific region countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). BANGLADESH supported using indicators to monitor the Habitat Agenda and said global, regional, national and local urban observatories are necessary to achieve the Agenda's goals.

BOTSWANA highlighted good governance and decentralization to local authorities, and called for building more partnerships with the private sector. MOROCCO, SRI LANKA, CUBA, LIBERIA, COLOMBIA and others outlined their national initiatives towards implementing the Habitat Agenda. INDONESIA advocated strengthening synergies between UNEP and UNCHS. NIGERIA emphasized better organization in human settlements development and supported global campaigns on secure tenure and good urban governance. He added that Nigeria was honored that the launch of the proposed urban governance campaign would be held in Nigeria.

UGANDA said reducing poverty will lead to sounder policies in good governance and improved land tenure systems, and called on developed countries to cancel debts. SPAIN advocated mutually supportive global and local policies. UNDP stressed the importance of democratic governance at all levels in the fight against poverty. ZAMBIA, on behalf of the Commonwealth Countries, supported the development of strong working partnerships between national and local governments and between civil society and the private sector.

The OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS emphasized a human rights approach to the Habitat Agenda and the cross-cutting nature of housing, and said the right to adequate housing must happen at the national level. RWANDA identified the following aspects requiring emphasis: linkages between poverty and human settlements; rural-urban development linkages; environment and sanitation; and participatory good governance in management of human settlements. She called for a global financial mechanism to support these areas. TURKEY called for more references, in the draft report, to tangible achievements in implementing the Habitat Agenda and to providing affordable housing.

The HOLY SEE drew attention to the plight of refugees and displaced persons, and said that although the Habitat Agenda makes reference to the family, the issue was missing in the secretariat's documents on indicators and the Executive Director's report, rendering the UNGASS process at odds with its own agenda. The DAVID M. KENNEDY CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES stressed the centrality of the natural family in realizing the Habitat Agenda, noted that feminization of poverty arises from the disintegration of the family, and supported adopting a resolution on the family. POLAND said family issues in human settlements planning should be promoted and not marginalized in the review and appraisal, and that Poland was cosponsoring the resolution on family policies.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

COW Chair Cheikh Sadibou Fall (Senegal) introduced the proposal for structuring the discussions among the Habitat Agenda partners at the special session (HS/C/PC.2/4). The Secretariat further noted that document HS/C/PC.2/4/Add.1 outlines the creation of a thematic committee. She underscored the work of other intergovernmental bodies since Habitat II, and invited the COW to consider regrouping proposed themes into relevant clusters reflecting: adequate shelter for all; managing the local environment; urban socio-economy; and urban governance and institutional development. CANADA asked for time to consider the proposal. CHINA stressed that discussions should include both urban and rural settlements.

Regarding participation, the EU, NORWAY and CANADA supported a flexible approach on the inclusion of a full range of governments and partners, noting that GA resolution 55/194 high-

lights the importance of active participation of accredited UNCHS partners. INDIA stressed the importance of local authorities in the achievement of the Habitat Agenda. CHINA stressed following UN rules of procedure regarding NGO participation in the General Assembly. TURKEY expressed concern over the potentially large number of contributions by participants in the thematic committee and the lack of time to properly debate them. The EU asked for clarification on criteria for presentations. INDIA, JAMAICA and COLOMBIA emphasized that criteria should include balanced representation of developing countries. JAMAICA called for the recognition of the special status of SIDS. KENYA questioned whether partners will have time to develop their presentations.

The US said that the creation of the thematic committee was not in keeping with practice of previous special sessions. NORWAY noted that GA resolution 55/195 of December 2000 called for the creation of a thematic committee. The EU said that given the special nature of the process, innovations such as the thematic committee were required. At the request of the US, CANADA and NORWAY, Chair Fall deferred further debate on this agenda item.

Delegates turned their attention to the agenda item on recommendations of the CHS at its 18th session and of the year 2000 coordinating segment of ECOSOC (HS/C/PC.2/5 and HS/C/PC.2/BD.1). CHS Chair Sid-Ali Ketrndji (Algeria) briefed the COW on resolutions adopted during the 18th session that are relevant to the upcoming special session, including, *inter alia*, those related to: secure tenure, good governance, revitalization of UNCHS, the role of local authorities, legal frameworks in support of the Habitat Agenda, the Cities Alliance Initiative to promote partnerships to reduce urban poverty, and an urban forum to strengthen coordination. The Secretariat highlighted relevant conclusions from the report on the coordination segment of ECOSOC, including one regarding the adoption of a Habitat Agenda task manager system to facilitate coordinated implementation and streamline reporting. NORWAY praised ECOSOC's focus on coordination with Habitat, repeated the call for countries to assist least developed countries in participating in the special session, and, with KENYA, advocated the creation of a task manager system. SUDAN called for the establishment of a coordinating body.

#### IN THE BREEZEWAYS

On the first day of the PrepCom, the issue of a World Charter on Local Self-Government that persisted throughout the Habitat II process resurfaced during the general debate. While some participants would like the proposed charter to be discussed more formally later this week, others say its proponents are very few, and that in light of the large opposition to such a charter expressed at the CHS meeting last week, many seem to prefer sweeping the issue under the carpet. However, some think that with the high presence of mayors at the PrepCom the subject is likely to be revived and that even if the issue is not resolved at this session, it is likely to be raised again at the UNGASS.

#### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**PLENARY:** Plenary will convene in Conference Room 2 at 9:30 am to consider the draft declaration on cities and other human settlements in the new millennium.

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE:** The COW will meet in Conference Room 1 in an afternoon session to continue consideration of the proposal on structuring discussions among the various Habitat Agenda partners at Istanbul +5 and on the CHS recommendations. Check the daily journal for times.

**DRAFTING COMMITTEE:** The drafting committee will meet in Conference Room 1 in the morning and possibly in an afternoon session, to begin consideration of a draft report on the overall review and appraisal on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Check the daily journal for times.