Introductory Statement by Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director


Agenda Item 3

HSP/CPR/37/3
Nairobi, 14 June 2010
Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to introduce, for the Committee’s consideration, the six-monthly progress report on the implementation of the Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan. This is the seventh progress report since we embarked on the implementation of MTSIP in 2008.

Since, this will be my last presentation of an MTSIP progress report, allow me to highlight the progress we have made so far and to thank you all for the commitment, support, enthusiasm and ownership of this reform process. You have been an important driver. Never afraid of challenging us, your constructive criticism and guidance have enabled us make significant progress in implementing the MTSIP.

The MTSIP for 2008-2013 was developed and approved by the Governing Council in 2007, to sharpen our focus, align our work and improve our effectiveness and efficiency. Following its approval, I put in place the implementation mechanisms. A Steering Committee and Task Forces were established. An Action Plan, for implementing the first phase of the MTSIP with prioritized “quick wins”, “must dos” and long term measures, was developed and approved by this Committee in December 2007. In collaboration with you and our partners around the world, we embarked on joint efforts to implement the plan in 2008.

Distinguished delegates,

After two and a half years of hard work, we are now in the roll-out phase of implementing the MTSIP. As you will see in Part II of the report before you, our self-assessment indicates significant progress on all six focus areas while noting the challenges we are facing.

We have made good progress in advocacy, monitoring and partnership. Through our flagship reports, global events, including World Urban Form and World Habitat Day, Ministerial Conferences and other networking events, we are promoting urban sustainability issues which are now attracting global attention. In March, the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro re-affirmed its role as the world’s premier event for urban issues. Both the World Urban Campaign and “the State of the World’s Cities report 2010/2011, Bridging the Urban Divide” were launched at WUF. The World Urban Campaign has further found a platform in the UN pavilion, “One Earth, One UN” at the Shanghai World Expo 2010 with the theme “Better City, Better Life”. UN-Habitat is coordinating all UN agencies participation in the pavilion, receiving approximately 5,000 visitors per day.

We now have 145 operational Urban Observatories that are used in various countries to monitor urban conditions and trends and providing information for better urban development. Partnership was a cornerstone of the MTSIP and our new partnerships are a pillar of strength in implementing the MTSIP.

Excellencies,

In participatory urban planning, management and governance, UN-Habitat has noted results of its advocacy efforts with a shift towards sustainable urbanization. 37 institutions in targeted countries have received institutional strengthening in participatory planning enabling them to promote sustainable urbanization regionally and at national level.
In disasters, we are combining our normative and operational approach. For example in Haiti, we have contributed to two important policy changes. The change in policy is enabling people to return home sooner and will facilitate the early reconstruction of permanent shelter and more efficient use of resources.

**Distinguished delegates,**

In the area of pro-poor land and housing, a recent independent review shows that UN-Habitat is now a key international actor in the land sector influencing the thinking and operations of the 42 global partners of Global Land Tool Network, including the World Bank and Cities Alliance. Further to developing normative approaches and tools, UN-Habitat is actively providing policy advice and technical assistance in more than 28 countries on pro-poor land and housing.

With regard to our work in environmentally sound basic urban infrastructure and services, the number of countries progressively adopting relevant policies to expand access to such services has reached 33. The total number of institutions in target countries partnering with UN-Habitat towards expanding access to environmentally sound urban infrastructure and services stand at 107. People benefitting from interventions of the water and sanitation programmes in Asia, Africa and Latin America reached 1.15 million by April 2010.

There is encouraging progress in the area of human settlements finance systems. Through SUF and ERSO, UN-Habitat’s catalytic role is enabling slum upgrading and affordable housing is evident. Discussions between UN-Habitat and finance institutions and domestic banks for opportunities that will facilitate affordable housing financing are on-going.

In management we continue to strive towards excellence. Some business processes have improved. We now recruit faster than we did before MTSIP implementation. We are aligning staff skills with MTSIP priorities. Mobilization of resources is encouraging. Application of results-based management principles is ongoing, and there have been improvements in monitoring and reporting on our work. Strategic evaluations have been carried out, including the Peer Review of the implementation of the MTSIP that is being finalized. The Enhanced Normative and Operational Framework has brought cohesion and alignment to our country activities.

**Chair and Excellencies,**

As I prepare myself to leave UN-Habitat, I am happy with the significant achievements we have made in the implementation of the MTSIP. Of course, there is still much to be done and there are areas needing attention and improvement. We are still grappling with issues of efficiency in management processes and culture change. Resource mobilization will continue to be a priority. However, with your commitment, support and guidance, I am very confident that by 2013, the MTSIP will have transformed UN-Habitat to a more focused, results-oriented organization. I am glad that the next Executive Director will find committed and dedicated staff and use the successes we have attained so far as a basis upon which to consolidate and expedite the implementation of the MTSIP.

I stop here and welcome your feedback on the report.

Thank you for your attention.