Introductory Statement by Ambassador Konrad Paulsen, Chair of the Open-ended Consultative Group on the UN-Habitat Governance Review Process

Progress Report on the Governance Review Process

Agenda Item 5

HSP/CPR/45/5

Nairobi, 28 June 2012
UN-Habitat Governance Review Process

Report to the 45th Regular Session of the CPR

Since the adoption of Resolution 23/13, “Governance of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme”, during the 23rd Session of the Governing Council (11-15 April 2011), the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) has been regularly informed on progress on the Governance Review Process in all its Regular Sessions.

In line with Governing Council Resolution 23/13, the CPR and the Secretariat of UN-Habitat have jointly engaged in a Governance Review process in order to:

- Further examine the options for reform and develop a preferred option;
- Develop procedures for the examination phase;
- Seek consensus on the identified option; and
- Develop an action plan and present it to the General Assembly at its 67th Session if applicable.

The first steps towards the implementation of the GC Resolution were the setting-up of an Open Ended Consultative Group on Governance Review to oversee the process and the approval of the Terms of Reference (TOR) during the 43rd Regular Session of the CPR held on the 15th of December 2011 to guide the third phase of the Governance Review Process.

In short, the TOR stipulate the following:

- The setting-up of four Task Force Teams (TFT’s) in order to analyze each of the four identified governance challenges and to provide proposals for action and recommendations on options to tackle those challenges.
- A comparative Analysis of different Governance Models.
- The elaboration of an Action Plan identifying options on the basis of the report HSP/GC/23/INF/7 and the findings of the work done by the Open Ended Consultative Group on Governance.
- Presentation of the Action Plan to the 67th Session of the General Assembly.

During the first quarter of 2012, all four Task Force Teams completed their work and submitted their findings and proposals, first to the Open Ended Consultative Group on Governance Review in separate sessions, and then to the 44th Regular Session of the CPR held in March 2012 for their endorsement.

Task Force Team 1 presented its findings and proposals for action related to the challenge of “Multiple lines of authority”. TFT 2 dealt with “Over-complicated Work Programme and Budget and burdensome administrative process due in large part to multiple and complex management and governance structures.” TFT 3 dealt with “Relationship between UN-Habitat and UNON” in
the light of the UN Secretariat’s Regulations and Rules, current procedures applied by UNON and UN-Habitat on effective delivery of UN-Habitat’s Mandate, and their impact on transparency and accountability of the system. Finally, TFT4 focused on the organization of the Governing Council, its composition, participation and engagement of all relevant stakeholders, frequency of meetings and implementation of GC resolutions, with the objective of finding proposals to revitalize current governing bodies. Presentations done by the four Task Force Teams validate identified governance challenges and contain a series of proposals and recommendations as inputs for the way forward. The CPR, at its 44th Regular Session held on April 3rd 2012 decided to endorse work done by the four TFT’s and use their recommendations as an input for the comparative exercise with other Governance Models, thus moving to the next stage of the process, as established in the Terms of Reference.

In order to carry out the comparative analysis with governance models of other Programmes and Agencies in the UN family, the Open Ended Consultative Group on Governance Review met several times in April 2012 and elaborated the criteria to guide the selection of a limited number of Programmes and Agencies potentially relevant to the exercise. As a result, the following organizations were selected (six in total):

- UN organisations that perform both normative and operational functions: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD);
- UN organisations that have experience in reform: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women);
- Other Programmes and Funds within the Secretariat: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);
- A specialised Agency: World Food Programme (WFP).

It was also decided that the comparative analysis would be done in the form of presentations to the Open Ended Consultative Group by the Regional/Country Directors of each of the selected Programmes and Agencies. In order to guide their briefings and achieve more focus, the Open Ended Consultative Group provided the Directors with a document titled “Guidelines for Presentations”, attached to the current progress report for reference. Guidelines are based on the validated governance challenges and findings of the four Task Force Teams.

Among the six chosen organisations, four have already presented their governance models to the Open Ended Consultative Group: UNHCR, UNODC, UNDP and WFP. So far the exercise is proving to be very fruitful in terms of providing insight and a wide range of potential solutions adopted in different governance models in order to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability.

With respect to the way forward, the Open Ended Consultative Group also agreed to recruit a Consultant who will work under the guidance of the Group to assist in the completion of Phase
Three of the governance review process. Among the main tasks and timelines assigned to the Consultant are the following:

- Report on the comparative analysis of different governance models based on the presentations to the Open Ended Consultative Group made by the representatives of the selected UN organisations whose governance structures UN-Habitat can learn lessons from (July/September 2012).

- Report on the examination of the governance options as identified by the Open Ended Consultative Group in reference to the document HSP/GC/23/INF/7, as well as any other emerging option during the process, and analysis of their modalities, financial, legal, procedural and political implications (October/November 2012).

- Draft Action Plan on the implementation of the preferred governance option(s) that defines clearly all steps that must be followed in the implementation of the preferred option(s), taking into consideration the requirement to comply with rules and procedures of relevant United Nations Bodies, and ensuring that the financial, legal and procedural implications of the preferred option(s) are specified (December 2012).