Draft Resolution on the Third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III)

The Governing Council,

Recalling the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976, which formed the basis for national action and international cooperation in the field of human settlements,

Also recalling the Habitat Agenda and the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements as the main outcomes of the Habitat II Conference held in 1996, which established the twin goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world, and adopted a global plan of action to attain these goals,

Further recalling the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium adopted by the special session of the General Assembly (in 2001), which invited the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on options for reviewing and strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), in accordance with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II);

Appreciating the General Assembly’s encouragement to the Secretary-General to consider, in his report to the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly on the question of convening in 2016 a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III), the possibility of integrating the two themes of “housing finance systems” and “sustainable urbanization”, previously suggested as topics for separate high-level events of the General Assembly, either into the preparatory process for Habitat III or into a combined theme for a single high-level event;

Reiterating its recommendation made at its twenty-second session that the General Assembly consider the question of convening in 2016 a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III),

Recalling General Assembly resolution 65/165 through which it requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the question of convening a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III), in collaboration with the Governing Council, for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session,

Aware of the ever-growing challenges in delivering sustainable urban development in the face of the accelerating demographic shift towards cities and towns as well as the dominance of urban centres in human settlements and national economic development,

Recognizing the challenges arising from rapid and often chaotic urbanization, urban inequity and environmental change in the broader context of sustainable development,

Also recognizing that current and future climate change challenges and recurrent financial and economic crises will inevitably have implications on the availability of public funds for social services and private capital to finance much needed improvements in housing, basic services and infrastructure, including public transport, energy, health and education, as well as the investments required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,
Bearing in mind the role of cities as engines of national economic and social development, as well as the contribution of housing to employment generation and urban poverty reduction,

Acknowledging that cities have a critical role to play in promoting energy efficiency and sustainable development through more appropriate urban planning, management and building practices,

Recognizing the need to minimize the negative impacts of climate change on human settlements by reducing the vulnerability of poor populations and increasing the adaptive capacities of cities, as well as by strengthening governance structures and engaging the private sector and civil society in finding practical solutions to problems in the areas of land-use planning, public transport, building design, as well as air and water quality,

Also recognizing that while substantial progress has been achieved in human settlements at the national and international levels during the past decade, there is a need for an in-depth review and assessment of global progress made towards the attainment of the goals of the Habitat Agenda and of other international goals relevant to human settlements,

1. Endorses the report of the Executive Director on the third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development and requests the Secretary General to include its ideas and proposals in his own report to be considered at the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly;

2. Supports the observations made in the Executive Director’s report, in particular the proposed aims of a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III), including (i) to review past policies, achievements and obstacles; (ii) to put in place a new urban development agenda capable of responding to the new urban challenges and opportunities such as climate change and urban safety and security as well as advancing a new role for cities; (iii) finding ways of strengthening the institutional framework for housing and sustainable urban development; and (iv) assessing and redefining the governance structure of UN-Habitat and its strategic development partners;

3. Requests the General Assembly to further deliberate and make a decision, at its sixty-sixth session, on the question of convening, in 2016, a third United Nations conference on housing and urban development (Habitat III);

4. Requests the Executive Director to report to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session on the outcome of the present resolution.