



STATEMENT BY KENYA DURING THE 63RD REGULAR SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (CPR)

DECEMBER 1, 2016, UNON COMPLEX GIGIRI

Mr. Chairman,
Executive Director
Excellences

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of Kenya. This statement complements those read earlier by the distinguished representatives of the Argentine Republic and the Republic of Zimbabwe on behalf of the G-77 and China, and the African Group respectively.

This being the first CPR after the historic Quito conference, this delegation takes this opportunity to join all in expressing sincere gratitude to the Government and people of Ecuador for successfully hosting Habitat III, and to the Secretariat of the Conference for the logistical support extended.

As a Member State, Kenya was actively involved in all the negotiations, and we are proud to associate ourselves with the outcome, the New Urban Agenda. We have now started to domesticate it to be context specific, and for ease of understanding so that our citizens can relate, own and derive its full benefits.

We thank the Executive Director (ED) for his briefing on the process towards and after the Habitat III. We note positively the steps being taken in moving with speed to roll out implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA). To this extend, I assure of Kenya's commitment.

Whereas the preparatory process to Quito was well managed, we feel there are areas that should be improved on, to make future intergovernmental processes of that nature more inclusive, inspiring and informative.

Of special mention is participation of the CPR, which was inadequate. Without belaboring the point, our latent engagement in the process could have sent wrong political signals on our views about the Organization.



We provide oversight to this Organization and should be involved more in future meetings of that kind.

Implementation, follow up and review of the NUA will be undertaken by both state and non-state entities. That is why the Governing Council recommended to the UNGA the creation of the General Assembly of Partners (GAP), as a special initiative for the Habitat III.

As an invention of the UN, its legacy should be cherished and lessons learnt from it should inform engagement of stakeholder's in future international forums. This does not change the fact that GAP is a loose partnership of stakeholders created by UN-Habitat's World Urban Campaign (WUC) more so, for purposes of coordinating partners during the preparations for Habitat III.

However, these expectations may no longer be viable. Last month, we learnt with dismay that GAP has applied for the registration of the name as patent in a member state as a private property of one Eugenie Birch, its former president. To that end, we are aware that a section of the members of the civil society has since lodged formal request with the President of ECOSOC to investigate the matter.

Being a creation of the UN, attempts to register and patent GAP by a private citizen is both unprecedented and unwarranted. The move sets dangerous precedent, and presents serious ethical and legal issues as far as relations between the organization and its employees are concerned.

Regarding UN-Habitat and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, this delegation takes note of the proposed focal point roles. As we are all aware, the Quito outcome not only reaffirmed the expertise and role of the agency in promoting sustainable urbanization and human settlements but also provided new mandates to the Organization in the implementation, coordination, follow up and review of the NUA.

The agency needs to start work in these areas without waiting for the outcome of the forthcoming assessment. Suffice to say, the purpose of the assessment is to add value to the normative and operational work of UN-Habitat, to suggest



better ways of making more inclusive and accountable decisions including through universal membership, and to evaluate financial capability of the organization bearing in mind the expectations of the NUA.

This leads me to the priority areas outlined in the briefing note. Officially, Habitat III was called the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. In line with this, the agreed text eloquently captures the spirit of providing affordable housing for all as a progressive human right. However, we note with concern the glaring omission of this important component in the proposed priorities.

Furthermore, the proposed priorities areas tend to overemphasize urban dimensions at the expense of rural linkages. Viability of urban centers depends on how rural areas are managed too; for those are the areas that provide food, water and other ecosystem services. The true spirit and letter of SDGs no. 11 *“make cities and other human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”* should also guide these priorities. In our view, further consultations are needed in the identification of the priority areas.

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UN-Habitat will not be in a position to discharge its functions without commensurate financial support. Last week, this delegation, being part of the African Group, participated in the consultations with the ED on the need to provide ‘bridging financing’.

We wish to inform that we have adequately briefed our principals on the dire financial situation of the Organization and the need to urgently mobilize resources. On the same note, we encourage all Member States to provide funds to the Organization to enable it maintain smooth operations.

In conclusion, Kenya echoes the call by various speakers on the need to convene the 26th session of the Governing Council as earlier scheduled in April 2017.

I thank you.