
HSP/CPR/27/4

CPR Meeting: 6 December 2007
Statement of the Co-Chair of the Working Group on Policy, Budgetary and Administrative Matters

Distinguished Delegates,

I now take my hat off as the Chair of the CPR to assume my role as the Co-Chair of the Working Group on Policy, Budgetary and Administrative Matters.

There are three documents that are presented before this committee for its endorsement. These are entitled the Action Plan for the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan, the Strategic Policy on Human Settlements and Crisis, and the Strategic Framework of the UN-HABITAT Work Programme for 2010-2011. These documents are the result of very constructive and well-attended sessions of the Working Group that I chaired on 10 September, on 22 October, and on 12, 19, and 26 November. In addition, one informal session devoted to the MTSIP Action Plan was held on 17 September 2007.

I would like to briefly outline the process and the outcome of these sessions.

On 10 September, the Secretariat presented the institutional arrangements that had been put into place by the Executive Director for the preparation of the MTSIP Action Plan in response to Resolution 21/2 of the Governing Council.

These arrangements included the establishment of four inter-divisional task forces, each headed by a divisional director, and of a Steering Committee, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director, comprised of the heads of the Task Forces and a few other selected staff members, including staff from the Office of the Executive Director.

The Secretariat explained how it had clustered the actions contained in the MTSIP that was approved by the Governing Council into four key areas: the Enhanced Normative and Operational Framework; Resource Mobilisation; Results-based Management and Knowledge Management; and Human Resources and Management.

Briefings were provided by a representative of each of the Task Forces. The Working Group was generally pleased by the amount of work that had been carried out by the Secretariat since the last session of the Governing Council, more so in light of the summer break.

An informal session was held on 17 September, the main conclusion of which was that the working group should reconvene upon completion by the Secretariat of a draft zero of the Action Plan of the MTSIP for 2008-2013.

What followed over the coming two months was what I could best describe as a series of very productive and constructive meetings. The Secretariat proved to be effective and responsive in presenting three successive drafts of the Action Plan in three subsequent sessions of the Working Group.
Each of these drafts not only incorporated the inputs and comments provided by members of the Working Group, but also presented considerable progress in terms of defining concrete actions to be taken, a time line for their implementation, the linkages between them, and their resource and budgetary implications, including different funding scenarios.

In the final meeting of the Working Group on the Action Plan on 26 November, there was general consensus that the Action Plan for the MTSIP was a well-prepared and thought-out document, representing a good balance between institutional and strategic objectives, as well as providing tangible evidence of an ongoing commitment to change. It is a living document that may be subject to further updates in the course of implementation and it presents a solid basis for assessing progress.

A few additional comments were submitted in writing and received by the Secretariat by 27 November to improve the document, including the integration of the ERSO Road Map in Annex IV of the document.

The document you have before you incorporates those comments and was sent out on 28 November with a minor amendment submitted to one of the annexes on 30 November.

I would like to thank all the members of the Working Group and the Secretariat for their diligence and commitment to this process, which in many ways, was exemplary. In this light I recommend that the document before you be endorsed by the CPR at this meeting.

Distinguished colleagues,

Allow me to now turn to the document entitled **Strategic Policy on Human Settlements and Crisis.**

This document is now before you for your endorsement. In its final revision, you have a document that originates from the 19th session of the Governing Council. It is the product of intense consultations with Habitat Agenda partners during the 2nd and 3rd World Urban Forums held in Barcelona and in Vancouver. It was reviewed and discussed during the 20th and 21st sessions of the Governing Council and the subject of considerable discussion within the Working Group of the CPR over time. Additionally, this policy has been enriched through internal discussions and is now aligned with the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan and its Action Plan.

While this process has taken several years, its endorsement by the CPR today opens a doorway for UN-HABITAT to better plan, implement and report on its work and to focus on its comparative advantages in the areas of human settlements planning and management to add value to humanitarian operations, and most importantly, to improve the living conditions of those people who are victims of natural and human made disasters.

A first draft of this policy document was submitted to the Working Group on 12 November 2007 taking into consideration Resolution 21/2 of the Governing Council, which requested the CPR to review this document before the end of 2007.
It was generally well received by members of the working group with most of the comments focusing on the catalytic role of UN-HABITAT, on the need to pay special attention to vulnerable groups, and on the importance of partnerships with other UN agencies in the implementation of the policy.

Clarifications were sought by one member of the Working Group on the need for lessons learned from in-depth evaluation of past and ongoing interventions.

These and other comments have been addressed in the version of the document before you, or in the related supporting briefs under this agenda item.

In conclusion, I should like once again to thank the members of the Working Group and the Secretariat for the substantial progress made on this document as a result of constructive dialogue and therefore recommend the document for your endorsement.

Distinguished delegates,

Allow me now to turn to the document entitled “Strategic Framework for 2010-2011” of UN-HABITAT’s Work Programme that is before you. This document will be submitted to the Office of the UN Comptroller where it will be incorporated into the Secretary General’s Report that will be reviewed by the Committee on Programme Coordination (CPC) in June 2008. The draft Strategic Framework for the 2010-2011 biennium was reviewed by the Working Group on Policy, Budgetary and Administrative Matters in two sessions that I chaired, on November 19th and 26th November.

The document was introduced by the Secretariat on 19 November. The Secretariat provided a detailed background of the strategic framework, including the instructions from the Office of the UN Comptroller at UNHQ, the preparation process, the relevant resolutions, the structure of the document and the approval process, including its consideration by the CPC.

The Secretariat also explained the process of internal consultations undertaken by the Secretariat with the objective of ensuring that the document represented a high degree of internal coherence and consistency with the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan. The document was generally well received and several constructive comments were made for its improvement.

During the second meeting on 26 November, the CPR Working Group made comments and provided inputs. During the second meeting, some delegations were concerned that many of the indicators were quantitative rather than qualitative. The Secretariat responded and in addition, distributed print-outs from the Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System (IMDIS). The print-outs showed how the monitoring and reporting process provides detailed qualitative information on each indicator, specifically on the implementation process, outputs delivered, results attained, impacts realised, where these are available, and lessons learnt during the biennium.
The Secretariat invited delegations with expertise in preparing qualitative indicators to work with the Secretariat on the document. After the meeting, the Secretariat circulated a revised draft strategic framework document showing the changes in bold and italics to all Embassies and High Commissions.

It was also explained that some of the issues such as those pertaining to management and to the institutional aspects of the MTSIP would be included in the Work Programme and Budget, to be prepared in the course of 2008, which contains a section on Executive Direction and Management.

The CPR Working Group noted the progress made by the Secretariat and the constraints arising from the tight deadline for submission of the draft document. It was agreed that any substantive comments made today at this meeting could still be integrated into the document, which will be submitted to the UN Comptroller’s Office in New York early next week, together with a transmission letter by the Chair of the CPR. Governments can still provide inputs to the document during its review by the Committee on Programme and Coordination in New York in mid-2008.

Again, I wish to thank the members of the Working Group and the Secretariat for their diligence.

Thank you for your attention.