Briefing on the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD)

Introduction

At its 23rd session, the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT adopted Resolution 23/6 on the Implementation of the Bamako Declaration and Action Plan and the Strengthening of the Secretariat of AMCHUD. In that resolution, the Governing Council once again noted the importance of regional forums in promoting the Habitat Agenda. It also noted that AMCHUD fulfils the requirements of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan at the country and regional levels. The Governing Council invited UN-HABITAT to continue providing support to the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development for the implementation of its resolutions and action plans and to provide financial and capacity support for the work programme of the Conference, subject to availability of funds, and in line with the work programme and budget of UN-HABITAT.

UN-HABITAT has continued to work closely with the AMCHUD Bureau and its Secretariat, together with African member-states in following up on the Bamako Declaration and Action Plan. The Secretariat also appreciates African governments’ continued commitment to making contributions for the administrative activities of AMCHUD. In this respect, a special tribute should be pay to the Government of Kenya for providing the basic facilities, including a building, for the operations of the AMCHUD’s permanent Secretariat here in Nairobi, Kenya. UN-Habitat has also begun to receive the committed financial pledges from some AMCHUD members, and others members are encourage to do so urgently.
AMCHUD 4

Among the activities planned for 2012, is the convening of the 4th Ministerial Conference to be hosted by the Government of Kenya, here in Nairobi, from 20 – 23 March 2012, at the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC).

The theme for AMCHUD 4 as decided by the AMCHUD Bureau in Rabat on 16 September 2011 will be: “Territorial planning and access to basic services for all” with a sub-theme on “implications of climate change for territorial planning and access to basic services”. The theme underscores the central role that urban planning and access to basic services play and also acknowledges the prevailing challenge of climate change.

Theme of the conference provides yet another opportunity for addressing at the highest level in the region key priority areas of our programme. The conference will enable us to come up with concrete strategies and programmes for the implementation of our biennium work programme. It will also provide a platform for obtaining inputs, guidance and support for an African position on the urban dimension of the deliberations that will take place at the forthcoming Rio-20 conference. Furthermore, the 4th AMCHUD conference will be an appropriate venue for mobilizing increased African participation to the forthcoming 6th World Urban Forum. Indeed, the conference and its planned deliberations will establish another milestone in consolidating the momentum of standing Ministerial conferences as vehicles for promoting the Habitat Agenda.

The Conference will be conducted in two segments:
1) the Experts Group meeting will take place from 20-22 March to reflect on the theme and prepare recommendations and action for consideration by the Conference.

2) the Ministerial Segment will take place from 22-23 March 2012.

The draft Agenda of the Experts Group meeting as well as the Ministerial segment are being developed, in consultation with the Chair and the Secretariat. The Conference will also discuss modalities of further strengthening AMCHUD as a Regional Ministerial vehicle and in this respect it will examine and adopt the Constitution and Rules of procedures of the Organisation.

It will also exchange views and come up with shared positions on key issues to be discussed in upcoming international fora such as Rio+20 (Rio de Janeiro, 20-22 June 2012), the World Urban Forum (Naples, 1-7 September 2012) as well as preparations for the forthcoming Habitat III conference planned for June 2016. The AMCHUD Secretariat in close collaboration with the Government of Kenya and with the support of UN-Habitat is preparing the Conference.

A national organising committee has been constituted by the Ministry of Housing and is working on the logistics and organizational matters. The Committee meets every two weeks to review the progress on the preparation of the Conference. An interdivisional committee constituted by UN-Habitat staff is working on preparing the working documents for the meeting.

In practice efforts have always been made to assist Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in their participation to these conferences. Once again, it is important to
appreciate the generous contributions of the Governments of South Africa for AMCHUD I held in Durban in 2005 and the Government of Nigeria for AMCHUD II held in Abuja in 2008. It is also important to take this opportunity to appeal to all governments that are able, to kindly assist in facilitating the participation of governments that may face constraints in bringing their delegations to Nairobi.