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Committee of Permanent Representatives  
to the United Nations Human Settlements  
Programme  
Sixty-fourth meeting  
Nairobi, 20 March 2017

## **Draft minutes of the sixty-third meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, held on 1 December 2016**

### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 9.45 a.m. on Thursday, 1 December 2016, by Mr. James Kimonyo, Permanent Representative of Rwanda and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).
2. The meeting was attended by 60 participants from 45 countries and 2 observer missions.
3. At the invitation of the Chair, the Committee observed one minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Ivan Živković, Permanent Representative of Serbia to UN-Habitat, who had passed away on 20 November 2016.
4. The Chair welcomed the following new permanent representatives to the Committee: Ms. Sara Hradecky (Canada), Mr. Ernesto Gomez Diaz (Cuba), Mr. Antoine Sivan (France), Ms. Agrina Mussa (Malawi), Mr. Chulpathmendra Dahanayake (Sri Lanka) and Mr. Abdulmonem Annan (Syrian Arab Republic).
5. He bade farewell to the following departing member, thanking him for his contribution to the work of the Committee: Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Al Abdulla (Qatar).

### **Agenda item 1**

#### **Adoption of the agenda**

6. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda (HSP/CPR/63/1).

### **Agenda item 2**

#### **Adoption of the draft minutes of the sixty-second regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

7. The Committee adopted the draft minutes of its sixty-second regular meeting on the basis of the draft minutes (HSP/CPR/63/L.1).

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Adoption of the work schedule for the Committee of Permanent Representatives for 2017**

8. The Committee adopted the proposed calendar of regular meetings for 2017(HSP/CPR/63/3), on the understanding that any of the draft provisional agendas also set out in that document could be amended to include additional items that Committee members or the Executive Director might wish to propose to the Bureau.

9. Following the adoption of the work schedule one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries requested that the Bureau reconsider the dates of the sixty-seventh meeting of the Committee, as it appeared to be scheduled to take place back-to-back with the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. Another representative seconded that request, saying that it was particularly important to avoid any clash of dates given the key role of the Committee as an interface between member States and the secretariat, especially in the context of the current circumstances facing UN-Habitat.

### **Agenda item 4**

#### **Executive Director's briefing to the Committee of Permanent Representatives**

10. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a document entitled "Executive Director's briefing to the CPR" (HSP/CPR/63/4), which outlined the key activities undertaken since the previous meeting of the Committee.

11. The Executive Director began his briefing to the Committee by expressing appreciation to all the member States for having contributed to the success of the third session of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, which, according to official figures, had been the best attended conference in the history of the United Nations. Some 45,000 participants had registered, he said, while as many as 33,000 had attended the various conference venues and up to 130,000 had visited the parallel events in the city, such as the Habitat III Village and the delegation side events organized on premises provided by the host Government, to whom he also expressed appreciation for having played a key role in seeing an extremely complex and difficult operation through to a successful conclusion.

12. The Executive Director also expressed appreciation to all involved in preparing the outcome document, entitled "New Urban Agenda", and in achieving the strategic objective of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III of ensuring that the text had been fully agreed before the opening of the conference so as to allow the participants to focus their discussions on the substantive aspects of the agenda. Most of the content had been agreed at the third session of the Preparatory Committee, held in Surabaya, Indonesia, in July 2016, and agreement on the only paragraph left pending – on the role of UN-Habitat in implementing the New Urban Agenda – had been reached, after 35 hours of continuous negotiations, at the final session of the informal intergovernmental meetings held in New York on 9 and 10 September 2016, thereby making it possible to take a consensus text to Quito. He extended his thanks to the member States and others involved in the preparatory process, under the guidance of the co-facilitators, for their remarkable efforts.

13. On the many parallel sessions and events that had taken place at Habitat III, he said that the quality of content had been high and the large number of high-level participants they had attracted represented recognition of the key role of UN-Habitat in facilitating dialogue. By way of an example, he highlighted the meeting of the World Mayors' Assembly, held on the day before the opening of the conference, which had provided a unique opportunity for some 2,000 local and regional authority representatives to meet and not only share their views among themselves but also enter into a free-flowing dialogue with member States. He also commended the stakeholders – the nine major groups identified in Agenda 21 and an additional six groups – for having shown themselves capable of organizing and engaging in dialogue within the framework of the General Assembly of Partners for Habitat III.

14. Regarding the New Urban Agenda, he said that it reflected a change in perceptions of urbanization over the 20 years since the United Nation Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). On the one hand, member States had increasingly come to regard urbanization as a strategic issue and, on the other, it was now seen as a means of leveraging national development.

15. On the strategic side, he attributed the change to two major crises of global importance that could be linked in one way or another to urbanization: first, the collapse of the sub-prime mortgage market in the United States of America, which had mainly concerned unregulated loans for

low-income housing and had then exploded into the global financial crisis of 2007–2008; and second, the Arab Spring uprising of unemployed urban youth, which had subsequently led to the destabilization of an entire region, the consequences of which were still plain to see. Both those crises, together with the current migration crisis in Europe and the proliferation of terrorism, many of whose protagonists were recruited in troubled neighbourhoods of cities around the world, had, he said, made clear that urbanization problems, when left unresolved, could easily affect strategic aspects of peace, security and development.

16. Regarding the other aspect of urbanization – its potential to leverage development – he said that many countries had, over the previous 20 years, shown how well-managed urban policies could yield positive results in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction. The most outstanding example was probably that of China, owing mainly to the size and global reach of the country, but there were others. Morocco, for instance, had experienced sustained growth as a result of an urbanization process that included public housing policies, which had boosted the country's construction sector, alleviated poverty and improved the well-being of the population. The New Urban Agenda, in his view, provided a framework that could enable decision makers in the countries in need of accelerated development to draw on the lessons learned from such success stories and help them to identify the strategies and urban investment priorities best suited to meeting that need; better urbanization in a context of scarce resources, he added, would be of benefit to all member States.

17. On the work to be undertaken over the coming months, he said that UN-Habitat now needed to concentrate on its newly assigned role as a focal point in the implementation, follow-up and review of the New Urban Agenda, taking into account the interlinkages of the latter with the wider agenda of the United Nations system in the fields not only of sustainable development but also climate change, disaster risk reduction, migration and humanitarian action, among others. The Programme's role in that regard would hopefully be mapped out at the upcoming twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat, which, given that that session was now due to take place in mid-May rather than early April 2017, meant that the Committee had just over six months to identify the priorities and prepare the relevant draft decisions, not only on the draft programme of work and budget for 2018–2019 but also on the revision of the strategic plan for 2014–2019.

18. Meanwhile, attention would also need to be paid to the independent assessment of UN-Habitat being conducted in parallel to that work by the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to enhancing the Programme's efficiency, as requested by the member States in the Habitat III outcome document. In that regard, he had been liaising with the teams of the outgoing Secretary-General and the Secretary-General elect, which would be working together to incorporate the assessment recommendations into the draft resolution on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, including the positioning of UN-Habitat in that regard, which was being prepared for consideration and possible adoption at the seventy-second session of the United Nations General Assembly. He had also been in contact with the President of the General Assembly, who had agreed to hold the proposed two-day high-level meeting, to be convened during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, on the report of the assessment of UN-Habitat in early September 2017, the outcomes of which would also be submitted for approval to the Assembly. The Programme therefore faced a very heavy workload over the coming 12 months and he thanked Committee members in advance for their contribution thereto.

19. Lastly, he assured the member States that he and the secretariat were ready to respond to any requests for further information on the bridging finance that they had been asked to consider as a contribution to the current core budget of UN-Habitat so as to enable the Programme to maintain its basic capacity and support for member States over the course of the assessment period.

20. In the ensuing discussion, general appreciation was expressed to the Executive Director and, through him, to the secretariats of UN-Habitat and Habitat III for the efficient organization of the conference in Quito and for having facilitated the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, which was variously described as ambitious, comprehensive and transformative, and roundly welcomed as an outstanding achievement and a worthy addition to the list of major international agreements reached over the previous 18 months: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change. Many representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, highlighted its references to and interlinkages with those other agreements, which, according to one of those speaking on behalf of a group of countries, gave it the capacity to address their key cross-cutting issues and, according to another representative, provided an opportunity to translate those agreements into tangible action at the local level. Several representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, said that the New Urban Agenda provided the requisite guidelines and global standards for sustainable, resilient and inclusive urban development with some, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, adding that it could serve to forge a cooperative

partnership of stakeholders at all levels, including national and subnational governments, civil society and the private sector, that, according to one, would promote good governance, facilitate access to data and financing and change perceptions of how cities were built, managed and inhabited. Some representatives, one speaking on behalf of a country in a situation of conflict and another on behalf of a post-conflict country, among others, welcomed the call in the New Urban Agenda for attention to be given to the specific needs of such countries.

21. Most of those who spoke endorsed the views expressed by the Executive Director in his briefing note with regard to the pivotal role of UN-Habitat as the focal point for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, with many representatives, including several speaking on behalf of groups of countries, welcoming his update on the arrangements being made in New York for the assessment to enhance its efficiency, which, according to several, was crucial to enabling it to adapt to and satisfy the new expectations inherent to its new mandate. Several representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, stressed that it was important to ensure that the assessment was genuinely independent and transparent, with one adding that any attempt to reverse the many positive reforms of recent years must be opposed. The latter also advised against any effort to increase the regular budget allocations approved by the United Nations General Assembly or to move UN-Habitat towards universal membership, which would weaken rather than strengthen the Programme. Another representative, on the other hand, said that universal membership would render its decision-making more inclusive and accountable.

22. Several representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, highlighted the Committee's key role as the body best placed to advise colleagues in New York on issues of relevance to the Programme. Several representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, said that the working group on programme and budget was an important mechanism for ensuring input from Nairobi. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, expressed dismay that some delegations involved in the discussion of the draft resolution on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the Second Committee had contested the emphasis that it placed on the strengthening of the Programme. That, he said, appeared to suggest a worrying disconnect between the work being undertaken in New York and that being undertaken in Nairobi, and he called for efforts to tackle the problem by fostering synergies. One representative expressed doubts as to whether the Committee's inputs would be sought and factored into the assessment and requested clarification as to where the assessment would be carried out, by whom and how the final recommendations might affect arrangements in Nairobi. He also expressed concern that the Committee's role might be reduced to a nominal one during the assessment period, in which case there would be no point in continuing to meet until the process was over. Another representative, however, said that it was important not to await the results of the assessment but to begin working on the implementation of the Habitat III outcome document right away. One representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, urged the secretariat to conduct its own analysis of the New Urban Agenda and how it would affect existing subprogrammes, the strategic plan for 2014–2019 and the work programme for 2018–2019, and present the findings to the Committee for consideration before the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council.

23. Many representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, said that they had been surprised by and were seriously concerned about the financial situation of UN-Habitat as outlined by the Executive Director. Several said that they were already looking into ways of responding to his request for bridging finance for 2016 and 2017, and they urged all other member States to do likewise so as to secure the additional resources the Programme needed to maintain its capacity to deliver in the field while fulfilling its expanded mandate as a focal point for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Some representatives expressed appreciation to the secretariat for its efforts to engage with donors while others, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, expressed regret that the outreach had not begun earlier, with one adding that meaningful support and advice could only be provided if the Committee were informed in a sufficiently timely manner to enable members to lobby their capitals to intervene. One representative stressed that it was essential for the Programme to ensure fiscal responsibility and tailor its budget to existing realities while continuing to build on recent reforms and demonstrating tangible, measurable, results to reassure member States and donors.

24. On the Executive Director's proposal to alter the dates of the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council to May rather than April 2017, many representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, requested that that the matter be reconsidered. One said that the new dates were problematic for her delegation; another said that in view of the current circumstances facing UN-Habitat it was important to avoid any scheduling clash with other events; and a third, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, requested clarification of the reasons for the proposed change.

25. Several representatives, including some speaking on behalf of groups of countries, while expressing appreciation to the Executive Director for his informative briefing note, called for further consultations with the Committee to review and enrich the implementation priorities set out in the note and to address some notable omissions, such as the lack of emphasis on, among other things, the provision of affordable housing for all as a progressive human right; the linkages between urban centres and the rural areas providing them with food, water and ecosystem services; and information on the theme of the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council. Several representatives expressed concern regarding the lack of updates on preparations for the ninth session of the World Urban Forum and specifically asked to be briefed on the matter.

26. One representative expressed dismay at the recent allegations that the President of the General Assembly of Partners for Habitat III, the existence of which had come to an end at the end of the conference, had submitted an application to register the name of that body, which was a United Nations creation, as a protected trademark, thereby putting at risk its legacy in terms of lessons learned for informing efforts to promote effective stakeholder participation in future international discussions and creating a worrying legal and ethical precedent. They sought clarification regarding the action being taken in the light of the allegations.

27. The Executive Director, responding first to the comments and requests for clarification on the rescheduling of the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, said that the decision had been taken to allow more time for the preparations with a view to ensuring a stronger role for the Council in the completion of the independent assessment of UN-Habitat and the subsequent discussion on its positioning in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda at the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017. Many other dates had been considered but mid-May 2017 had emerged as the best alternative to that end and he urged the Committee members objecting to the proposal to reconsider their position on the matter. As to the theme of the session, the current preferred option was that of housing within the framework of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

28. Regarding the upcoming assessment of UN-Habitat, he emphatically rejected any suggestion that it would devalue the everyday work of UN-Habitat in Nairobi and reduce the Committee to a nominal role while under way. That work should continue unabated, with the same levels of commitment, and nobody should sit back and wait for the results. He furthermore assured the Committee that it would indeed be an independent process, as agreed by member States in the Habitat III outcome document, and its intergovernmental nature had been guaranteed by mandating the President of the United Nations General Assembly to convene a high-level meeting to discuss the results the following September. As to the question of the body responsible for conducting the assessment, the decision lay with the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Both the outgoing Secretary-General and the Secretary-General elect intended to consult the regional groups on the matter in New York and he urged Committee members to advise them of the fact.

29. Meanwhile, with regard to the differing views on the strengthening of UN-Habitat, he expressed the hope that the member States concerned would take the opportunity to continue to openly discuss the matter with a view to reconciling their differences and reaching consensus during the assessment period, at the high-level meeting and in the discussion of the draft resolution in the Second Committee and General Assembly at its seventy-second session.

30. On the question of the financial situation of the Programme, he said that he was confident that the requested bridging finance for 2016 and 2017 would be raised and that Committee members and all member States would manage to resolve the current challenges.

31. As to the requested update on the preparations for the ninth session of the World Urban Forum in 2018, he reported that talks to finalize a site agreement with the host Government in Kuala Lumpur had run into difficulties over the issue of immunities and privileges and that if the problems were not resolved within the coming two weeks another venue would have to be sought. He noted that he would provide an update in that regard in the coming weeks.

32. Lastly, on the attempt to register the name of the General Assembly of Partners as a protected trademark, he said that he knew little about the matter beyond the fact that an application had been submitted through the President of the Assembly, that a lawyer in New York had lodged a complaint with the United Nations and that an investigation was currently under way. Pending the outcome of that investigation, it was important not to rush to judgement and to respect the principle of the presumption of innocence. The General Assembly of Partners, he added, had been established under the World Urban Campaign. He further added that the Habitat III secretariat was facilitating a meeting for the Executive Board of the Assembly in New York and offering to cover the travel expenses of all participants. On the ongoing investigations, he said that the Committee would be kept informed in a

transparent manner about any investigation under way. The investigation would certainly be completed rapidly and the findings would dispel any doubts.

33. The Chair assured the representatives concerned about the issue of the General Assembly of Partners for Habitat III that it would not be swept under the carpet and that the secretariat would respond with an official communication.

## **Agenda item 5**

### **Quarterly report on the financial status of UN-Habitat**

34. Introducing the item, the Executive Director drew attention to the report on the financial status of UN-Habitat covering the quarter ended 30 September 2016 (HSP/CPR/63/5). Highlighting a selection of key figures, he pointed out that total gross revenue for the period in question had amounted to \$172.6 million, \$15.5 million of which related to core funding and the remainder to United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation special purpose and technical cooperation agreements; total actual expenditure had come to \$116 million, comprising \$23.3 million for core funds and \$92.7 million for earmarked funds; the total core fund balance, including reserves, at the beginning of 2016 had stood at \$23.8 million, comprising \$10 million in Foundation general purpose funds and \$13.6 million in programme support funds; and the fund balance at the end of 2016 was projected at \$600,000 in Foundation general purpose funds and \$10.4 million in programme support funds.

35. While the UN-Habitat portfolio was currently in a good state of health in terms of non-earmarked funds and the general and special purpose funds of the Foundation, the regular budget remained a challenge, especially in terms of the Foundation's non-earmarked funds. Furthermore, a decline in non-earmarked funds from several member States in 2016 had placed a strain on the core budget. Although the latter only represented a small part of the total budget, the rules and regulations required that it be kept in balance and an effort was therefore being made to reduce core expenditure while minimizing the negative impact on the efficiency of the Programme's delivery of its mandate and project portfolio. It was for that reason that member States were being asked for support.

36. He expressed his deep appreciation to the Governments of Argentina, Chile, India, Israel, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the United States of America and Zimbabwe for the core contributions received by the end of the third quarter of 2016, adding that he trusted that many more would join that list before the end of the year.

37. He further thanked the Governments of Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iraq, Mexico, Norway, Spain, South Africa and Sweden for the new contribution agreements that they had signed with UN-Habitat since the publication of the previous report, which amounted to some \$37.7 million in earmarked funds, also thanking the European Union for the agreements already signed.

38. With only one month remaining until the end of the year, he encouraged member States to submit any outstanding contributions for 2016, in particular those meant for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation general purpose account, as that would make it possible not only to carry out the planned activities in the programme of work for 2016–2017 but also to advance the intensive work to be undertaken in the follow-up to Habitat III.

39. In the ensuing discussion one representative, expressing appreciation to the Executive Director for his oral report, said that the written version of the quarterly report on the financial status of UN-Habitat (HSP/CPR/63/5) did not make clear the severity of the financial situation facing the Programme and suggested that future such reports, in addition to presenting the relevant figures and tables, should provide a summary and assessment of critical developments, which could help to facilitate a timely response to the challenges.

40. Another representative noted with satisfaction the positive trend towards greater transparency in the report, which, if it continued, would help members to better understand the situation, take appropriate action and provide appropriate guidance to the secretariat. Requesting further information on the countries making contributions, she also welcomed efforts to address the challenge of cost recovery, adding that the working group on programme and budget had the necessary expertise in that regard and could help to cultivate a sense of ownership among member States so that they worked together to improve the financial situation and strengthen UN-Habitat for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

## **Agenda item 6**

### **Proposed work programme and budget for 2018–2019**

41. Introducing the item, the Executive Director recalled that the Governing Council, by its resolution 23/11 on the work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the biennium 2012–2013, had requested him to prepare a new strategic plan for 2014–2019. Outlining the preparatory process followed in pursuance of that resolution, he said that the time had come for its revision in the light of the New Urban Agenda adopted at Habitat III, the lessons learned from the implementation of the plan over the previous three years and the other recent international agreements relevant to sustainable cities and human settlements.

42. Outlining the first steps taken in the revision process, he said that the subcommittee on policy and programme of work, at a briefing on 9 November 2016, had considered process issues related to the revision of the strategic plan and the strategic framework for the period 2018–2019 and the preparation of the work programme and budget for 2018–2019; that branch coordinators, in consultation with regional office directors, had proposed specific revisions to the strategic plan in their respective areas of work; and that amendments had also been proposed to relevant parts of the narrative of the plan.

43. The draft revised strategic plan, he said, had to be ready by the end of February 2017 to meet the deadline for the submission of documents for the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council and the strategic framework, too, would need to be updated in line with the revised plan. To allow sufficient time for that work to be completed and for the completed documents to be translated for consideration by the Governing Council, member States had been requested to consider holding the twenty-sixth session in mid-May. If that request were accepted, the Committee would have until the end of February to review the revised plan and framework, in which case the working group on programme and budget and the Committee's subcommittees would be able to continue working on the documents until the end of April. If the member States decided that the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council must be held on the original dates in April, however, the Committee would be compelled to conduct its review within the space of just one and a half weeks in January. He therefore strongly recommended that they accept the request for a change of date.

44. The Committee decided to mandate the subcommittee on policy and programme of work to revise the strategic plan for 2014–2019 and the strategic framework for the period 2018–2019 and to prepare the draft work programme and budget for 2018–2019, in collaboration with the secretariat, by mid-January 2017.

## **Agenda item 7**

### **Thematic/country activities presentation**

45. Owing to time constraints, consideration of agenda item 7 was deferred.

## **Agenda 8**

### **Preparations for the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council**

46. Introducing the item, the Executive Director said that he had requested that the dates of the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, originally scheduled to take place from 3 to 7 April 2017, be changed to 15 to 18 May 2017 to enable UN-Habitat to respond to the outcome of Habitat III and to better prepare for that session. In accordance with rule 3 of the rules of procedure of the Governing Council, members of the Council had 21 days, until 14 December 2016, to decide whether to approve that request.

47. He had also informed members that Slovakia had nominated Mr. Michal Mlyner to replace Mr. Ján Ilavský as President of the Council following the resignation of the latter. In the light of the responses received, and in accordance with rule 19.4 of the rules of procedure of the Governing Council, Mr. Mlyner's confirmation as temporary President of the Governing Council was expected on 11 December 2016. Further, in accordance with rule 17 of the rules of procedure, on regional rotation, the offices of President and Rapporteur of the Governing Council at its twenty-sixth session would be filled by the representatives of an Asian-Pacific State and an Eastern European State respectively. He urged those groups to prepare their nominations well in advance of the twenty-sixth session.

48. Meanwhile, in preparation for the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, the subcommittee on policy and programme of work was currently discussing progress in implementing the resolutions adopted by the Governing Council at its previous session, after which it would move on to a discussion of the mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan for 2014–2019, the strategic framework

for the period 2016–2017 and the work programme and budget for 2016–2017, together with the proposed draft resolutions to be prepared for consideration by the Governing Council and the proposed theme of the twenty-sixth session of affordable, pro-poor housing as a core area of concern towards sustainable urbanization, which encapsulated every aspect of the New Urban Agenda. He would shortly be consulting with members on the subject and, if approved, would inform the Bureau before the theme was formally accepted.

49. Lastly, the agenda for the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, as approved by the Council at its previous session, had been distributed to member States in October 2016. He looked forward, he said, to the support of members in ensuring that the twenty-sixth session was a resounding success.

50. In the ensuing discussion, one representative stressed the importance of the agenda of the twenty-sixth session being clear, robust and building on the political momentum generated by Habitat III. Among other things, it could have a direct bearing on the discussions in the Second Committee and at the high-level meeting in New York, thereby helping to confirm UN-Habitat in its role as a focal point in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and preventing the Governing Council from being excluded from subsequent relevant decision-making. The twenty-sixth session, he said, was the first major intergovernmental meeting to take place since Habitat III and its agenda provided an opportunity to cement the urban-rural continuum.

51. One representative, supported by another two representatives, urged the secretariat to provide detailed timelines for the preparations for the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council at the subcommittee level as soon as possible; for the submission of draft resolutions; and for a discussion of the theme of the session. Another representative requested the secretariat to provide a list of other possible options for the theme, such as “The right to adequate housing” which had first emerged at Habitat II and was now included in the Habitat III outcome document. One representative said that it would be helpful if the theme of the twenty-sixth session focused on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, adding that member States needed to be made aware of what the New Urban Agenda meant for the future work of UN-Habitat and how it would inform the revision of key documents, including the strategic plan, the strategic framework and the work programme.

52. The Executive Director, responding to the comments, reiterated that moving the twenty-sixth session to mid-May 2016 would make it feasible to consider more carefully the linkages between the New Urban Agenda and the work of UN-Habitat than if it were held in April. As for the theme, he said that sustainable, affordable, pro-poor housing was a core issue for UN-Habitat and a topic that could serve to crystallize the spirit of the New Urban Agenda in an action-oriented manner.

### **Agenda item 9**

#### **Report on the work of the subcommittees**

53. Owing to time constraints, consideration of agenda item 9 was deferred.

### **Agenda item 10**

#### **Report of the working group on programme and budget**

54. Owing to time constraints, consideration of agenda item 10 was deferred.

### **Agenda item 11**

#### **Briefing on the outcome of Habitat III**

55. Owing to time constraints, consideration of agenda item 11 was deferred.

### **Agenda item 12**

#### **Any other matters**

56. No other matters were discussed.

### **Closure of the meeting**

57. The meeting was declared closed at 12.40 p.m. on Wednesday, 1 December 2016.