Introductory Statement

by

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SPEAKING NOTES

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Executive Director’s Briefing to the Committee of Permanent Representatives

Agenda Item 3

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Seventh Session of the World Urban Forum

- The Seventh Session of the World Urban Forum was probably the most successful Forum yet in terms of relevance, outcomes and participation.
- The attendance of more than 22,000 people was formidable. The participants came from more than 140 countries. Together with the international attention received before, during and after the Forum, this demonstrates clear growing interest in cities as drivers for sustainable development.
- I would like to thank the Government of Colombia, represented here by Permanent Representative to UN-Habitat, Ms. Marie Engenia Correa Olarte, most sincerely to the Minister and the City of Medellin for their hosting of the Forum.
- The outcomes of WUF, as reflected in the Medellin Declaration, are providing an important foundation for the preparatory process towards Habitat III.

ECOSOC Integration Segment

- The first-ever Integration Segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was held during the period 27-29 May 2014 in New York. The Segment focused on the theme of “Sustainable Urbanization”.
- The Integration Segment was chaired by His Excellency Vladimir Drobnjak, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations and Vice-President of ECOSOC. It brought together the President of the Republic of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame; the Vice-President of Colombia, H.E. Mr. Angelino Garzon; the Vice-President of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Ms. Isabelle Picco; the UN Secretary General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon; the UN Special Envoy on Cities and Climate Change and former Mayor of New York, Mr. Michael Bloomberg;
- The meeting featured various interactive panel discussions and dialogues. It also featured side events organized by Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders. All events offered opportunities to engage on the future of urbanization.
- At the closing session of the Segment, I delivered a keynote address on The Way Forward towards Habitat III. This speech contained a number of observations. I invite you to visit the website dedicated to the Segment for this speech and many other interesting presentations made.

The Secretary-General’s Climate Summit

- The UN Secretary-General will convene a Climate Summit in New York on the 23rd of September. From 4-6 May, I attended the Abu Dhabi Ascent meeting in support of this Summit, where many governments, UN agencies and partners were present.
- UN-Habitat has been asked to lead preparations of deliverables for Cities to be announced at the summit. The importance of cities in climate change is clear. More than 70% of greenhouse gas emissions are related to urbanization. Cities also face disproportionate consequences from climate change. There will be no solution to climate change without proper planned urbanization.
In this regard, two key action areas are emerging as possible deliverables at the Summit in September. The first is a signed commitment by Mayors around the world to action on climate change. This will be a joint effort between all the major networks of local and sub-national authorities to strengthen existing commitments and develop new ones. We hope that a compact is signed between networks representing more than 10,000 cities around the world.

As a second deliverable, we propose to form an alliance to increase investments into city-level Transformative climate initiatives. These initiatives will be the ones that are highly cost-effective in reducing carbon missions and increasing resilience. They will be led by cities, based on the concept of scaling up and replication of proven models. Strong partnerships between technical agencies and financing institutions are needed to catalyze resources for these actions.

Joint Annual Consultations – Brussels 2-3 July

Coming up in July, I am very pleased to inform you that we are preparing for our annual donor partner consultations. This will take place in Brussels on 2-3 July. It will be an important opportunity to strengthen our strategic dialogue with our largest development partners.