Preparations for the 24th Session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat

Statement

By

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Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat

Agenda Item 6

CPR Meeting: 20 March 2013
Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to update you on the status of the preparations for the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council (GC 24).

The Notification of the Executive Director with all attachments, including the organization of work, was sent out to all Permanent and Observer Missions to UN-Habitat in Nairobi and to the United Nations in New York on 16 November 2012. This has also been sent to all relevant national Ministries and accredited Habitat Agenda Partners.

The Secretariat has started receiving correspondence from Governments and Habitat Agenda Partners informing us of the composition of their delegations to the twenty-fourth session. We wish to urge other Member States to do the same as soon as possible in order to facilitate early preparations, including registration. On-line registration can be done at the GC24 website (www.unhabitat.org/gc24). This website also provides information on various issues, including on media accreditation and travel advisory details such as health, visas and hotels.

Mr. Chairman, regarding the composition of the Bureau, the Secretariat would be grateful if Regional Groups could inform the Secretariat on the following outstanding nominations: (1) President, to be nominated by the Western European and Others Group (WEOG); (ii) Vice-President, to be nominated by the African States; (iii) Vice-President, to be nominated by the Asia-Pacific States; (iv) Vice-President, to be nominated by the Eastern European States; and (v) Rapporteur, to be nominated by the Latin American States.
Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Most of the documents for decision may be found at the GC24 website. Translation of the remaining documents by UNON Conference Services is still on-going and these documents will be uploaded at the GC24 website as soon as they become available.

I especially wish to draw your attention to the document on the Dialogue on the special theme of the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council, that is, document HSP/GC/24/4, titled “Sustainable Urban Development: the role of cities in creating improved economic opportunities for all, with special reference to youth and gender”. Please kindly note that enquiries on the Dialogue may be referred to Mr. Gulelat Kebede, Coordinator, Urban Economy Branch.

I wish to thank the CPR Working Group on Planning for its continuing work on the draft resolutions for GC24.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to inform you at this juncture that the Secretariat is ready to receive requests from Governments for places on the speaker’s list for the high-level segment of the Plenary, which is scheduled to take place on 15 and 16 April 2013.

The Secretariat has finalised the list of parallel and side events to be organised during GC24. Members who wish to know more about such events may contact the Governing Council Secretariat.
The exhibition remains a regular and important component of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat. It showcases the activities and latest technologies in the field of sustainable urban development. Relevant information on this is also available at the GC24 website.

I also wish to inform you that the Secretariat has received several requests from participants for funding to attend the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council. As we have limited funds, the Secretariat would like to appeal to member States in a position to do so to consider providing additional funding for this purpose. For now, funding will be provided only to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) who are current member States of the Governing Council.

Final details on all organizational aspects of GC24 will be presented to the Committee at its Extraordinary Meeting on 9 April 2013. Meanwhile, any inquiries regarding the organisation of GC24 may be addressed to the Governing Council Secretariat (at UN-HabitatGCSecretariat@unhabitat.org) or to the Secretary at Chris.Mensah@unhabitat.org.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Our sister Programme, UNEP, has conducted its recent Governing Council session using a papersmart conferencing system. The UN-Habitat Secretariat believes that this is the way forward.

You will recall that we started having CPR papersmart meetings from the 41st Regular Meeting in June 2011. The experience accumulated from papersmart CPR meetings will help us to organise this coming session of the Governing
Council. I am, however, open to guidance and advice on this issue, given your first-hand experience with the recent session of the Governing Council of UNEP.

I thank you for your kind attention and will be happy to answer any questions that you might have.