



Executive Director's Statement to the CPR

Agenda Item 3

**HSP/CPR/66/3
Nairobi, 27 September 2017**

Thank you very much Chair for this opportunity to brief the CPR.

Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Since the last CPR, we have gone through a very hectic period of activities which have been very relevant for UN-Habitat because they have included the celebration of the High Level Meeting for the strengthening of UN-Habitat in New York at the beginning of September. That has been a milestone in the process on the strengthening of UN-Habitat following the propositions of the resolution on Habitat III in Quito. That coincided with a period of holidays in some parts of the world and that has made these three months very busy; arranging agendas and making possible the celebration of all these very important meetings given the circumstances. My written report is available, therefore I am not going to go through it by reading it but I would like to highlight the outcome of this High Level Meeting of the General Assembly. I am sure that some of you were present there and all of you have been following it and that has been a very important meeting. From the point of view of the Secretariat of UN-Habitat, we were very positively impressed by the recognition of the strategic role of urbanization that was expressed by most of the interventions of the Member States. We were also positively impressed by the general support towards the strengthening of UN-Habitat which was present in the content of the interventions of the illustrious delegates.

It was also an opportunity, in this meeting, to listen to the High Level Panel that the Secretary-General established. Twenty-five recommendations were put forward for the consideration of Member States. These recommendations were received by the majority of the delegations with some aspects supported while others not as much. This was an occasion to have a profound debate about the role of UN-Habitat in the future of the United Nations.

We were also very encouraged by the speech of the Deputy Secretary-General who came to the opening of the session. She put the strengthening of UN-Habitat right at the centre of the reforms of the development system of the United Nations. She also mentioned that the strengthening of UN-Habitat is the litmus test for the steps that are going to be taken next month in the UN reforms and specifically in the Development Group of the United Nations. This support of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General by putting UN-Habitat during this specific moment at the centre of the UN reform also encourages us to advance in the best manner and to facilitate, as much as we can, from the Secretariat to the Member States, the forthcoming negotiations towards the elaboration of the resolution in the General Assembly hopefully at the end of this trimester. Therefore, now until the final approval of the resolution in the General Assembly is going to be a very important period for the United Nations Programme for Human Settlements. The work that has been done by both the High Level Panel and the High Level Meeting is going to contribute highly to the quality of the conversation and also to the wisdom of the resolution.

At the same time that this is happening, we will continue to manage our institution delivering on our mandate and advancing in our reforms in order to fulfil the objectives of efficiency, transparency and accountability that you require of this programme.

On the issues that were discussed, I would like to mention in particular an item that was extensively debated - the creation of an entity called "UN Urban" that would depend on UN DESA as recommended by the panel. Listening to the reactions of most of the members states, as analysed by them, we were pleased that the Deputy Secretary-General in her speech, both at the beginning and during the closing, made it very clear that any coordination mechanism that is necessary in the reform of the United Nations is recommended to be under the leadership of UN-Habitat. That has clarified different interpretations that this proposal could have generated and has also been a very positive input that we have received from the secretariat in New York. With this work already done, we enter into the new phase of the elaboration of the resolution at the end of the year.

At the same time, there are important events in relation to UN-Habitat. I single out the end of my mandate in December, that will happen during the specific moment when there will be debates and tasks in front of us. I would like to conduct my three last months in an exemplary and participatory manner in order that you, as the CPR, the Member States and delegates feel comfortable. We can establish a most efficient transition period that doesn't complicate the debates of the resolutions towards the strengthening of UN-Habitat. I have already increased the frequency of the Senior Management Committee meetings in UN-Habitat in conjunction with the Deputy Executive Director and the three directors. We are working intensively to share, as much as possible, the decisions during this period. I would also like to comment that I will pay most attention to guarantee meetings with the regional groups and the members of the CPR willing to engage in conversations both in relation to the issues that are going to happen during the three months, and also in relation to the important question of the next World Urban Forum that is going to be celebrated in Kuala Lumpur in February.

As you know, the Secretary-General has opened the call for applications to the position of Executive Director of UN-Habitat which closes on 23 October 2017. This shows the commitment of the Secretary-General to allow the transition period to be fast and guarantee the institutional continuity of the programme. I will do my very best to make this process as transparent and efficient as possible keeping in mind that what is most important is the UN-Habitat institution. I communicated this to all the staff in yesterday's town hall, and therefore extending this message to you as well allows us to conduct this process in the most efficient and productive manner for UN-Habitat. This especially will assist us in the important decisions that need to be taken in the next three months. I would like to ensure that you feel absolutely free in taking your own decisions, and engaging in your own conversations and with the certainty that you are going to have a new leadership. In this way, you will have the opportunity to begin a new period in UN-Habitat. In the meantime, I insist that my directors present here are at your disposal as I am, in order to conduct this transition in the most efficient manner.

As I have also been tasked by the Secretary-General's office to encourage Member States to consider the presentation of candidacies for the post of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, I take this opportunity to do so. Please remember that we have one month to advance in this proposal in order to make sure that we can have a rapid and efficient transition in the forthcoming months.

I reiterate that I am at your disposal, both as individuals and as groups, in order to engage in further conversations. We are establishing a mechanism that includes two kinds of formal conversations with the groups. One on the High Level Meeting outcomes and the other on the World Urban Forum (WUF). The frequency of meetings will be increased in order to make the groups comfortable to ensure the success of WUF.

Having said that, in my written message you will find the updates of the programmatic issues, mission reports for the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director. I am ready to answer your questions regarding these items.

Thank you for your support and help and I am sure that we will be able to engage in these three very important months for UN-Habitat that coincides with the recruitment of the new Executive Director.

Thank you very much.