



United Nations Human  
Settlements Programme

Distr.: General  
5 February 2018

English only



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Committee of Permanent Representatives  
to the United Nations Human Settlements  
Programme  
Sixty-eighth meeting  
Nairobi, 21 March 2018

## **Draft minutes of the sixty-seventh meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, held on 14 December 2017**

### **Opening of the meeting**

1. The meeting was opened at 9.15 a.m. on Thursday, 14 December 2017, by Ms. Elizabeth Taylor, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). Ms. Taylor chaired the meeting on behalf of Mr. James Kimonyo, Permanent Representative of Rwanda and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat, who was unable to attend the meeting.
2. The meeting was attended by 71 participants from 48 countries and 3 observer missions.
3. The Chair welcomed the following new permanent representatives to the Committee: Mr. Ado Lohmus (Estonia); Mr. Marek Rohr-Garztecki (Poland); and Ms. Susie Kitchens (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). She also welcomed the new permanent representative-designates to the Committee: Ms. Alison Chartres (Australia); Mr. Wilhelm von Trott zu Solz (Malta) and Ms. Phibby Awere Otaala (Uganda).
4. She then bade farewell to Ms. Marcela M. Nicodemos (Brazil), who had recently departed the Nairobi duty station, thanking her for her contribution to the work of the Committee.

### **Agenda item 1**

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

5. The agenda was adopted, as amended, on the basis of the provisional agenda (HSP/CPR/67/1/Rev.1).

### **Agenda item 2**

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

6. The Committee adopted the minutes of its sixty-sixth regular meeting, held on 27 September 2017, on the basis of the draft minutes of the meeting (HSP/CPR/67/L.1).

### **Agenda item 3**

#### **Adoption of the Committee's work schedule for 2018**

7. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a document entitled "Proposed CPR calendar for 2018" (HSP/CPR/67/3), stressing that 2018 would be an important year for the Committee and for

UN-Habitat, considering the latter's role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goal 11, the New Urban Agenda and the preparations for and follow-up to the ninth session of the World Urban Forum, and the ongoing strengthening of UN-Habitat, which was also being discussed at the United Nations Secretariat in New York.

8. In the ensuing discussion, one representative suggested that at its sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth meetings the Committee review briefings by the secretariat on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 11 and on the annual meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development to be held in 2018. Another representative proposed that the Committee discuss at the same two meetings the budgetary situation of UN-Habitat, recalling that the General Assembly of the United Nations had agreed to hold a strategic dialogue to discuss the financial situation of UN-Habitat and to conclude such dialogue by 30 June 2018.

9. The Committee adopted the proposed work schedule, as orally amended.

#### **Agenda item 4**

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

10. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to two documents, entitled, "Executive Director's briefing to the Committee of Permanent Representatives" (HSP/CPR/67/4) and "Executive Director's closing remarks to the Committee of Permanent Representatives" (HSP/CPR/67/4/Add.1).

11. With regard to the first document (HSP/CPR/67/4), the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Mr. Joan Clos, said that the secretariat had been actively engaged over the previous months in the negotiation of a draft resolution on the strengthening of UN-Habitat, which would be extremely important for the Programme's future, to be considered by the General Assembly at the end of 2017. Member States had concluded their negotiations on the draft resolution, in which the Committee was tasked with the responsibility of discussing by 30 June 2018 ways in which UN-Habitat might be strengthened. He expressed the hope that such discussions would lead to consensus.

12. Turning to the second document (HSP/CPR/67/4/Add.1), he said that it outlined his views on the situation of UN-Habitat and constituted his handover note to the Secretary-General of the United Nations following his seven-year tenure as Executive Director. Key messages included that, thanks to the work of UN-Habitat, urbanization had gained a prominent position in the international arena, not only in relation to sustainability and development, but also in relation to peace and security, migration, climate change, resilience and other major challenges that faced all countries; that UN-Habitat had managed to increase its portfolio and its country presence worldwide while reducing its administrative and general costs, thereby adapting to the observed tendency of member States to move away from non-earmarked contributions toward earmarked contributions and bilateral cooperation; and that UN-Habitat had undertaken a process of reform that included two parts - professional reform and administrative reform - and was continuing. The professional reform had focused on specializing in and driving the Programme's substantive activities towards the fundamentals of urbanization, namely, urban planning, urban legislation and urban finance, while the administrative reform had sought to increase the Programme's productivity in order to diminish administrative costs and allow the allocation of more resources to substantive programmes and deliverables for member States, cities and other stakeholders. The administrative reform had achieved a 40 per cent reduction of core budget costs, including by reducing the number of staff in Nairobi from 330 to 210, while expanding the portfolio and increasing the overall productivity of UN-Habitat.

13. Mr. Clos said that the above-mentioned reforms of UN-Habitat were fully in line with the United Nations reform agenda of the Secretary-General and, while their implementation had not been without issues, it was critical that UN-Habitat and other United Nations entities continue to work towards professionalization and increased productivity if they wanted to serve member States and other stakeholders in the most efficient manner possible.

14. The second document also provided an overview of the financial situation of UN-Habitat, which Mr. Clos encouraged member States to examine on the basis of the hard facts and data provided in the detailed financial statements produced in accordance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The current annual budget of UN-Habitat was balanced and amounted to approximately \$210 million, of which \$30 million were core budget funds. UN-Habitat continued to experience difficulties with regard to the core budget, which had continued to decline since 2010. The core budget deficit had grown from \$2 million in 2010 to \$5 million in 2017. UN-Habitat had financed the core budget deficit through its three reserves, which according to the last audited figures represented over \$22.8 million, meaning that the Programme would be able to continue to rely on such reserves for some time to finance small core budget deficits. The secretariat had managed to raise funds for the core budget by using project portfolio overheads and cost recovery, which now

constituted 50 per cent of the core budget. Such efforts should continue over the following years so that project portfolio overheads and cost recovery eventually made up 75 per cent of the core budget, unless member States decided to contribute additional funds from the regular budget of the United Nations to UN-Habitat or to increase their non-earmarked voluntary contributions to the Programme.

15. He went on to highlight a number of his recommendations for the future of UN-Habitat. First, it was crucial that the Programme continue to specialize and focus on the fundamentals of urbanization over the coming years in order to demonstrate its specific role in the United Nations system in the context of the reform of the United Nations Development Group. Second, UN-Habitat should insist on using the regulations and rules applicable to field operations rather than those of the United Nations Secretariat, which were inadequate for the Programme. Third, it was his hope that member States would reach consensus on the governance reform of UN Habitat, thereby creating a more trusting relationship between member States, the secretariat, the Committee and other relevant stakeholders. Fourth, in the context of the reform of the United Nations Development Group, it was crucial that real coordination be achieved between the sixty entities that made up the Group in order to avoid overlapping functions and duplication of efforts and enhance the management of the Group's budget, which was approximately \$10 billion per year. Real coordination, he said, was not about increasing the number of coordination-related meetings or documents, but about establishing a management system which assigned clear responsibilities and made clear the required results, and gave more authority to those responsible for coordination.

16. In closing, he expressed his deep appreciation to his management team and the entire staff of UN-Habitat, both at headquarters and in the field, and he urged member States to consider carefully over the following months ways in which the Programme could be strengthened, taking into account the considerable reform efforts already undertaken and how much more could be achieved with additional support. Thanking all those who had contributed to improving UN-Habitat throughout his tenure, he asked for the indulgence of Committee members and others who he might inadvertently have offended in his efforts to improve the Programme.

17. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives expressed their deep appreciation to Mr. Clos for his leadership, dedication and remarkable efforts during his tenure as Executive Director of UN-Habitat and as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), wishing him every success in his future endeavours. Several representatives said that his leadership was clearly reflected in the New Urban Agenda and in the widespread acceptance of the notion that sustainable urbanization could be a major contributor to sustainable development.

18. With regard to the financial situation of UN-Habitat, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, recognized the dire situation in terms of the core budget and the challenges it presented to UN-Habitat, but congratulated the management of UN-Habitat on their successful efforts to raise earmarked resources. He expressed the hope that non-earmarked member State contributions to UN-Habitat would increase in the near future, noting that the creation of an open-ended working group to examine options for strengthening member State oversight of UN-Habitat, as was mandated by the General Assembly in the draft resolution on the strengthening of UN-Habitat to be considered for adoption at the end of 2017, was a promising step towards achieving that objective. Another representative said that achieving greater trust and transparency through governance reform was key to enhancing the effectiveness of UN-Habitat.

19. Another representative expressed concern over the reduction in core budget funds and, noting that an organization such as UN-Habitat should not depend on earmarked contributions alone, she called on all member States to consider the issue further.

20. With regard to the ninth session of the World Urban Forum, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, asked for more details on how the session would contribute to the first progress report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and what the relationship would be between that progress report and the report on Sustainable Development Goal 11 to be considered by the high-level forum on sustainable development at its July 2018 meeting. He urged UN-Habitat to engage with member States in the development of the progress report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, which he said should be key priority of the Programme and which must be credible and comprehensive and be fully owned by member States.

21. With regard to the negotiations on the draft General Assembly resolution on the implementation of the outcomes of United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), one representative speaking on behalf of a group of countries

expressed the hope that were the draft resolution to be adopted, it would contribute to improving the effectiveness of UN-Habitat and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, which UN-Habitat should identify as a key priority. Supported by another representative, he said that the governance reform of UN-Habitat was a key element in strengthening the headquarters functions of UN-Habitat in Nairobi and he urged member States to address the issue over the following six months.

22. Responding to comments, the Executive Director expressed his appreciation to all the representatives for their kind words, emphasizing that the elevation of urbanization in the global agenda had been possible thanks to the collective efforts of his staff, member States, the Committee and experts and other stakeholders interested in urbanization, including the co-facilitators of Habitat III from Mexico and the Philippines, who had played a crucial role in the success of the Conference and in the adoption of the New Urban Agenda.

## **Agenda item 5**

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

23. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the quarterly report on the financial status of UN-Habitat (HSP/CPR/67/5), outlining the financial situation of UN-Habitat for the quarter ending on 30 September 2017.

24. The representative of the secretariat then provided an outline of UN-Habitat fund balances, expenses and revenue for the period. Revenue had totalled \$113 million, of which \$18.2 million related to core funds and \$94.8 million related to earmarked funds. Total expenditures had amounted to \$119.6 million, comprising \$22.3 million for core expenses and \$97.3 million for earmarked expenses. At beginning of 2017, the total core fund balances, including reserves, had been \$21.8 million, of which \$6.1 million related to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation general purpose fund and \$15.7 million related to the programme support funds. Section 5.2 of the report provided details of fund balance movements for earmarked funds.

25. Stressing that non-earmarked income to the Foundation general purpose fund had been only \$1.2 million during the reporting period and had risen to a mere \$2.6 million by the end of November 2017, he said that, as the secretariat had consistently pointed out, the current financial model for the core budget did not work and required the attention of member States in 2018, since the gap between what member States had asked UN-Habitat to do as core work in the approved programme of work and their financial contributions to the core budget was unmanageable and the gap between core budget expenditures and contributions was simply too large for the status quo to continue. He urged member States to make their contributions to the Foundation general purpose fund as soon as possible, noting that until such contributions were received UN-Habitat would have to continue to use programme support funds to fulfil commitments under the Foundation general purpose fund.

26. Negotiations had concluded on the draft General Assembly resolution on the implementation of the outcomes of United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), in which UN-Habitat was requested to hold a strategic dialogue with member States to discuss budgetary matters in order to permit the full and effective delivery of its mandate, in particular its normative work, as called for in paragraph 129 of the New Urban Agenda. Such a dialogue was a crucial exercise in addressing the structural financial issues of UN-Habitat; the plan was therefore to initiate the discussion process in 2018 with a view to engaging with capitals and with delegations both in Nairobi and New York.

27. In closing, he expressed his deep appreciation to the Governments of Barbados, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, India, Japan, Kenya, Norway, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, South Africa and Zambia for their contributions to the Foundation general purpose fund received as at the end of the third quarter of 2017. He further expressed his appreciation to the European Union and to the Governments of Afghanistan, Australia, Belgium, Cabo Verde, China, Colombia, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Uganda, United Arab Emirates and the United States of America for new contribution agreements for earmarked activities that they had signed with UN-Habitat in the second quarter of 2017, amounting to \$33.9 million.

28. In the ensuing discussion, one representative thanked the secretariat for the presentation, saying that her Government shared the concerns expressed regarding the gap between expenditures and revenue, and asked the secretariat to review the figures provided on page 5 of the report, which appeared to be the same as those provided in the report of the second quarter of 2017.

29. The secretariat agreed to review the quarterly report and make the necessary corrections.

## Agenda item 6

### Thematic or country presentation

30. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a note by the secretariat entitled “UN-Habitat’s contribution to the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus” (HSP/CPR/67/6).
31. The Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, gave a presentation on UN-Habitat work with partners to support member States at the country, regional and global levels in their efforts to build resilience; prevent, minimize the effects of and respond to humanitarian crises; and safely overcome such crises through sustainable development approaches.
32. She drew attention to the unprecedented recent levels of migration, with over 65 million people currently forcibly displaced, and much longer-lasting forced displacements than had been customary in the past. It was in that context that UN-Habitat was working to help communities to address the structural and economic impacts of humanitarian crises and to prevent, mainly through policy changes, the increasing fragility and instability of communities.
33. She recalled that, in November 2007, the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat had endorsed the strategic policy on human settlements in crisis, developed in response to Governing Council resolution 20/17 of 8 April 2005. In 2008, UN-Habitat had joined the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on Humanitarian Affairs, which had been created in 1992 to shape humanitarian policy and ensure coordinated and effective response to humanitarian crises, and had subsequently produced guidelines regarding its role in addressing humanitarian crises, especially with regard to planning and human settlements. More recently, UN-Habitat had reflected on how the New Urban Agenda and the fundamental aspects of urbanization might be used to help member States in responding to humanitarian crises in ways that addressed the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. In 2017, in its resolution 26/2, the Governing Council had requested the Executive Director to use the fund established in accordance with paragraph 1 of the decision, in consultation with member States, to update the UN-Habitat strategic policy on human settlements in crisis, in line with its mandate.
34. Traditional responses to humanitarian situations had been linear, she said, involving shelter and short-term recovery mechanisms as immediate responses to crisis events, followed by long-term recovery efforts at a later stage. Such linear responses had often resulted in the creation of large slums and informal settlements, so building on that experience UN-Habitat had been working with sister entities to offer advice to Governments in order to ensure, for example, that even emergency shelters were planned and met a set of minimum standards. Under this new approach, prevention and resilience were integrated into crisis responses from the outset, so that affected communities lived decent, dignified lives and, should they leave their emergency shelters, they left behind sound infrastructure that could be used for city expansion.
35. Key elements of the policy and technical advice and support that UN-Habitat was providing to Governments in this area included: ensuring, through spatial planning, that any infrastructure was built in a better way and made communities more resilient by ensuring that people had access not only to housing but also to basic services, community centres and other goods; that human rights principles were upheld, especially with regard to access to land, property and security of tenure; that property was acquired in as amicable a way as possible and that locally-available and resilient tools and infrastructure were used; and that a people-led process was implemented and that local capacities, including from local authorities, the private sector and community-based organizations, were used to the extent possible.
36. In situations where the level of destruction had been very significant, such as in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, UN-Habitat was also working to set up systems to collect and analyse data so as to help Governments and communities to plan ahead and to make informed, action-oriented decisions related to reconstruction. In Iraq, for instance, a data platform and profiling system was being used to collect data on levels of destruction to inform the reconstruction process, while urban profiling had been conducted in the Syrian Arab Republic to help Governments and partners to make appropriate interventions based on the key principles of the New Urban Agenda.
37. Stressing that UN-Habitat was a non-resident entity at the national level, she invited the Committee members to share ideas on ways in which it might mobilize Governments, regional economic commissions and other key actors to promote the transformative changes that were needed to deal with the humanitarian-development nexus challenge, including in the areas of policy and financing.

38. Reflecting on the way forward, she urged member States to significantly increase their level of support for the normative work of UN-Habitat, which was what made it possible for the Programme to work in the field and to provide professional advice on addressing planning, legislation and finance in an integrated way. Such support would also help UN-Habitat to be present where it mattered in order to inform policymaking at the subregional and global levels, including in locations as diverse as Bangkok and New York, and to promote the creation of platforms of learning for sharing the Programme's expertise such that the successes achieved in countries like Iraq could be replicated elsewhere. She invited member States to discuss such issues in the context of their deliberations on the reform and the strengthening of UN-Habitat, as well as in the context of their discussions on the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2019–2024, which should address reporting issues, including the report to be provided to the high-level political forum in 2018.

39. In closing, she expressed her appreciation to the Governments of Germany, India, Japan, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for their generous contributions to the humanitarian work of UN-Habitat.

40. In the ensuing discussion, representatives expressed appreciation for the presentation by the Deputy Executive Director and for the note by the secretariat (HSP/CPR/67/6).

41. One representative asked about UN-Habitat activities in response to humanitarian crises between 2007 and 2015, prior to the development of the New Urban Agenda. He also queried whether the new ways of working advocated by the Secretary-General had been tried and tested; asked about the role of experts in the humanitarian work of UN-Habitat; and sought clarification regarding the possible specific contributions of member States in formulating a new strategy to deal with humanitarian crises. Subsequently, he asked for an explanation of ways in which urbanization could serve as a means to prevent crises or conflict.

42. The representative of Iraq thanked UN-Habitat and donors for the support they had provided to his country, commending in particular the Executive Director for his leadership and innovative work. He said that the information presented demonstrated that UN-Habitat performed strongly at the country level and provided invaluable normative and operational support to member States in conflict and post-conflict situations. The United Nations reform process led by the Secretary-General presented an excellent opportunity for UN-Habitat to contribute across the spectrum of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and to strengthen its portfolio, and he urged member States to contribute to the urban emergency response fund approved by the Governing Council at its twenty-sixth session in May 2017 in order to strengthen the technical capacities of UN-Habitat in that area.

43. The representative of the Democratic Republic of Congo lamented that the presentation had not listed his country as one of those in which the successes of UN-Habitat could be replicated given that it had one of the world's highest numbers of internally displaced people and required support to better understand the causes of such displacement, in particular the situations in which people were migrating away from secure areas of the country.

44. Another representative asked about the significant increase in the budget for the UN-Habitat risk reduction, rehabilitation and crisis programme, which, according to the note by the secretariat (HSP/CPR/67/6) totalled \$80 million in the biennium 2018–2019, compared to \$38 million reported in the current budget.

45. Responding to questions raised, the Deputy Executive Director said that between 2007 and 2015, UN-Habitat had helped crisis-affected people to access shelter and had led that work within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, but the focus on crisis prevention, resilience building and proactive planning had come later on, after the discussions on the New Urban Agenda had begun. She said that the new way of dealing with humanitarian crises was indeed a tried and tested approach and the current reform agenda was the product of past reform experiences and a great deal of reflection on how best to address such crises. With regard to the role of experts in the crisis-related work of UN-Habitat, the Programme had engaged a global alliance of partners in addressing urban crises and, during the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, had requested funding to create a pool of resources and a roster of trained experts and individuals to ensure a swifter response to urban crises.

46. As for the contributions that member States could make to the UN-Habitat humanitarian-development nexus strategy, given that the current strategic plan would end in 2019, member States had an opportunity to share their ideas in the preparation of the next strategic plan on ways in which UN-Habitat could better support them.

47. She said that UN-Habitat remained committed to working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but noted that while some progress had been achieved and past successes could be replicated

in the country, the current lack of political stability and the fluid nature of migration in the country constituted a significant hindrance.

48. Lastly, with regard to the role of urbanization as a means of preventing crises or conflict, she said that crises and conflict were often caused by inequalities, lack of respect for human rights and lack of access to basic services. When leaders followed the principles of good urbanization, planning ahead in an inclusive manner to create jobs and assure access by citizens to affordable services, urbanization became a cornerstone of sustainable development. She suggested that a subcommittee meeting could be organized in early 2018 to discuss that issue in more detail.

49. Also responding to some of the questions raised, the representative of the secretariat said that UN-Habitat was working with the Governments of Canada, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland to set up a group of experts to be deployed as early responders, enabling UN-Habitat to engage in the early stages of crises to design durable solutions and interventions. With regard to the increase in the budget for the risk reduction, rehabilitation and crisis programme, he explained that the figures for the next biennium were based on greater commitments from donors and new agreements to be signed for projects in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic.

## **Agenda item 7**

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

50. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a document entitled “Report on the work of the working group on programme and budget” (HSP/CPR/67/7). The Chair of the working group outlined the content of the report, including five recommendations made by the working group.

51. The Committee took note of the report.

## **Agenda item 8**

### **Report on the status of preparations for the ninth session of the World Urban Forum (Governing Council resolution 26/6)**

52. Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat said that a detailed presentation on the preparations for the ninth session of the World Urban Forum had been presented to the subcommittee on 13 December 2017 by the Forum coordinator, so she would provide a brief update on the preparations at the current meeting. She drew attention to an information note on the ninth session of the World Urban Forum and a draft concept paper entitled “Cities 2030, cities for all: implementing the new urban agenda”.

53. Stressing the importance of the ninth session of the Forum given that it would be the first such session after the adoption of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, she said that all the branches and regional offices of UN-Habitat were preparing for the session, in line with a framework that outlined how the session would inform future priorities and provide support in achieving the expected accomplishments of the UN-Habitat programme of work. In addition, a team of focal points was preparing for and would engage with member States, partners and stakeholders to organize each event at the session. With regard to documentation for the session, the agenda and a comprehensive outline of all the session events had been finalized. As for registration, approximately 8,000 people or organizations had registered for the session, most of them from the Asia-Pacific region, but 25,000 participants were expected, so the registration deadline had been extended from 15 December 2017 to 15 January 2018. Over 1,000 applications to host events had been received, and the Government of Malaysia was taking the lead on the logistics front, planning to host events in Kuala Lumpur where it would share Malaysia’s best practices in sustainable urbanization.

54. The representative of Malaysia thanked the secretariat for the work it had undertaken in preparation for the session, which would be hosted in Kuala Lumpur in February 2018 in collaboration with the Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government. He stressed that preparations were progressing well and his Government was committed to ensuring the success of the session. It would continue to work closely with UN-Habitat to address human settlement issues in the Asia-Pacific region and to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The session would bring significant benefits to all member States and the global community, in particular in support of their efforts to achieve sustainable urbanization and development, green cities and the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda. In closing, he conveyed his deep gratitude to the Executive Director for his leadership and contribution to the work of UN-Habitat and the preparations for the ninth session of the Forum, inviting him to attend the session.

55. The Executive Director expressed his profound appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for its sizeable contribution to the ninth session of the Forum, which he said had included a contribution of \$7 million and the provision of urbanization expertise, suggesting that the unprecedented number of event hosting proposals demonstrated that interest in urbanization was growing worldwide. In closing, he highlighted the significance of convening the session in Asia, which was the most populated continent in the world and had to date been the most rapidly urbanizing continent, stressing that the session represented an important step toward the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

## **Agenda item 9**

### **Briefing on actions required by Governing Council resolutions by end of 2017**

56. The Committee considered the three sub-items listed under agenda item 9. Following the introduction of each sub-item by a representative of the Secretariat, the Committee held a discussion on the three sub-items.

#### **A. Report on the status of implementation of the New Urban Agenda (Governing Council resolution 26/8)**

57. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the secretariat drew attention to a document entitled “Supporting the implementation of NUA and the urban dimension of the SDGs” (HSP/CPR/67/9(a), which complemented other reports previously submitted to the Committee. The reports demonstrated the important role that UN-Habitat was playing in supporting the implementation of the New Urban Agenda at the global, regional, national and local levels, including in the areas of reporting, coordination and advocacy, and through the development of guidelines to assist member States and cities in their implementation of the Agenda.

58. He said that the report presented at the current meeting focused on two areas of work, namely, data and reporting, and the engagement of the regional offices in stimulating the uptake of New Urban Agenda implementation in all the regions. He highlighted a number of activities undertaken under each area. With regard to data and reporting, UN-Habitat had intensified efforts to work with partners on data and reporting in order to: finalize a global definition of cities and refine national samples of a cities approach; develop spatial guidelines for the Sustainable Development Goals; finalize methodological guides of indicators on Sustainable Development Goals for which UN-Habitat was the custodian agency; organize thematic expert group meetings; develop new regional partnership arrangements related to data; refine the City Prosperity Initiative to better address urban data and reporting; and lead pilot exercises in Botswana, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Tunisia.

59. Efforts by the regional offices to stimulate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the regions included: developing regional and subregional action and implementation plans and monitoring frameworks in collaboration with regional economic commissions and regional political bodies; engaging with regional partners and forums to shape regional agendas, including research agendas; strengthening partnerships with regional economic commissions, for instance by creating the Regional Urban and Cities Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; supporting specific countries in all the regions to incorporate key elements of New Urban Agenda implementation in UN-Habitat country programme documents; and providing technical advice to countries on issues such as national policy, planning, financial and legislative reforms and local implementation of the New Urban Agenda in specific cities.

#### **B. Review and approval of the revised strategic plan for 2014–2019 (Governing Council resolution 26/3)**

60. Introducing the sub-item, the Executive Director drew attention to a document entitled “Draft revised strategic plan of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the period 2014–2019” (HSP/GC/26/6/Add.3), which he said had been extensively debated and reviewed by the Committee in the subcommittee and other forums, and suggested that the Committee approve the plan at the current meeting.

#### **C. Review of the draft stakeholder engagement policy (Governing Council resolution 26/7)**

61. Introducing the sub-item, the representative of the secretariat drew attention to a document entitled “Update on partnerships including Stakeholder Engagement Policy” (HSP/CPR/67/9(c), previously presented to the subcommittee. Recalling that in its resolution 26/7 the Governing Council



had requested the Executive Director to develop and submit to the Committee by the end of 2017 a draft stakeholder engagement policy drawing on best practices and models from multilateral institutions and exploring new mechanisms for the engagement of civil society in the intergovernmental decision-making processes and work of UN-Habitat, she said that the secretariat was developing a partnership information management system to help support the implementation of the policy.

62. With regard to progress achieved in drafting the policy, she said that the secretariat had consulted with the NGO Branch of the Economic and Social Council and the Stakeholder Engagement Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as well as the United Nations Environment Programme which had been working on its stakeholder engagement policy since 2014, and had conducted an analysis of the stakeholder engagement policies of several multilateral entities and identified elements that could be utilized for the policy.

63. Stressing that the secretariat was engaged in a number of preparatory activities for the implementation of a partnership strategy, including a collaborative implementation framework for the United Nations system and another one for stakeholders, she suggested that the Committee request the secretariat to submit an annotated outline of the draft policy to the Committee by 31 January 2018 and that a subcommittee meeting be held in March 2018 to discuss the draft policy. She also requested that the Committee give the secretariat until 30 June 2018 to submit the draft policy for its consideration.

## Discussion

64. In the following discussion, one representative thanked the secretariat for the update provided under sub-item (a), stressing that the production of progress reports on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda offered a unique opportunity for UN-Habitat to raise the level of ambition in the implementation of the Agenda by taking stock of such implementation and highlighting areas where improvement was required, thereby prompting high-level discussions by member States on the way forward. Suggesting that this opportunity could be seized only if the progress reports were credible and comprehensive and had buy-in from member States, she urged the secretariat to set up a more transparent process to obtain the necessary data and to ensure that member States were more closely involved in the production of the reports.

65. She also sought clarification, in the update scheduled for March 2018, of how the report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda added value to the report on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11 and how the draft implementation and monitoring frameworks being developed for Africa fitted into the overall reporting framework of the New Urban Agenda. She asked the secretariat to submit the draft progress report to the Committee several weeks in advance of the ninth session of the World Urban Forum, at which the report was to be discussed for possible approval. Together with another representative, she expressed surprise that the World Urban Forum was expected to approve the draft report given that it was a non-legislative body that did not have the authority to do so.

66. Subsequently, the Committee decided to adopt the draft strategic plan for 2014–2019, and to request the secretariat to submit the draft stakeholder engagement policy to the Committee for its consideration by 30 June 2018.

67. At the suggestion of the Chair, the Committee also requested the secretariat to address, at an appropriate time, the queries raised during the discussion under the agenda item.

## Agenda item 10

### Discussions at the United Nations General Assembly with a bearing on UN-Habitat: draft General Assembly resolution on strengthening UN-Habitat

68. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the relevant document (HSP/CPR/67/10), recalling that the General Assembly of the United Nations had requested the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat to establish an open-ended working group in Nairobi to examine different options for strengthening UN-Habitat and to share its findings with member States no later than 30 June 2018 for subsequent consideration by the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. She said that the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives had proposed that the open-ended working group begin its work in January 2018.

69. The Executive Director expressed confidence that, under the leadership of the Chair, the Committee would be able to meet the deadline and reach agreement on how to strengthen UN-Habitat. He said that it was very important that the Committee reach consensus on the issue by the deadline in order to enable the General Assembly to adopt the resolution on strengthening UN-Habitat at its

current session, stressing that the resolution should have been adopted in December 2017, when the General Assembly was approving the budget of the United Nations, including UN-Habitat, for the following biennium, had the General Assembly been able to reach a conclusion on the strengthening of UN-Habitat. Any decision on the strengthening of UN-Habitat would not be reflected in the next biennial budget of the United Nations because the adoption of the resolution had been deferred to 2018, so the secretariat would have to continue to reduce costs so as not to create deficits that could be not be financed by the current levels of income.

70. The Committee endorsed the establishment by the Chair of the proposed open-ended working group to examine different options for strengthening UN-Habitat, and the request that the group to begin its work promptly in January 2018.

### **Agenda item 11**

#### **Elections of the Bureau for the biennium 2018–2019**

71. The following new members were elected by acclamation to the Bureau for the biennium 2018–2019, after nominations by the regional groups following the customary rotation of nominations:

Chair:	Mr. Fernando Estellita Lins de Salvo Coimbra (Brazil)
Vice-chairs:	Ms. Agrina Mussa (Malawi)
	Mr. Dragan Županjevac (Serbia)
Rapporteur:	Ms. Lori Dando (United States of America)

72. The Committee agreed to elect the vice-chair representing the Asia-Pacific group at its sixty-eighth meeting, once the group had concluded its consultations on the nomination. In the meantime, the Permanent Representative of China agreed to continue to serve as vice-president for the Asia-Pacific group.

### **Agenda item 12**

#### **Any other matters**

73. On behalf of the Chair of Committee and the outgoing Bureau, the Chair congratulated and expressed gratitude to Mr. Clos for his successful tenure as Executive Director of UN-Habitat. She said that Mr. Clos would be remembered for his significant contribution to the Habitat III process and its outcome, the New Urban Agenda; his leadership in the post-2015 development agenda process, which had secured a place for UN-Habitat in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, including a dedicated goal on cities and human settlements; his leadership at a time of heightened competition for resources and his successful efforts to boost earmarked contributions to the Programme; the emphasis he had placed on urban planning and an integrated approach to sustainable urban development; his readiness to engage with Bureau members and his impressive attendance record at meetings of the Committee and the working group on programme and budget, which member States had not taken for granted.

74. On behalf of the outgoing Bureau, the Chair welcomed the newly elected Bureau members and requested the secretariat to convene a joint meeting between the two bureaux in the second half of January 2018 in order to enable the outgoing bureau to provide an overview of matters of importance for the current biennium.

75. The Executive Director expressed his gratitude to the outgoing Bureau members for their dedication and contribution to the work of the Committee. He expressed the hope that UN-Habitat would be further strengthened under the leadership of the new Executive Director.

#### **Closing of the meeting**

76. The meeting was declared closed at 12.45 p.m. on Thursday, 14 December 2017.

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