Remarks UN-Habitat CPR 19 June

- Let me start by thanking the ED for another informative report to the CPR. Two Months have passed since the Governing Council, and the report reflects that the Secretariat has done a lot to follow up, including the preparations for today’s meeting and the recent joint donor consultations in Brussels. These efforts are highly appreciated.

- Looking back at the Governing Council, Norway is particularly pleased that the Strategic Plan and the Programme of Work received broad support. These documents form the basis for further improvement of result based management and continued relevance of UN-Habitat in the years to come.

- Furthermore we believe it is of significant importance that the GC adopted a resolution that provides a good framework for the preparations of the Habitat III conference in 2016.

- Norway is moreover very pleased with the way youth and gender issues were handled at the GC. The youth and gender caucuses were actively involved in the meeting, notably by building awareness and support for resolutions that lay the foundation for future UN Habitat engagement within these essential areas. Many of the side events on youth and gender were packed, and the Secretariat deserves credit for having encouraged this kind of active stakeholder participation, including through various thematic sessions.

- I would like to highlight, finally, the important resolution on country activities, stressing that activities at the country level should contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and Programme of Work, including UN-Habitats normative work. In our opinion UN-Habitats biggest challenges lies precisely here; in utilizing its catalytic role as a UN agency by connecting more closely its normative functions with its work on the ground.

- Norway had hoped for consensus at the GC around a reform of the governance structure that would have involved representatives from capitals of donor and partner countries more directly in a strategic dialogue about those connections. Needless to say we are disappointed by the fact that the GC failed to deliver progress in this regard. In our
opinion a reform of this nature is necessary in order to strengthen the organization, mobilise increased resources and build the ownership that is needed for UN-Habitat to play a leading role in promoting the urban agenda.

- Norway stands ready, however, to continue working on reform issues in cooperation with the Secretariat and other countries. For instance, we are interested in further developing ideas related to programmatic approaches and cost recovery policies to strengthen the capacity of UN Habitats normative functions. The recent joint donor consultations were useful. And we support also several of the proposals in the Bureau Paper on improved working methods of the CPR that we are going to discuss later. A combination of different measures may help strengthening this very important agency.

- Thank you for your attention.