



**Commission on
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ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

Draft proceedings of the Commission on Human Settlements
at its sixteenth session

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Addendum

Chapter -. FOLLOW-UP TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT II) (Agenda item 6)

A. Introduction

1. The Commission considered agenda item 6 at its 2nd through 5th plenary meetings, from 28 to 30 April, in the context of its general debate. Committee II considered the item at its 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings, on 29 and 30 April and on 1 May.

2. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Executive Director on the review of the working methods of the Commission on Human Settlements (HS/C/16/4);

(b) Preliminary report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of UNCHS (Habitat) (HS/C/16/5);

(c) Report of the Executive Director on the role of local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other partners in the implementation and monitoring of the Habitat Agenda (HS/C/16/6);

(d) Note by the secretariat on the report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (HS/C/16/CRP.4);

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(e) Note by the secretariat on the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation and the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (HS/C/16/CRP.5);

(f) Note by the Executive Director on the background note to the preliminary report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of UNCHS (Habitat) (HS/C/16/INF.10).

3. In introducing the item, the Assistant Secretary-General pointed out that the review of working methods of the Commission was submitted pursuant to the relevant paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 51/177, on the implementation of the outcome of the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). By that resolution the General Assembly had endorsed the relevant recommendations of Habitat II, especially the Habitat Agenda. The importance of partnership, as emphasized in the Agenda had also been endorsed by the Assembly.

B. Discussion

1. Plenary

4. All delegations underscored the success of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Many delegations stressed the need to ensure that the commitments made at Habitat II were translated into effective action, through the formulation and implementation of concrete policies and programmes on the ground.

5. A number of delegations elaborated on their follow-up activities since Habitat II, informing the meeting on their respective national plans of action and other human settlements development policies, programmes and projects implemented in their countries. Some delegations welcomed the initiative taken by the secretariat in preparing a new set of guidelines for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, focusing on in-country activities, leading to the formulation, implementation, monitoring, assessment and updating of the national plans of action.

6. Several delegations stressed the need for a well-coordinated follow-up of Habitat II. While recognizing that the Habitat Agenda placed primary responsibility for its implementation on Governments, many delegations noted that Governments were not in a position to accomplish the objectives of Habitat II alone. Many delegations stressed the need for partnership arrangements between Governments, local authorities, the private sector and

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non-governmental and community-based organizations in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Several delegations noted that such partnership arrangements should be promoted at both the national and international levels.

7. Given the magnitude of the task of achieving sustainable human settlements amid pervasive poverty and homelessness, many delegations stressed the need for enhanced technical cooperation, external support and assistance in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. One delegation highlighted the need for assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons. Some delegations emphasized the importance of an exchange of ideas and expertise as a way to create synergy. One delegation expressed interest in collaborating with UNCHS (Habitat) in setting up a regional urban observatory in the Asia/Pacific region.

8. Many delegations were of the view that the strengthening of the Commission and the Centre would be vital for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Habitat Agenda. Several delegations emphasized that the goal should be to enable the Centre effectively to carry out its leadership role in the field of sustainable human settlements development and shelter. Reference was made to General Assembly resolution 51/177, in which the Assembly called for an assessment of the Centre by the Secretary-General, with a view to revitalizing its functions. Several delegations stressed the need to review the programme of work and the working methods of the Commission in order to integrate the follow-up process of Habitat II into them. With regard to the mandate, programme of work and working methods of the Commission, several delegations reminded the meeting of the necessity to keep in mind the broader discussions on United Nations reform that were currently taking place, aimed at streamlining the United Nations machinery in order to increase its efficiency. They referred, in particular to the forthcoming Economic and Social Council session, in July 1997, at which the Council would begin a comprehensive and in-depth review of its subsidiary bodies, including the review and strengthening of the mandate of the Commission on Human Settlements. One delegation suggested that in advancing the Habitat Agenda, the Centre should follow the new development strategy of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

9. Some delegations called for more frequent meetings of the Commission, to enable Governments and civic partners to implement the Habitat Agenda effectively. One delegation pointed out the importance for the Commission to hold special sessions in 1998 and 2000, in order to enable Member States and other partners to share experiences and to review and appraise the implementation process of the Habitat Agenda. Other delegations supported

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the continuation of the biennial cycle of sessions, bearing in mind resource constraints.

10. Many delegations recognized the vital role of local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations in the field of shelter and human settlement development and argued that the representatives of those organizations should participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Habitat Agenda. Several delegations emphasized that future participation in the Commission by local authorities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should be within the framework of the relevant rules and regulations of the United Nations. Some delegations expressed reservations in regard to those partners being accorded full membership in the Commission. Many delegations supported their integration within national delegations to the Commission.

2. Committee II

11. Delegations generally agreed that the involvement of local authorities, non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society was vital for the work of UNCHS (Habitat) and for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The importance of partnerships, formal and informal, was emphasized by almost all delegations, and several delegations emphasized the special position of local authorities.

12. Delegations were of the view that the proposal to expand membership of the Commission to include partners from civil society was neither necessary nor legally tenable. Several delegations agreed that the expansion of the Commission was an issue better discussed in the General Assembly. Reference was made to the Economic and Social Council rules and procedures, specifically to the resolution on the relationship between the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.

13. All delegations were unanimously of the opinion that there was a need to involve members of civil society in an ongoing process of consultation and of working out relationships for implementing actual projects on the ground. The modalities for such a consultative process needed further elaboration and could be worked out by individual countries and UNCHS (Habitat).

14. One non-governmental spokesperson was of the view that, although the subject of expansion of the Commission was a novel idea, the consultative process now being initiated was also new. He therefore felt that new situations required new models.

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C. Action taken by the Commission

14. At its ... meeting on ... May, the Commission adopted the following decision, which is reproduced in annex ...
