



UNITED
NATIONS



UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
(HABITAT II)

Istanbul (Turkey)
3-14 June 1996

Distr.
LIMITED

A/CONF.165/L.6/Add.1
12 June 1996

Original: ENGLISH

Agenda item 9

THE HABITAT AGENDA: GOALS AND PRINCIPLES, COMMITMENTS
AND GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION

Report of Committee I

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mrs. Ayse Esen ÖGÜT (Turkey)

At the ... meeting, on ... June 1996, Committee I approved chapter I (Preamble) of the Habitat Agenda and recommended it to the Conference for adoption. The text of chapter I read as follows:

Chapter I

PREAMBLE

1. We recognize the imperative need to improve the quality of human settlements, which profoundly affects the daily lives and well-being of our peoples. There is a sense of great opportunity and hope that a new world can be built, in which economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development can be realized through solidarity and cooperation within and between countries and through effective partnerships at all levels. International cooperation and universal solidarity, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in a spirit of partnership, are crucial in order to improve the quality of life of the peoples of the world.

2. The purpose of the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) is to address two themes of equal global importance: "Adequate shelter for all" and "Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world". Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, including adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements, and they are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature. They are also entitled to a life in consonance with their cultural heritage and spiritual and cultural values. [While the significance of national and regional particularities of various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms].

2 bis. As to the first theme, a large segment of the world's population lacks shelter and sanitation, particularly in developing countries. We recognize that access to safe and healthy shelter and basic services is essential to a person's physical, psychological, social and economic well-being and should be a fundamental part of our urgent actions for the more than 1 billion people without decent living conditions. Our objective is to achieve adequate shelter for all, especially the deprived urban and rural poor, through an enabling approach to the development and improvement of shelter that is environmentally sound.

2 ter. As to the second theme, sustainable development of human settlements combines economic development, social development and environmental protection, with full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, and offers a means of achieving a world of greater stability and peace, built on ethical and spiritual vision. [Democracy and transparent, representative and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society are indispensable foundations for the realization of sustainable development. However, the lack of development and the existence of widespread absolute poverty inhibit the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and render fragile democracy and popular participation.]

3. Recognizing the global nature of these issues, the international community, in convening Habitat II, has decided that a concerted global approach could greatly enhance progress towards achieving these goals. Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, particularly in

industrialized countries, environmental degradation, demographic changes, widespread and persistent poverty, and social and economic inequality can have local, cross-national and global impacts. The sooner communities, local governments and partnerships among the public, private and community sectors join efforts to create comprehensive, bold and innovative strategies for shelter and human settlements, the better the prospects will be for the safety, health and well-being of people and the brighter the outlook for solutions to global environment and social problems.

4. Having considered the experience since the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat), held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976, Habitat II reaffirms the results from relevant recent world conferences and has developed them into an agenda for human settlements: the Habitat Agenda. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - the Earth Summit - held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, produced Agenda 21. At that Conference, the international community agreed on a framework for the sustainable development of human settlements. Each of the other conferences, including the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995); the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995); the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados, 1994); the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (Yokohama, 1994) and the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), as well as the World Summit for Children (New York, 1990) and the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, 1990), also address important social, economic and environmental issues, including components of the sustainable development agenda, for which successful implementation requires action at the local, national and international levels. The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, adopted in 1988, which emphasizes the need for improved production and delivery of shelter, revised national housing policies and an enabling strategy, offers useful guidelines for the realization of adequate shelter for all in the next century.

5. During the course of history, urbanization has been associated with economic and social progress, the promotion of literacy and education, the improvement of the general state of health, greater access to social services, and cultural, political and religious participation. Democratization has enhanced such access and meaningful participation and involvement for civil

society actors, for public-private partnerships, and for decentralized, participatory planning and management, which are important features of a successful urban future. Cities and towns have been engines of growth and incubators of civilization and have facilitated the evolution of knowledge, culture and tradition, as well as of industry and commerce. Urban settlements, properly planned and managed, hold the promise for human development and the protection of the world's natural resources through their ability to support large numbers of people while limiting their impact on the natural environment. The growth of cities and towns causes social, economic and environmental changes that go beyond city boundaries. Habitat II deals with all settlements - large, medium and small - and reaffirms the need for universal improvements in living and working conditions.

6. To overcome current problems and to ensure future progress in the improvement of economic, social and environmental conditions in human settlements, we must begin with a recognition of the challenges facing cities and towns. According to current projections, by the turn of the century, more than 3 billion people - one half of the world's population - will live and work in urban areas. The most serious problems confronting cities and towns and their inhabitants include inadequate financial resources, lack of employment opportunities, spreading homelessness and expansion of squatter settlements, increased poverty and a widening gap between rich and poor, growing insecurity and rising crime rates, inadequate and deteriorating building stock, services and infrastructure, lack of health and educational facilities, improper land use, insecure land tenure, rising traffic congestion, increasing pollution, lack of green spaces, inadequate water supply and sanitation, uncoordinated urban development and an increasing vulnerability to disaster. All of these have seriously challenged the capacities of Governments, particularly those of developing countries, at all levels to realize economic development, social development and environmental protection, which are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development - the framework for our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Rapid rates of international and internal migration, as well as population growth in cities and towns, and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption raise these problems in especially acute forms. In these cities and towns, large sections of the world's urban population live in inadequate conditions and are confronted with serious

problems, including environmental problems, that are exacerbated by inadequate planning and managerial capacities, lack of investment and technology, and insufficient mobilization and inappropriate allocation of financial resources, as well as by a lack of social and economic opportunities. In the case of international migration, migrants have needs for housing and basic services, education, employment and social integration without a loss of cultural identity, and they are to be given adequate protection and attention within host countries.

7. In the process of globalization and growing interdependence, rural settlements represent a great challenge and opportunity for renewed developmental initiatives at all levels and in all fields. Many rural settlements, however, are facing a lack or an inadequacy of economic opportunities, especially employment, and of infrastructure and services, particularly those related to water, sanitation, health, education, communication, transportation and energy. Appropriate efforts and technologies for rural development can help to reduce, inter alia, imbalances, unsustainable practices, poverty, isolation, environmental pollution and insecure land tenure. Such efforts can contribute to improving the linkage of rural settlements with the mainstream of economic, social and cultural life, to assuring sustainable communities and safe environments, and to reducing pressures on urban growth.

8. Cities, towns and rural settlements are linked through the movements of goods, resources and people. Urban-rural linkages have a crucial importance for the sustainability of human settlements. As rural population growth has outpaced the generation of employment and economic opportunities, rural-to-urban migration has steadily increased, particularly in developing countries, which has put enormous pressure on urban infrastructure and services already under serious stress. It is urgent to eradicate rural poverty and to improve the quality of living conditions, as well as to create employment and educational opportunities in rural settlements, regional centres and secondary cities. Full advantage must be taken of the complementary contributions and linkages of rural and urban areas by balancing their different economic, social and environmental requirements.

9. More people than ever are living in absolute poverty and without adequate shelter. Inadequate shelter and homelessness are growing plights in many countries, threatening standards of health, security and even life itself.

Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing, housing, water and sanitation, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.

9 bis. The rapidly increasing number of displaced persons, including refugees, other displaced persons in need of international protection and internally displaced persons, as a result of natural and human-made disasters in many regions of the world, is aggravating the shelter crisis, highlighting the need for a speedy solution to the problem on a durable basis.

9 ter. The needs of children and youth, particularly with regard to their living environment, have to be taken fully into account. Special attention needs to be paid to the participatory processes dealing with the shaping of cities, towns and neighbourhoods; this is in order to secure the living conditions of children and of youth and to make use of their insight, creativity and thoughts on the environment. Special attention must be paid to the shelter needs of vulnerable children, such as street children, refugee children and children who are victims of sexual exploitation. Parents and other persons legally responsible for children have responsibilities, rights and duties, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to address these needs.

9 quater. In shelter and urban development and management policies, particular attention should be given to the needs and participation of indigenous people. These policies should fully respect their identity and culture and provide an appropriate environment that enables them to participate in political, social and economic life.

9 quinqüens. Women have an important role to play in the attainment of sustainable human settlements. Nevertheless, as a result of a number of factors, including the persistent and increasing burden of poverty of women and discrimination against women, women face particular constraints in obtaining adequate shelter and in fully participating in decision-making related to sustainable human settlements. The empowerment of women and their full and equal participation in political, social and economic life, the improvement of health and the eradication of poverty are essential to achieving sustainable human settlements.

9 ses. Encountering disabilities is a part of normal life. Persons with disabilities have not always had the opportunity to participate fully and equally in human settlements development and management, including

decision-making, often due to social, economic, attitudinal and physical barriers, and discrimination. Such barriers should be removed and the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities should be fully integrated into shelter and sustainable human settlement plans and policies to create access for all.

9 sept. Older persons are entitled to lead fulfilling and productive lives and should have opportunities for full participation in their communities and society, and in all decision-making regarding their well-being, especially their shelter needs. Their many contributions to the political, social and economic processes of human settlements should be recognized and valued. Special attention should be given to meeting their evolving housing and mobility needs in order to enable them to continue to lead rewarding lives in their communities.

10. Although many countries, particularly developing countries, lack the legal, institutional, financial, technological and human resources to respond adequately to rapid urbanization, many local authorities are taking on these challenges with open, accountable and effective leadership and are eager to bring people into the sustainable development process. Enabling structures that facilitate independent initiative and creativity, and that encourage a wide range of partnerships, including partnership with the private sector, and within and between countries, should be promoted. Furthermore, empowering all people, especially those belonging to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, in particular people living in poverty, to participate equally and effectively in all activities related to human settlements is the basis for civic engagement and should be facilitated by national authorities. Indeed, the Habitat Agenda provides a framework to enable people to take responsibility for the promotion and creation of sustainable human settlements.

10 bis. [Human settlements problems are of a multidimensional nature that has its main roots in poverty and underdevelopment and, in many countries, are aggravated by the scarcity of resources. It is recognized that human settlements are not isolated from the social and economic development of countries and that they cannot be set apart from the need for a favourable international framework for sustained economic growth and sustainable development.]

11. There are critical differences regarding human settlements in different regions and countries and within countries. The differences, specific

situations and varying capacities of each community and country need to be taken into account in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

[International, regional, subregional and national institutional arrangements, including the enhancement of the Commission on Human Settlements and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) as the global focal point and the allocation of resources, are central to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.]

12. The Habitat Agenda is a global call to action at all levels. It offers, within a framework of goals and principles and commitments, a positive vision of sustainable human settlements - where all have adequate shelter, a healthy and safe environment, basic services, and productive and freely chosen employment. The Habitat Agenda will guide all efforts to turn this vision into reality.
