Guidelines on decentralization and strengthening of local authorities

The Governing Council,

Recalling its resolution 20/18, which took note with appreciation of the Draft guidelines on decentralisation and the strengthening of local authorities, and cognizant of the Report HSP/GC/21/2/Add.2 entitled “Cooperation with local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners, including draft guidelines on decentralisation and the strengthening of local authorities”,

Bearing in mind paragraph 177 of the Habitat Agenda, adopted in Istanbul in 1996, which stresses that sustainable human settlements development can be achieved “through the effective decentralisation of responsibilities, policy management, decision-making authority and sufficient resources, including revenue collection authority, to local authorities, closest to and most representative of their constituencies”,

Recognising the importance of decentralisation policies in achieving sustainable human settlements development in line with the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations, and

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2 General Assembly resolution 55/2.
acknowledging the leading role of efficient national governments within the overall context of the sustainable development and their primary responsibility for the good governance within each nation, with local authorities as their closest partners³);

1. **Appreciates** the role of UN-HABITAT in the international dialogue on decentralisation aiming at improving governance at all levels, including the consultative process on the finalization of the Guidelines on decentralization;

2. **Approves** the “Guidelines on Decentralisation and strengthening of local authorities” prepared by UN-HABITAT in collaboration with the Advisory Group of Experts on Decentralisation (AGRED) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), which are annexed to the Report HSP/GC/21/2/Add.2, as a key instrument in the promotion of good governance at all levels and the strengthening of local authorities;

3. **Requests** UN-HABITAT to assist interested Governments in adapting the guidelines to their national contexts, where appropriate and to further develop tools and indicators as part of its support to their application;

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³ Istanbul declaration, article 12
4. **Invites** Governments to undertake further concerted and coordinated action to place decentralisation and local development at the centre of governance and development policies, and to strengthen their legal and institutional frameworks with regard to decentralisation and governance at all levels in line with the guidelines;

5. **Calls upon** UN-HABITAT to develop innovative partnerships with local authorities and their associations, including United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) to support the ownership and application of these Guidelines, and to continue its collaboration with UCLG in establishing an observatory to assess, monitor and evaluate the state of decentralisation and local governance in the world as requested in its resolution 20/18;

6. **Encourages** Governments to support technically and financially the application of the Guidelines on decentralisation, and the establishment by UCLG in cooperation with UN-HABITAT of the above mentioned Observatory;

7. **Requests** the Executive Director to include a reference to the implementation of the present resolution in her overall progress report to the twenty-second session of the Governing Council and [present a biennial progress report on the state of decentralisation and local governance in the world, and invites independent experts and relevant stakeholders to contribute to that report].