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ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES, THE PRIVATE SECTOR,
PARLIAMENTARIANS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND OTHER
PARTNERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HABITAT AGENDA

Report of Committee II

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Addendum

PREAMBLE

In the view of many speakers, the "Partners' Committee" was the most exciting feature of Habitat II. For the first time at a major conference of the United Nations, eminent representatives of the different components of civil society, identified on the "road to Istanbul", were given the opportunity to assemble in their own partners' forums and present their views and commitments to delegates at the Conference in an official forum created especially for that purpose: Committee II. They brought the voice of local authorities, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), business, foundations, scientists, professionals and researchers.

The forum experience itself included many novel elements. While international non-governmental organizations have assembled at NGO forums at each preceding United Nations conference - although separately from the official conference - many partners were organizing their own global meeting for the first time. For example, the international and national associations

of cities and local authorities had the opportunity to organize their first world assembly and to endorse a common declaration stating their objectives and their contribution to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Other partners, such as the academies of science and engineering and the foundations, also welcomed the novelty of the experience and stressed its value in bringing new global constituencies together.

One significant achievement to emerge from the forums was the determination of partners to contribute to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to the achievement of its two main goals - adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world. They saw themselves, first and foremost, as partners not only in an event, but in a regional, national and international process and a network that will continue after Istanbul.

In addition to their new relationship with the United Nations, the partners also forged new relationships with each other and determined to support each other, regardless of the definition and perception of each other's role, in the pursuit of a common goal, the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

The partners responded well to the invitation to define their roles in implementing the Habitat Agenda and to record their commitments as an integral part of the deliberations of the Conference. The representatives from the World Assembly of Cities and Local Authorities determined to institutionalize the coordination mechanisms that had been established to prepare for the Conference. They also committed themselves to pursuing closer partnerships with the United Nations in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to continue their efforts in pursuing the goal of a global charter for local self-government. The Business Forum representatives pledged to build on the encouraging results obtained thus far in mobilizing the support and involvement of socially and environmentally responsible companies all over the world. All partners stated their intentions to continue working with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and other members of the United Nations system.

Committee II was a pioneering experiment in partnership also with respect to the United Nations. Members of the United Nations family had the opportunity to offer to a most authoritative and highly specialized assembly

of Member States a joint presentation on their own mission statements as well as on the strategies and specific actions they intend to follow in implementing the Habitat Agenda.

The Dialogues for the 21st Century - dealing with the future of cities, finance, water, energy, health, access to land, rural/urban linkages, transport, communication, citizenship and democracy - were reported to the Committee and enriched the debate with their findings. The ethical aspects of the Conference were underlined by the messages that came from the report on the Forum on Human Solidarity, and also stressed in the report of the Wisdom Keepers.

The statements produced by the representatives of the forums and dialogues, and the Chairman's summaries of the discussions carried out by Committee II, together constitute the output of the partners' hearings and will become a part of the official record of Habitat II, as a testimonial to this pioneering initiative and a benchmark for measuring progress in the partners' participation in the years to come.

The members of Committee II expressed appreciation for the presentations made by parliamentarians, local authorities and non-governmental partners. The Committee II hearings and deliberations are an expression of recognition for the contribution of partners to achieving the goals of Habitat II.
