Mr. Chair,
Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

I wish to provide you with a quarterly update on UN-HABITAT’s country activities, which is supplementary to the widely distributed biennial Country Activities Report submitted to the Governing Council.

As you are already aware, the Report, as contained in HSP/CPR/38/4/Rev.1, is divided into two sections: one on completed projects and the other on new projects. Both sections are divided by region. The first section presents the country and regional projects completed over the last three months, while the second section presents the country and regional projects initiated in the last three months reporting period. All projects are linked to the MTSIP/ENOF action plan and the relevant focus areas are indicated.

Among the recently completed projects we have highlighted two projects closed in the Arab States region and one closed in Asia. In the Arab States region, we have closed a project in Iraq that aimed at improving living conditions and contributing to sustainable poverty reduction of the most vulnerable groups, including minorities, women, youth, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), the disabled and the poor in three areas, Sulaymaniyah, Hillah and the Marshlands. With funding from the Government of Spain, this completed project provided the Governorates of these three areas with tools for promoting inclusive and participatory planning practices in the prioritisation of development programmes and annual budgeting and, at the same time, provided focused technical assistance in improving essential service delivery. This project was fully in line with focus areas 2 and 4 of the MTSIP on ‘Participatory urban planning, management and governance’ and on ‘Environmentally sound basic infrastructure and services’. Another closed project worth noting is the one in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which developed a medical and rehabilitation centre for the local community. The centre provides a range of immediate care and emergency medical and rehabilitation services for the population in Taqwa, south of Bethlehem. It did contribute to focus area 4 of the MTSIP on ‘Environmentally sound basic infrastructure and services’. It was funded by the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development.

In Asia, in the aftermath of the Tsunami and earthquake of 24 December 2004, there was a need to have a standard on-plot sanitation provision for houses rebuilt after the disaster. Under this project, several sanitation utilities and amenities were build and support provided for the local communities. The project’s activities were in line with focus areas 4 of the MTSIP on ‘Environmentally sound basic infrastructure and services’.

Now, I would like to highlight new projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In Africa, I would like to mention the ‘Strengthening Urban Safety Programme in Burkina Faso’, which seeks to support the Government of Burkina Faso in enhancing the participatory capacities of the Government as well as of the City Council of Ouagadougou in planning, implementing and evaluating urban crime prevention initiatives in the city. The project will involve USD2 million in financing to the City Council of Ouagadougou. This project is in line with focus areas 1, 2 and 4 of the MTSIP.
In Asia and the Pacific, a number of new projects have been initiated to respond to the destruction caused Cyclone Nargis. The projects are designed to assist communities in rebuilding their own homes through a people’s process, with over 400 internally displaced persons benefiting.

In Latin America, Irish Aid, in partnership with UN-HABITAT, are involved in recovery action in response to the Haiti Earthquake by providing technical advisory and operational support to the Government of Haiti, the international humanitarian community, and individual families to enable the re-occupation, repair and rebuilding of earthquake destroyed homes and other buildings. We expect that over 700,000 families will benefit at the conclusion of this project by December 2010.

Thank you for your attention.