

UN HABITAT **FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE**

**68th Regular Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of
United Nations Human Settlements Programme**

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Executive Director

Agenda Item 5: Executive Director's Briefing to the CPR

(HSP/CPR/68/5)

Nairobi, 21 March 2018

Statement by the Executive Director to the 68th Regular Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

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Your Excellency Mr. Fernando Coimbra, Chair of the CPR

Excellencies, Members of the CPR,

Colleagues,

Good Morning,

It is my great pleasure to join all of you this morning. Since assuming my duties as Executive Director on January 21st and today marking exactly 2 months, this is my first opportunity to formally address and meet the Committee of Permanent Representatives in this forum. It is my honour to be with you here today and I look forward to our discussion today on the agenda items before us.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all Member States for the immense support and messages of goodwill that I have received since my appointment as United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat. I have had the opportunity to interact with a number of you through informal meetings, meetings of the subcommittee and in bilateral meetings.

The Ninth session of the World Urban Forum in February accorded me a great opportunity to interact with a wide range of partners and to meet with many delegations, seventy-three delegations to be precise.

Through these interactions, I am beginning to understand and internalize the great expectation that is placed on UN-Habitat and on its leadership. It is my sincere hope that in delivering on this expectation, within the mandate of UN-Habitat and within the framework of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, I can count on the full support of Member States and on the guidance of this Committee.

I thank my predecessors for their contribution to the Organization and I look forward a strengthened UN-Habitat, viewed and respected as the centre of excellence and expertise on sustainable urban development and human settlements in the coming years.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate H.E. Mr Kwon Young Dae of the Republic of Korea on his election as Vice Chair of the CPR Bureau as well as all the Excellencies in the new Bureau for 2018-2019 on their election. I assure you of my close cooperation and count on your guidance. I also join the Chair in recognizing all new Permanent Representatives to Un-Habitat and welcome the distinguished representatives to Nairobi.

With that said, I would like to share a few words on Agenda Item 5.

My Briefing to the CPR has been shared with you electronically. As mentioned, today marks exactly two months since I first arrived in Nairobi. In just these two months I already had the privilege to hold extensive consultations, meetings and discussions with UN-Habitat personnel, United Nations counterparts and colleagues, Member States and partners, in Nairobi. During the second week in New York, I also met with Member States and partners. I also met the Secretary-General and the Deputy-Secretary-General as well as the Presidents of the General Assembly and ECOSOC.

In the past few weeks I have had the opportunity to meet with officials from the Government of Kenya, Her Excellency Ambassador Monica Juma, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and His Excellency Mr James Wainaina Macharia, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban

Development. These encounters have been extremely meaningful. I also had the honour to visit Mathare here in Nairobi, this was a humbling and very informative experience, where I saw first-hand UN-Habitat's work in action and saw the importance of localizing our work by involving every stakeholder, including youth, women and civil society at every stage. I understand that the challenges are clear and would like to thank all of you for giving me support and sharing with me and I can assure you that I am here to listen and work together with Member States to raise UN-Habitat to a higher level.

I have heard your concerns that there is an urgency to ensure that UN-Habitat can deliver on its mandate. I have been a Mayor for the last 7 years, and I now have the opportunity to share my principles and beliefs garnered through my experience as a trained Mayor.

On the 24th January, I had a Townhall with all personnel, I spoke on trust and asked them to trust me and assured them that I would do the same. I have also been trained to work on good governance, transparency, competency, accountability, efficiency and inclusivity.

On good governance, I believe in teamwork. Regardless of a leader's excellence, without the team it will be very difficult to grow into greater heights. I believe that my staff are an asset. I view Member States as being part of the team, working together to ensure growth. Similarly, it is important to building mutual trust within UN-Habitat and the wider UN family, Member States and partners. With the need to improve on governance, I would like to share that apart from the Townhall, I have already met with personnel from all the 7 branches and had the opportunity to meet with regional offices during WUF9 to listen and to receive their feedback.

From various deliberations and discussions, I realized that apart from the governance reform process, UN-Habitat needs strategic alignment on strengthening the internal management and system winning back the confidence of the staff, Member States and donors. This strategic alignment on strengthening the internal management

will look into the review/reform of the organization's standard operation procedures (SOPs), organization's flowchart and system because there is great potential and expertise in UN-Habitat. Therefore, we need to bring back the excellence by building staff morale to work together with Member States and cities who need out advice and technical expertise.

On transparency, competency, accountability, efficiency, and inclusivity is the reason to why Member States want to know of the Executive Director's mission and vision. However, I want to clarify that it is UN-Habitat's mission and vision as the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals promote inclusivity, engagement and partnership. Hopefully by April, the CPR and the Secretariat can agree on the priorities going forward to combat the issues of urbanization and human settlements.

As you are aware, UN-Habitat is in a financial crisis and without the support of Member States we will be unable fulfill the objectives ahead of us. However, we can take the constraints and use them as an opportunity to raise UN-Habitat to greater excellence. Therefore, we need the support of Member States both financially and politically. In addition, I appeal to your Excellencies to conclude the reform of UN-Habitat and to retrieve the positive impact of UN-Habitat.

"After the various consultative and bilateral meetings, I would like to share my conclusion of the normative and operational work. Foremost, the need to establish a balance between normative and operational work. Secondly, the role of UN-Habitat in the normative work can be categorized as follows:

1. UN-Habitat's role in countries that have no development policies, no rules and regulations no land laws;
2. UN-Habitat's role in engaging and assisting countries with development policies that were prepared prior to the adoption of the Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda and reviewing the development policies with inclusion of New Urban Agenda and Agenda 2030;
3. UN-Habitat's role in countries that have managed to integrate the New Urban

Agenda and the SDGs into their development policies but need tools for implementation of the development policies;

4. UN-Habitat's role in assisting countries with established integrated development policies but in need of mechanisms/tools/systems for monitoring and measuring;
5. UN-Habitat's role in urban renewal and regeneration and planning of rural areas and intermediary cities.
6. UN-Habitat's role in countries or cities in/with crisis.

These are the categories which I would like to discuss and get feedback from the CPR based on my personal analysis from the discussions with Member States, partners and stakeholder. Hence, we will come back with the vision and mission of UN-Habitat in improving the quality of life in human settlements which includes both urban and rural areas for people to work, live and play. We would like to look into these in order to come up with immediate, short term, medium term, long term and sustainable priorities of the organization.