TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ADVISORY GROUP OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM

Background

The World Urban Forum was established as a biennial meeting by the United Nations General Assembly (Resolution 56/206) at its fifty-sixth session in December 2001, as a “non-legislative technical forum in which experts can exchange views in the years when the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme does not meet.” Since its inaugural session in Nairobi, Kenya in 2002, the Forum has grown in size and stature into the world’s premier conference on cities.

A unique feature of the World Urban Forum is that it is one of the most open gatherings of its kind on the international stage. The reason being that the Forum is a non-legislative meeting, which brings together government leaders, ministers, mayors, diplomats, members of national, regional and international associations of local governments, non-governmental and community organizations in open dialogue and exchange. Invited also are professionals, academics, grassroots women’s organizations, youth, slum dwellers groups, the private sector and the media as partners working for smarter and inclusive cities. Each session builds on the lessons and success of the previous events and on other meetings of the United Nations system.

Annex IV to the Report of the First session of the World Urban Forum provides that the Advisory Group is a multi-partner assemblage established prior to each session to advise and assist the Executive Director of UN-Habitat with the organization and conduct of the Forum.

The Advisory Group mission

The Advisory Group represents various constituent groups and partners of UN-Habitat whose selection is guided by geographical and gender balance, while the Chair is held by a Minister from the host country. The Chair is assisted by a Co-Chair, each of them from the Global North and the Global South and vice versa, depending on which country hosts the World Urban Forum.

The Governing Council of UN-Habitat at its twenty-third session in 2011 recommended that the role of the Advisory Group, CPR and Host Country be more clearly defined.


**Membership and term of office**

The Advisory Group is comprised of Government representatives, a parliamentary representative and one each representing the academic world, women’s groups, youth, the private sector, habitat professionals, local authorities and civil society organizations. The Advisory Group is chaired by the WUF Host Country.

The Advisory Group is inaugurated at the beginning of the Forum by the Executive Director. Members shall serve for two years and hand over to the new incoming Advisory Group at each Forum’s inauguration. The Chair of WUF6 shall serve for one year while, with effect from the seventh session of the Forum, the tenure of the Chair shall begin at each regular session of the Governing Council and end at the next regular session of the Council. This is to ensure continuity and provide sufficient time before and after the Forum session for which they are responsible. The change from one chair to another is marked by the symbolic handover of the report of the previous World Urban Forum to the incoming Chair and to the Executive Director.

**Oversight**

- The Advisory Group has an advisory oversight of the meeting, monitors the progression of deliberations, assists in solving emerging problems and generally advises the Executive Director on how to generate an optimum outcome from the meeting.
- Advises and assists the Executive Director with the organization and conduct of the Forum meetings. (The Executive Director of UN-Habitat is represented in the meetings of the Group).
- Reviews the report of daily proceedings of the Forum to ensure the final report tabled at the closing reflects discussion and concerns of Governments and partner groups. Monitors the proceedings and resolves political issues that may emerge.
- Works remotely with the Secretariat to finalize the consolidated report for presentation to the Executive Director during the next Governing Council.

Every day, during the week of the Forum, the UN-Habitat Secretariat provides the Advisory Group with the draft report up to the given day, for them to review and clear its content. The final summary of the Forum is then endorsed in the last day.