Speaking Notes

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Briefing to the CPR on the Status of preparations for Habitat III and Prepcom

Agenda Item 6

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HABITAT III Update for CPR
18 June 2014

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2. Why Habitat III
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1. Objective of the Conference

- To deliver new urban agenda, based on accepted link between sustainable urbanization and sustainable development
- To learn from the past
- Apply concept of sustainable urbanization to all aspects of human settlements
- As in all similar conferences, and echoing Resolution 67/216, referring to renewed political or global commitment to and support for housing and sustainable urban development; and the implementation of a new urban agenda. It will be important to address the institutional arrangements for the implementation of the new urban agenda.

2. Why Habitat III?

- Habitat III to discuss the important challenge of how villages, cities and towns can become better planned and managed, and fulfill their role as drivers of sustainable development.
- Habitat III will be the first UN global summit following the adoption of the Post-2015 development goals and, hopefully, a new climate agreement in Paris. It is therefore a tremendous opportunity for member states to drive sustainable development.
- The General Assembly has mandated that member states put in place a new global urban agenda for the next 20 years. This will require the convening power of a UN system-wide conference and building consensus amongst partners in the broadest sense possible.

3. Strategy for the Conference

a. Policy

- Habitat III will be the first global conference of the United Nations after the adoption of the post-2015 Development Agenda, and as such presents an excellent opportunity for Member States to negotiate and reach collective agreement on the role of cities in sustainable development.
- Recent positive developments include the UN-Habitat led exercise on proposed SDG 11 “Build inclusive, safe and sustainable cities and human settlements”, and interventions by the SG of the conference on the ECOSOC Integration Segment on Sustainable Urbanisation which generated a lot of interest in Habitat III.
- The New Urban Agenda will represent a paradigm shift towards a new model of urbanization that can better respond to the challenges of our age and make optimal use of resources so as to harness future potential.
- Action plan for implementation.

b. Engagement

- Ensure that Habitat III is as participatory and inclusive as possible. A good debate will require the involvement of academics, researchers, practitioners, civil society, NGOs, grassroots groups and other urban actors.
- The World Urban Forum 7 was an excellent platform in soliciting engagement for Habitat III. For eg, the Interagency Coordination Mechanism for Habitat III held a successful meeting on 8 April 2014 in Medellin, with broad participation from partners and stakeholders.
- Over 400 letters have been sent to partners seeking inputs for improved participation.
• Intellectual debate on urbanisation issues from the UN family, Members States, local authorities academics, researchers, practitioners, civil society, NGOs, grassroots groups, media and other urban actors in the process leading up to the conference, and at the conference itself, will bring ownership, richness and depth.
• Media
• Communications

c. Knowledge
• UN-Habitat through its Research Capacity Development Branch generates new data for its flagship reports, which will be useful for Habitat III purposes.
• Relevant reports and data from governments, other UN agencies and partners and consultations will ensure availability of current knowledge in urbanisation.

d. Operations
• Conference Services

• On Resource Mobilization:
  Regular Budget: US$2 million for the 2014-2015 biennium
  Trust Fund Established: US$800,000 in hand
  Working closely with other countries.
  We want as many countries contributing to Trust Fund to widen ownership.

4. The Point of PrepCom 1
• Consensus on how the preparations for Habitat III will be organized.
• Prep Coms are waypoints. The preparatory process is two years – not two or three days in a conference room in a Prep Com
• In the Prep Com, we have to make choices about what we do – the time agreed by the GA is very short

5. Innovation for Habitat III
  a. New Urban Agenda
  b. How will it be implemented –Plan of Action?
  c. Analysis and thinking – combination of traditional and modern.
  d. Information technology (IT) and social networking
  e. Productive interaction between member states and partners on delivering the result of the conference
  f. Light formal preparatory process
  g. Integrated strategy for the conference
  h. Papersmart, etc.

6. Firewall and Temporary Coordination Team

• Temporary Coordination Team set up to prepare for PrepCom I
• Temporary Coordination Team will hand over responsibilities to Habitat III Secretariat
• UN-Habitat staff will still be called upon to provide technical expertise.
• The Concept of Firewall.
  o Experience of Habitat II conference through its evaluation and audit are useful
Important not to confuse UN-Habitat as an Agency and the Habitat III secretariat.

There is need for some staff to be in Nairobi, some in New York.

To the Secretariat, UN-Habitat is ‘another’ UN agency – although the most important one.

Secretariat will contract tasks to UN-Habitat

As Secretary-General, I am committed to being the only person with a formal foot on both sides of the firewall. Everything else will be a business relationship.

7. Concluding

- We need greater support, engagement and inputs
- Member States are encouraged to attend PrepCom I, taking place from 17-18 September in New York.
- We are ready to provide more support to Member States who wish to further discuss the role of urbanization.
- Contributions to the Habitat III Trust Fund is requested for broad and comprehensive participatory processes.