Introductory Statement of the Executive Director on the Work Plan for 2006
CPR Meeting: 16 March 2006
Introduction

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates, it is my pleasure to present to you the Work Plan for 2006. This Plan derives from the biennial Work Programme and budget for 2006-2007 approved by the 20th session of the Governing Council and by the General Assembly. It outlines the outputs from the Work Programme and Budget for 2006-2007 to be delivered in 2006. It also includes a few outputs carried over from 2005.

The Work Plan reflects the same priorities as in the approved Work Programme and Budget for 2006-2007. The highest priority is accorded to outputs related to internationally agreed development goals for slum upgrading and water and sanitation, the Global Campaigns, and outputs requested by resolutions of the Governing Council and the General Assembly. I will briefly highlight the work plan submitted to you on 1 March.

Allow me to start with Executive Direction and Management. Once again I want to welcome our recently appointed and long awaited Deputy Executive Director, Mrs. Inga Bjork-Klevby. Executive Direction and Management provides overall policy guidance, monitors the implementation of the work programme, and participates in UN system-wide senior management and coordination. It also serves as the secretariat for the Governing Council, the WUF and the UN Advisory Committee on Local Authorities.

A major priority for 2006 will be the formulation of the Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008-2013 to be presented to the 21st Session of the Governing Council. I have established a core team to solicit inputs from all staff members, the CPR and other stakeholders. Its work will be informed by exemplary plans and processes from other UN agencies, the implementation of the OIOS recommendations, and by the ongoing UN system-wide reforms. The Deputy Executive Director is playing an active role in this undertaking. Regular updates on progress made are discussed at a
newly established bi-weekly Directors’ Meeting chaired by myself, or by the Deputy Executive Director in my absence.

Distinguished delegates,

The formulation of a focused Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan requires serious commitment by the leadership of the agency as well as by key stakeholders. While the formulation of this plan was an outcome of the 20th Session of the Governing Council, no resources were allocated in the approved work programme and budget for 2006-2007. I have decided, nonetheless, to devote substantial human and other resources to this endeavour. Detailed terms of reference have been finalized on the basis of wide consultations and lessons learned from recent experience of other UN agencies.

My office will continue to monitor and assess progress made in the implementation of the 2006 work programme and report to the Committee of Permanent Representatives. Six programmes will be evaluated this year, providing further inputs to the medium-term strategic and institutional plan.

Information Services will pursue the goal of mobilizing international awareness and support for the Habitat Agenda. A major task in 2006 is to strengthen the information and communication capacity of our regional and country offices. A new version of our web site will be made available for use by the press and other partners.

Madam Chair,

I now turn to **subprogramme 1**, the objective of which is to improve the shelter conditions of the urban poor and to ensure sustainable human settlements development. UN-HABITAT will assist countries in adopting pro-poor land and housing policies in support of the MDG target 11 on slums. The Global Campaigns on Urban Governance and Secure Tenure will finalize a forward-looking strategic plan. A priority issue will be to mainstream slum upgrading and prevention,

The design and launch of the Global Land Tool Network will support global advocacy and provide our partners with an instrument to assist Member States to improve their land and tenure policies and further contribute to the progressive realization of housing rights.

UN-HABITAT will sign a memorandum of understanding with the African Development Bank. This agreement will involve US $217 million in grants and US $362 million in follow-up investment over five years for pro-poor water and sanitation. UN-HABITAT’s contribution will be US $10 million. The Asian Development Bank has allocated about US $300 million for investment follow-up to our policy and capacity-building work in India, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Nepal. Pre-investment work is also underway in China and Vietnam to prepare for capital expenditures of US $200 million.

Our two trans-boundary water and sanitation initiatives for Lake Victoria and the Mekong River Basin are underway. They are also designed to leverage our normative and capacity building work with grants and loans targeting the water and sanitation needs of the urban poor. At the 4th World Water Forum next week, UN-HABITAT will launch its 2nd Global Report on Water and Sanitation in the World’s Cities, which focuses on meeting MDG Target 10 in secondary towns - some of the fastest growing settlements in the world today.

In the area of the Urban Environment, UN-HABITAT continues to work with UNEP to strengthen local environmental planning and management capacity and to mainstream sustainable urbanisation policies at the national level. A mid-term review of UN-HABITAT’s urban environmental management activities was carried out last February.

In training and institution building the focus remains on strengthening national training institutions and the training of trainers to ensure a multiplier effect. New training tools on Local Elected Leadership, Local
Economic Development, and Local Government Financial Management will be widely disseminated in 2006.

The integration of emergency and relief efforts into longer-term development settlement strategies remains the key principle and focus of UN-HABITAT’s interventions in post disaster and post-conflict situations. A progress report on formulating UN-HABITAT’s strategic plan for sustainable reconstruction was discussed in a working group of this committee yesterday. In the area of urban safety, UN-HABITAT will continue to promote the adoption of participatory and inclusive crime prevention policies and strategies coordinated by local governments.

Distinguished delegates,

I now turn to **subprogramme 2**, the objective of which is to ensure the monitoring of key urbanisation trends and issues and to assess the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The Global Urban Observatory will conclude Phase III of the Urban Indicators Programme and Phase I of the Urban Inequities Programme. The data will be presented in an interactive model at WUF III together with the launch of the State of the World’s Cities Report 2006.

The first draft of the Global Report on Human Settlements 2007, provisionally titled “Enhancing Urban Safety and Security” will be produced in 2006. A meeting of the Advisory Board of the Global Research Network on Human Settlements (HS-Net) and the first UN-HABITAT Lecture will be held during WUF III.

In the area of Urban Economy and Finance, the agency will pursue policy research on the urban informal sector, rural-urban linkages and urban economic development with publications on municipal regulations for the urban informal sector and on the evaluation of housing finance mechanisms.

An important event this year will be the 6th Dubai International Award on Best Practices. This involves reviewing over 600 submissions, organizing two expert group meetings, an award ceremony and a
conference on lessons learned. UN-HABITAT will also document best practice transfers and the policies behind successful practices in implementing the Habitat Agenda.

The agency continues to mainstream gender considerations in all of its internal activities and programmes and will produce two publications: a handbook on gender mainstreaming in human settlements development, and a reference manual for gender mainstreaming in municipal planning.

During WUF III, UN-HABITAT will hold round table discussions, networking events and exhibitions with Habitat Agenda partners. The World Urban Youth Forum, also to be held in Vancouver, will present best practices on youth employment and livelihoods, lessons learned and their policy and capacity building implications.

Madam Chair,

I now move to **sub-programme 3**. The objective of this sub-programme is to strengthen national capacities for implementing sustainable housing and urban development policies and strategies. A major thrust in 2006 will be to assist countries in translating pro-poor policies into programmes and projects that contribute to the realization of target 11 of the MDGs.

In Iraq, UN-HABITAT is concentrating on best practice-based policy and institutional reforms and capacity building in the housing and urban sector. With funding from the Government of Japan, UN-HABITAT is demonstrating the benefits of an integrated approach to the rehabilitation of communities and schools with job creation and local economic development.

Our Regional Office for Asia is carrying out rehabilitation activities in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Pakistan and the Maldives in close collaboration with UNDP and with funding support from the Governments of Canada, China, Japan and New Zealand. Early engagement in post-Tsunami and post-earthquake relief
operations enabled UN-HABITAT to initiate subsequent dialogue and technical assistance in land-use planning laws and building standards. Lessons learned are being cross-fertilized with our activities in Chad, Libya, Serbia, Somalia and the Sudan to further our integrated packaging of normative and capacity building expertise to provide value added response to the priorities of Member States.

Habitat Programme Managers, located within UNDP country offices, are now present in 35 countries. Their primary role will be to assist Member States in formulating comprehensive strategies for attaining the MDGs, as called for by the 2005 World Summit Outcome. As per the recommendations of the Governing Council, the Programme is being evaluated this year.

Distinguished delegates,

I now turn to sub-programme 4 on Human Settlements Financing. The objective of this sub-programme is to assist Member States in mobilizing domestic and international capital for housing and urban development. A key challenge lies in overcoming the risks perceived by the private sector in investing in pro-poor housing and urban development. The Slum Upgrading Facility is currently field-testing innovative approaches to combine public sector expenditures with domestic capital and community-based credit systems to increase the supply of pro-poor housing and urban development. Pilot initiatives for 2006 include Ghana, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. The potential outcome of this pilot phase is nothing less than a new set of policies and tools for scaling up community-led housing initiatives to meet Goal 7 target 11 of the MDGs and paragraph 56(m) of 2005 World Summit Outcome.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In terms of Programme Support UN-HABITAT will continue its efforts in planning and coordination, results-based budgeting and management, human resources development and legal advisory services. Periodic status reports will be provided to the CPR. Priorities
for 2006 include the preparation of the strategic framework for 2008-2009 and its integrated work programme and budget. UN-HABITAT will pursue a prudent and cautious approach to financial management with regular financial reporting to New York and to the CPR. Particular attention will be paid to ensure that recommendations of the External Board of Auditors and the OIOS are implemented effectively and expeditiously. Service level agreements will be closely monitored to ensure adequate and cost-effective service provision.

Thank you for your kind attention.