Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

1. Thank you for allowing me to introduce the item: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the Evaluation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) programmes and activities. You will recall that in the 16th regular meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), held on 14 March 2005, this particular agenda item was postponed because UN-Habitat secretariat had not received the final draft of the evaluation report by then. However, we received the report by the end of March 2005; and it was distributed the 20th Session of the Governing Council under item 4: Activities of the UN-Habitat: progress report of the Executive Director.
2. The overall objective of the in-depth evaluation by OIOS was to assess the achievements and shortcomings of UN-Habitat major objectives as provided in the Medium-Term Plan 2002-2005. The evaluation focused mainly on advocacy of norms, monitoring and research, operational activities, innovative approaches to funding and executive direction and cross cutting issues.

3. In brief, the evaluation report before you, HSP/GC/20/INF/9, highlights some of the achievements of the programme including: UN-Habitat’s advocacy norms of global campaign for Urban Governance and Global Campaign for Secure Tenure that have raised awareness and have led to changes at policy and institutional levels in countries where the campaigns were launched. Monitoring functions has accomplished compilation of statistics on housing and human settlements and has expanded to include Urban Indicators to monitor the MDG goal on improving the lives of slum dwellers. Regarding operational activities, OIOS found many admirable examples of “scaling up” and that clients were generally satisfied with UN-Habitat’s Technical Cooperation projects.
The report commends the placement of UN-Habitat Programme Managers in UNDP offices in a number of developing countries as a positive step in integrating the Habitat Agenda into United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). The report informs of the increase in extra-budgetary contributions and UN-Habitat efforts in the development of innovative approaches to funding. Information activities has had positive results in raising the Programme’s profile in the media and increased number of visits to the UN-Habitat’s websites.

4. The report also highlights several challenges to the Programme including: financial constraints; lack of clearly articulated strategies and plans; gaps in monitoring and research agenda; dependency on relatively small number of donors and problems of limited staffing resources to some units. The report notes the need for UN-Habitat to narrow the scope of the programme and to focus on fewer activities and to improve support to the GC and the CPR.

5. Based on the findings, OIOS made 13 recommendations aimed at increasing the overall relevance, effectiveness and
impact of the programme. The recommendations are in the following areas: to sharpen UN-Habitat focus; to improve the planning, management and funding of the global campaigns; to mainstream housing rights; to consolidate flagship reports, to eliminate gaps in research; to enhance the integration of Best Practice and Local Leadership Programme in UN-Habitat’s work programme; to evaluate the impact of the UN-Habitat Programme Managers in 2007; to ensure that relevant pilot projects involving direct technical assistance should be designed for scaling up later; to ensure early involvement by human settlement experts in post-conflict and disaster assessment and reconstruction; to improve coordination of fund-raising activities; to strengthen secretariat support to member States; and to increase the capacity of the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit by at least one post to better meet its requirements.

6. UN-Habitat intends to implement of the above OIOS recommendations with your support.
7. Finally I wish to inform you that this evaluation report will be discussed at the coming Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) meeting in New York in June 2005.

I thank you for your attention.