Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013

1. Introduction

This report is a revised version of the report submitted to and reviewed by Working Group of the CPR of 6 September 2006. A key result of that meeting was to initiate, in the course of September-October, informal consultations with members of the CPR on the content of the Plan in view of finalizing a draft by December 2006, and for recommending an approach to presenting the Plan at the Governing Council and its implications for the 2008-2009 Work Programme and budget.

2. Summary of Previous Report

The report submitted to the Committee of Permanent Representatives at its 2nd regular session (8 June 2006) highlighted the key steps taken during the first and second quarters of 2006 in the preparation of the MTSIP. These included:

• The preparation of Terms of Reference for the overall preparation of the MTSIP presented to and discussed at the working group level of the CPR;
• The establishment of a core team of ten (10) staff members representing all divisions as members of the Task Force for preparing the MTSIP;
• The establishment of a bi-weekly Meeting of Directors to provide guidance and feedback to the Task Force and the regular convening of the Senior Management Board;
• The administration of an in-house questionnaire to all staff on key issues pertaining to MTSIP;
• The organisation of a series of independently facilitated focus-group workshops including a Directors’ workshop to probe the findings resulting from the questionnaire;
• The administration of a questionnaire for external partners at the 3rd session of the World Urban Forum;
• Fact-finding missions and meetings with other UN agencies having undergone similar exercises, including UNICEF, WFP, DPKO and others;
• Participation in high-level meetings on system-wide reform and coherence.

3. Progress to date and summary of key issues

3.1 Key issues resulting from the staff questionnaire and focus group workshops

The results of the staff questionnaire were compiled with the assistance of external consultants. Six (6) broad categories of issues were identified including: vision and strategy, nature of funding and donor management, intervention approach and alignment, organizational culture, management style, and reforming key processes. These issues were further probed and refined in the course of five (5) independently facilitated focus group workshops involving over 90 staff. The results of these workshops were presented to senior management and formed the basis of a directors’ focus group workshop to determine priorities and to further guide the work of the Task Force.
A significant outcome of the focus groups was a considerable degree of consensus among staff on what UN-HABITAT should focus on for the period 2008-2013. The areas identified were: sustainable urbanisation, urban poverty reduction, and strengthening national capacities for the attainment of the MDGs.

3.2 Priority areas for follow-up

The directors’ workshop reviewed the results of the focus groups workshops with a view to identifying priority areas of focus for the next phase. These areas include:

(a) **Mandate, vision and strategy**: While the results of the staff focus groups workshops revealed a considerable degree of consensus among staff on the mandate, vision and strategy of the Programme, it was agreed that there is a need to further unpack the key thematic areas identified, to sharpen the focus and refine the vision of UN-HABITAT and to set clear goals and objectives. To this end, the Executive Director convened an enlarged group to assist the Task Force in formulating options for a set of not more than five (5) key areas and their corresponding performance indicators. These options are to be reviewed by senior management and to be used as a basis of consultations with members of the CPR. This task is scheduled to be completed by the end of September 2006.

(b) Having a defined **internal management style and culture**, based on empowerment and an agreed code of conduct, and the necessity to construct a ‘One UN-HABITAT brand’ based on common beliefs and values that would facilitate the development of a strong work ethic and internal cohesion. Terms of reference have been developed for external experts to assist UN-HABITAT in reaching rapid consensus in refining a set of beliefs and values and mainstreaming them throughout the agency.

(c) **Reforming key processes**: the directors’ workshop agreed to the need to reform the following key processes: resource mobilization and allocation (distribution); human resources management; Campaigns delivery; preparation and approval of projects and programmes (decision-making); and donor management.

Terms of reference are being finalized to assist the Task Force and senior management of UN-HABITAT to review, in a first instance, the processes involved in resource mobilization and distribution and in project and programme preparation and approval. In parallel, a Resource Mobilisation Task Force has been established under the leadership of the Deputy Executive Director focusing on resource mobilization and donor management. Human resources management and Campaigns delivery would be examined further down the line pending the refinement of the key thematic areas of focus of the MTSIP as per [a] above.

(d) **Developing an efficient administrative system**: Two areas of action were identified – reviewing internal processes to develop clarity and reduce bureaucracy, and reviewing and refining working relations with the two main administrative departments, namely PSD and UNON. Terms of reference have been developed approved for an OIOS independent review of working relations with UNON to be undertaken starting in October 2006.
(e) **Other issues**: Other issues that emerged from the Director’s focus group workshop included: (i) that the overall architecture of the four sub-programmes remains valid but there is scope for re-allocating resources within and among them; and (ii) the need for the Task Force to continue to involve all staff and external partners in a transparent, open and inclusive consultative process to achieve maximum consensus and ownership.

### 3.3 Results of the external questionnaire

The external questionnaire was administered to over 120 Habitat Agenda partners in a targeted fashion during the 3rd session of the World Urban Forum. The questionnaire focused on partners’ development priorities for the next 5 to 10 years, the type of external support they required, and their perception of UN-HABITAT’s comparative strengths or advantages. The results of the questionnaire largely corroborate the results of the staff focus group discussions. Priorities identified by external partners included: urban poverty, urban environment, financing affordable housing, and institutional strengthening for attaining the MDGs. These results will further inform the process of determining the key focus areas of the MTSIP.

### 4. Lessons learned

The process engaged to date has received considerable staff support and enthusiasm. It has prompted several changes in resource allocation and coordination. Examples include the re-allocating of human resources dealing with housing finance from Subprogramme 2 to Subprogramme 4, more effective coordinating mechanisms and clear allocation of resources and of authority for preparing and servicing special events such as WUFIII, Africultures, and the forthcoming Asia-Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Housing and Urban Development. Reporting to intergovernmental bodies, including ECOSOC and the General Assembly, have also been sharpened and improved with greater emphasis being placed on results.

### 5. Next Steps and indicative time frame

The next steps include:

(a) The formulation by an expanded Task Force of a set of options for the thematic focus of the MTSIP – August 2006  
(b) Review of and feedback by senior management on the options for the thematic focus of the MTSIP – September 2006  
(c) Informal and formal consultations with members of the CPR – September/October 2006  
(d) Independent assessment of key processes including resource mobilization and distribution and programme and project design and approval – October 2006 and review and incorporation of recommendations in the Road Map and the Resource Mobilisation Strategy for implementing the MTSIP – November 2006  
(e) OIOS review of working arrangements between UN-HABITAT and UNON – October 2006 and incorporation of recommendations in the Road Map – December 2006  
(f) Review and incorporation of results of the Evaluation of Habitat Programme Managers in the Road Map – November 2006
(g) External inputs and advice on refining and mainstreaming a common set of values, beliefs and a code of conduct for improving internal alignment and cohesion – September 2006, and review and incorporation of recommendations in the Road Map – January 2007
(h) Final draft of the MTSIP – November 2006
(i) Final draft of the Road Map for results-based management – December 2006