

Summary of Discussions and Recommendations Emanating from the Fifth Bureau Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of UN-Habitat for the Year 2021

H.E. Mr. Beyene Russom
Chair of the CPR and Permanent Representative of the State of Eritrea to UN-Habitat
 Online Meeting- Tuesday 8 June 2021 from 14:00 - 16:00 EAT

The following Bureau members attended the meeting : Eritrea (Chair), Bangladesh, Serbia, Costa Rica (Vice Chairs), United States of America.

Agenda item		Discussion	Recommendation from the Bureau
1.	Adoption of the Agenda		
		Adoption of the provisional agenda	Adopted
		Adoption of the draft summary of discussions and recommendations emanating from the fourth Bureau meeting held on 28 April 2021	Adopted
2.	Status of preparations of the high-level midterm review of the Committee of Permanent Representatives		
2 (a)	Status of documentation	<p>Under this sub-item, the Deputy Executive Director conveyed the apologies of the Executive Director who could not join the meeting as she was on official travel outside Nairobi, therefore briefed the Bureau on her behalf. The full presentation by the Secretariat under this sub-item can be found here and highlighted the following:</p> <p>a) All pre-session documents including the Notification and the provisional Agenda have been ready in the six UN languages and have been available online at the dedicated website for the midterm review which can be accessed here.</p> <p>b) The Notification and Provisional Agenda were transmitted by the Secretariat to Member States on 18 May 2021. A communication informing of the availability of pre-session documents was sent by to Member States by the Secretariat on 28 May 2021.</p>	The Bureau took note of the briefing by the Deputy Executive Director
2(b)	Preparations of the dialogue	<p>Under this sub-item, the Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the preparations of the dialogue. The full presentation by the Secretariat can be accessed here and highlighted the following :</p> <p>a) The Secretariat recalled that during the fourth meeting of the Bureau held on 28 April 2021, the Bureau approved the topic for the dialogue scheduled for Day 2 of the high-level midterm review to be “Cities and Pandemics” and agreed to refine at a later meeting the details of the dialogue. . At that meeting the Bureau took note of the reservations by the representative of USA on behalf of WEOG regarding the high-level nature of the dialogue.</p>	The Bureau took note of the briefing by the Secretariat

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<p>2(b) Preparations of the dialogue (continued)</p>	<p>b) The Secretariat further recalled that, in March 2021, UN-Habitat launched its global flagship report due to the complex relationship between the Pandemic and the Cities, during the first anniversary of the WHO declaration on the COVID-19 Pandemic. The report aims to guide cities and countries towards a more just and green healthy future by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. novel data on the impacts of COVID-19 in cities, ii. some underlying basis for the different prevalence of the disease and iii. successes of local responses and policy recommendations for a better response and return to normal. <p>c) The Secretariat noted that the report was produced by UN-Habitat in-house research teams in consultation with global thematic experts and reviewed by partners and stakeholders. The Secretariat therefore reiterated that the objectives of the dialogue would be to share and discuss the lessons learned from the analysis of the report which could further guide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The implementation of the 2020-2023 UN-Habitat Strategic Plan and necessary partnerships ii. UN-Habitat support to Member States <p>d) The Secretariat further briefed the Bureau that that during the opening of the dialogue, the moderator will provide key findings of the Cities and Pandemics Report focusing on the fundamental impacts of the COVID-19 on cities and urban living and responses in cities. The dialogue will further focus on the potential implications to the Strategic Plan implementation and how to turn the disruption to an opportunity. This introductory part of the dialogue will also be drawn from the Secretary General’s brief on the COVID-19 in an Urban World, the WHO and UN-Habitat joint course book in integrating urban territorial planning, published in 2020, and other key UN-Habitat sources.</p> <p>e) The Secretariat also noted that UN-Habitat has received an expression of interest from the President of the General Assembly to make introductory remarks at the beginning of the dialogue.</p>	<p>The Bureau took note of the briefing by the Secretariat</p>

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<p>2(b) Preparations of the dialogue (continued)</p>	<p>f) The Secretariat also briefed the Bureau that the panel selected for the dialogue will comprise of senior experts and confirmed that three of the four invited panelists have so far confirmed their presence, as follows :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mr. Etienne Krug, Director, Management of NON-communicable Diseases, Disability, Violence and Injury Presentation, WHO will discuss opportunities for healthier environments, climate actions by strong urban policies and spatial planning, which stretches to the four areas of the Strategic Plan ii. Madam Claudia Lopez Hernandez, Mayor of the City of Bogota, Columbia, will discuss a fair and green lean in urbanization to effective governance and integrated investment in the context of Colombian Cities, which focusses on sub-programme 3 of the Strategic plan iii. Madam Balakrishnan Rajagopal, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing , will discuss universal housing and services in the center of resilient cities and communities, which is related to sub-programmes 1,2 and 4 of the Strategic Plan iv. The fourth speaker will discuss the new social contracts addressing social and economic inequalities through inclusive multi-lateralism universal rights and local financing, which aligns with the focus on the human rights and social inclusion crosscutting areas. 	<p>The Bureau took note of the briefing by the Secretariat</p>
	<p>g) The final part of the dialogue will consist of questions to the panelists and will aim to prioritization between policies, investment and accelerators of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan implementation by applying the new knowledge and evidence learned from the Covid-19 Pandemic.</p>	
	<p>During discussions on this sub-item:</p> <p>h) The representative of USA on behalf of WEOG, although the discussions was on the dialogue, expressed concerns on the annotated provisional Agenda, specifically on (i) the reference in paragraph 13 of the annotated provisional agenda to the establishment of a subcommittee of the CPR, (ii) the preparation of the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly by the current Bureau, (iii) the preparation by the current Bureau of potential outcomes of the high-level midterm review. He further expressed his regret that the comments made by USA on behalf of WEOG at the previous Bureau meeting on the provisional Agenda of the high-level midterm review did not seem to have been considered by the Secretariat. He further expressed concerns that the Secretariat</p>	<p>Noted</p>

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2(b) Preparations of the dialogue (continued)	circulated the annotated provisional Agenda as recommended by the Bureau at a time when WEOG was not participating in the Bureau meetings. He finally raised concerns that in his view, the Secretariat overstepped its mandate on issues on which no consensus was reached and called for respect of all views expressed within the Bureau.	Noted
	i) The representative of USA on behalf of WEOG further expressed its concern that the tentative roadmap towards the meetings of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat transmitted to Member States by the Secretariat reflected two consultations on draft outcomes to be adopted by the high-level midterm review despite the fact that a consensus has not been reached on the Bureau on this matter.	Noted
	j) The representative of USA on behalf of WEOG called for more feedback from the Bureau members on these issues and further reiterated that WEOG as a group does not concur with many elements of the provisional Agenda of the high-level mid-term review. He emphasized that that WEOG would not be comfortable in participating in the high-level midterm review if the concerns of the group are not being considered.	Noted
	k) The representative of Serbia on behalf of Eastern European Group requested clarification on when the statement by the President of the General Assembly would be made during the dialogue , as it is not explicitly highlighted in the annotated provisional agenda . Supported by Costa Rica and Bangladesh, the representative of Serbia underlined the pertinence of the topic of the dialogue because it is on cities and pandemics and he emphasized on the importance for the dialogue be held at a high-level so as to highlight the role and mandate of UN-Habitat under these unprecedented times.	Noted
	<p>In response of the views expressed and at the request of the Chair, the Secretariat responded as follows:</p> l) The annotated agenda is a detailed explanation and expansion of the provisional Agenda and remains provisional. The Secretariat is also bound by the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly and those of the General Assembly to submit for translation and circulate the pre-session documentation within a specific time frame, within which the secretariat has to comply. The provisional Agenda and the annotated provisional Agenda were specifically recommended by the Bureau during its meetings held on 8 December 2020 and 24 February 2021 and subsequent to which both documents were sent to Member States on 18 May 2021 in line with the rules of procedure referred to above.	Noted

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2(b) Preparations of the dialogue (continued)	<p>m) The guidance from the Bureau has always been the only basis upon which the Secretariat has acted and has never acted against any guidance from the Bureau. This is different from a situation where the secretariat is instructed by a representative to act otherwise contrary to the recommendation of the Bureau as in the case of the representative of the USA acting on behalf of WEOG. Accordingly, the Secretariat respectfully views the reference by the presentative of USA on behalf of WEOG that “Secretariat is taking liberties” as not being factually accurate. The Secretariat called for measured use of language to avoid misinterpretation and reaffirmed its role as only to service Member States.</p>	
	<p>n) It should be noted that during its second and third meetings held in 8 December 2020 and 28 February 2021, the Bureau of the CPR did recommend the provisional Agenda for the high-level midterm review, and this recommendation guided the Secretariat in the preparation of the pre-session documentation for the high-level midterm review. During the fourth meeting of the Bureau held on 28 April 2021, the representative of USA on behalf of WEOG expressed concerns on the provisional Agenda of the high-level midterm review and questioned the need for outcomes to be adopted by the high-level midterm review at the conclusion of the review. While these suggestions were noted by the Bureau and reflected as “noted” in the summary of discussions and recommendations emanating from that meeting, the Bureau did not reverse its earlier recommendation regarding the provisional Agenda and neither did the representative of USA on behalf of WEOG ask for a vote to reverse the earlier decision from the Bureau on the matter. Instead, the USA on behalf of WEOG sent several e-mails to the Secretariat with instructions to remove certain items from the provisional Agenda and from the roadmap on the preparations for the high-level midterm-term review, such as consultations on the outcomes, yet these items and the consultations had already been approved by the Bureau. The Secretariat responded to the e-mails and acknowledged receipt but also informed the USA that the Secretariat does not have the mandate to modify a provisional Agenda based on the request of one regional group only. In the responses, the Secretariat also recommended to the USA that it brings the issues to the Bureau for a specific decision by the Bureau to reverse its decision and to guide the Secretariat accordingly. It should be noted that the road map is based upon the provisional Agenda and so any changes in one Will affect the other.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
	<p>o) In its response on the challenge to the establishment a sub-committee by the CPR, the Secretariat explained that is a possibility provided in Rule 23.2 of the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly. Paragraph 13 of the annotated provisional Agenda refers only to the</p>	<p>Noted</p>

Agenda item	Discussion	Recommendation from the Bureau
2(b) Preparations of the dialogue (continued)	possibility for the CPR considering the need to establish such subcommittee, with emphasis on the word “may”.	
	p) The statement by the President of the General Assembly would take place under Agenda 5 of the provisional Agenda, during the dialogue.	Noted
	In response to the views expressed and at the request of the Chair: q) The Deputy Executive Director invited the Bureau to provide a recommendation on the way forward and further emphasized that the role of the Secretariat was to service the Bureau. The Secretariat also highlighted that any change to the current version of the provisional annotated Agenda will inter-alia need to be edited and translate by the Division of Conference Services before being sent back to Member States and given the time frame, that cannot happen prior to 29 June 2021 which is the first day of the high-level midterm review. The Secretariat did, however, advice that with the Agenda being provisional, nothing precludes any member state or regional from proposing an amendment to the agenda on the first day of the high-level midterm review prior to the adoption of the Agenda. r) The representative from Serbia on behalf of the Eastern Europe group, supported by Bangladesh on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group and others, noted the fact that the Bureau did make recommendations on the provisional Agenda which prompted the Secretariat to act but at the same time also recommended that in light of the strong reservation by a member of the Bureau consideration could be given to addressing the concerns expressed by WOEG and to find a way forward.	Noted
	s) Accordingly, the Bureau agreed to schedule on 17 June 2021 another Bureau meeting to address the concerns expressed by USA on behalf of WEOG.	Agreed
	Under this sub-item, the Secretariat briefed the Bureau on logistical arrangements including registration and format of the high-level midterm review. The full presentation can be found here and highlighted the following :	
	a) The registration for the high-level midterm review meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives is open from 18 May will close on 25 June 2021 at 14:00 hrs. East Africa Time (EAT).	Noted
	b) The UNON Director General is being consulted in relation to the format of the meeting the Secretariat welcomes any guidance from the Host Country, Kenya.	Noted

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2 (c) Logistical arrangements including registration and format of the meeting	c) An information note for participants has been prepared and is available on the website and will be updated based on the updated regarding the format of the meeting.	Noted
	d) All delegates should individually register on-line before the deadline, which is 25 June 2021. For effective planning for the meeting. Permanent and Observer Missions, in addition to registering online by 25 June 2021, should communicate the names and email addresses of the members of their respective delegations as early as possible, but no later than 25 June 2021, through an official letter emanating from the Government or a Note Verbale from the Permanent Mission of the country to the United Nations or to UN-Habitat to the Secretary to the Governing Bodies.	Noted
	e) The representative of UNON Joint Medical Services, Dr. Joshua Anino, highlighted that Covid-19 being a respiratory disease transmitted by droplets spread in congregate setting, there is a significant risk posed on in-person meetings. Upon weighing of risks to the importance of having the in-person meetings, it is important to put in place mitigation measures such as screening, washing hands, wearing masks, social distancing and limiting number of participants to the meeting. The criticality of the meeting should be considered when scheduling an in-person meeting.	Noted
	f) H.E Mrs. Jean Kimani, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to UN-Habitat updated that the Government of Kenya received a formal request for guidance from UN-Habitat with respect to the format of the high-level midterm review. The Permanent Mission is still waiting an official communication from the Ministry of Health and will update the Bureau as soon as possible. She further informed that for now the applicable mitigation strategy for in-person gatherings from the Government of Kenya was to apply the one third rule, meaning that a room should only be filled up to 1/3 of its actual capacity.	Noted
		Noted
	g) H.E Mrs. Jean Kimani, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to UN-Habitat also that the invitation addressed to His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, to open the high-level mid-term review was still under consideration.	
	h) The Secretariat mentioned the modalities implemented during the General Assembly in September 2021 during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic in New York which included extreme social distancing and one representative per delegation.	Noted
	i) Based on the latest update provided by the Secretariat, the Bureau called for cautiousness at this stage and requested the Secretariat to continue preparing 2 possible scenarios pending further review and assessment of the situation : (i) A hybrid format of the meeting with the delegations-	Agreed

Agenda item	Discussion	Recommendation from the Bureau
2 (c) Logistical arrangements including registration and format of the meeting (continued)	based outside Kenya participating virtually in the meeting and Member States based in Nairobi participating in person (ii) an on-line meeting.	
3. Potential outcomes of the high-level midterm review of the Committee of Permanent Representatives		
3(a) Potential outcomes	<p>Under this sub-item the Secretariat presented the possible outcomes for the high-level midterm review. The full presentation can be accessed here and highlighted the following :</p> <p>a) The potential outcomes of the CPR high-level midterm review as already presented to the Bureau during its meeting on 28 April 2021 could encompass :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Recommendation on the progress in implementing the UN-Habitat Assembly resolutions and including specifically resolution 1/1 on the strategic plan. ii. Recommendation on financing the mandate of UN-Habitat through support for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the New urban Agenda and SDGs. iii. Recommendation on the High-Level meeting to assess progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda of the General Assembly in 2022 in line with GA resolution A/RES/75/224. iv. Recommendation on WUF 10 outcome and WUF 11 preparations in line with GC resolution 26/6 on the World urban Forum. v. Recommendation on the dates and agenda of the second session of the UN-Habitat Assembly and the dates and agenda for the next Open-Ended CPR meeting. vi. Adjustments and reprioritization, for the remaining years of the Strategic Plan, based on gaps analysis (WEOG proposal) 	The Bureau took note of the briefing by the Secretariat
	<p>During discussions on this item:</p> <p>b) The representative of USA on behalf of WEOG reiterated WEOG's position on having shorter, more focused set of outcomes and mentioned that WEOG prefers that the possible outcomes do not include recommendations ii, iii and iv. He further highlighted that the outcomes of the high-level midterm review should be driven by discussions that will take place during the high-level midterm review based upon the provisional Agenda, on which the Bureau has not yet reached consensus. He also expressed concerns on holding informal consultations on draft outcomes on-line.</p>	Noted

Agenda item	Discussion	Recommendation from the Bureau
3(a) Potential outcomes (continued)	<p>c) The representative of Serbia on behalf of the Eastern Europe Group supported by Costa Rica on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean and Kenya as representative of the Host Country, welcomed the six proposed areas of possible outcomes and suggested merging the recommendations where necessary rather than omitting of recommendations ii, iii and iv as suggested by the representative of USA on behalf of WEOG. He reiterated that the high-level midterm review should look at all aspects of the mandate of UN-Habitat. He suggested as an alternative that recommendations ii, iii and iv could be discussed during the high-level midterm review without the CPR necessarily using active and strong phrases to depict its desire.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
	<p>d) On the outcomes on finances, the Secretariat recalled GA resolution 73/729, which implemented the governance reform of UN-Habitat based on the financial situation of UN-Habitat. The Secretariat highlighted that the implementation of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan would be impaired with the current financial situation.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
	<p>e) On the WUF outcome, the Secretariat further recalled that GC resolution 26/6, which requests the Executive Director to consult with the CPR on preparations for the sessions of WUF has not been overturned by the General Assembly or the UN-Habitat Assembly and that from a legal perspective the Bureau does not have the mandate to overturn GC resolution 26/6. Therefore, omission of recommendation 4 would put the Executive Director in a position where it would appear she did not follow the instructions of the governing bodies as far as the preparations of the upcoming World Urban Forum are concerned.</p>	
	<p>f) The representative of USA on behalf of WEOG highlighted a procedural issue and requested that the Bureau discussions on the draft outcomes should be held between Bureau Members, noting that Kenya is not a Bureau Member.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
	<p>g) The Chair and the representative of Serbia on behalf of Eastern Europe welcomed and supported the presence and inputs from H.E Mrs. Jean Kimani, as a representative of the Host Country to give valuable feedback from the Host Country and highlighted her valuable contribution to the discussion.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
	<p>h) The Secretariat was requested to draft technical inputs to feed in the possible outcomes to be adopted by the CPR during its high-level mid-term review. The draft technical inputs should be sent to the Bureau in advance of its next meeting which should take place on 17 June 2021.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

Agenda item	Discussion	Recommendation from the Bureau
3(b) Schedule of Consultations on the Draft Outcomes	a) The informal consultation scheduled for 17 June 2021 and a possible schedule of discussion of the draft outcomes to be decided only after review of the draft technical inputs by the Bureau prior and during its meeting to be held on 17 June 2021.	Agreed
Elections of the 2021/2023 Bureau of the CPR- Composition of the next CPR Bureau.	<p>a) The Chair took the opportunity to recall that the next Bureau of the CPR will be elected pursuant to Rule 27 of rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly at the end of the high-level mid-term review and will hold office for 2 years until the end of the Open-ended CPR meeting held in preparations for the UN-Habitat Assembly scheduled in June 2023.</p> <p>In line with the tentative draft of the Scenarios of the Bureau(x) shared with Member States in preparations of the first session of the UN-Habitat Assembly in May 2019, the composition of the next CPR Bureau in terms of the seats for the respective regional groups is as follows :</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chair: WEOG Vice-Chairs: African States, Asian States, Latin American and Caribbean States Rapporteur: Eastern European States</p> <p>The Chair recalled that the Secretariat, on 29 April 2021, sent a Note Verbale to the Chairs of the Regional Groups with a copy to the respective member of the Bureau, inviting all regional groups to start caucusing towards identifying nominations for their respective representatives to the new Bureau of 2021- 2023 of the CPR.</p>	Noted
	b) The Chair updated that so far the Secretariat has not receive any formal nomination strongly encouraged that each Regional Group continue caucusing towards identifying nominations for their representative to the new Bureau, as the high-level mid-term review is now fast approaching.	Agreed
4. Any Other Matters		
	The next Bureau meeting is scheduled for Thursday 17 June 2021.	Agreed
	<i>The fifth Bureau meeting of the CPR was adjourned at 17:00 East African Time</i>	