

The Governing Council of UN-Habitat

1. The work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UH-Habitat) is guided by three main policy bodies of the United Nations through the General Assembly namely, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Governing Council of UN-Habitat and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR).
2. With effect from 1 January 2002, the Commission on Human Settlements and its Secretariat, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat), including the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, was transformed into United Nations Human Settlements Programme pursuant to resolution **A/RES/56/206** of the General Assembly.
3. The General Assembly, in the same resolution, also transformed the Commission on Human Settlements into the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
4. The Governing Council was empowered to propose its rules of procedure which were approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations in resolution.
5. The Governing Council is composed of **58 members** who are elected by the Economic and Social Council for a term of 4 years.
6. At the commencement of the first meeting of each regular session, the Governing Council elects a President, three vice Presidents and Rapporteur. These officers constitute the Bureau of the Governing Council whose function is to assist the President in the conduct of the business of the Governing Council. In addition, the Bureau of the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council consisted of:
 1. **President:** Nigeria (representing African Group)
 2. **Vice-President:** Russian Fed, (representing Eastern European States), Argentina (representing Latin America and Caribbean States) and Bangladesh (representing Asia-Pacific States)
 3. **Rapporteur:** Germany (representing Western European and Other States)

7. When the Governing Council meets, it is divided into:

1. A Plenary, which is assisted by a sessional committee of the whole and a drafting committee
2. A High-level segment and dialogue on a special theme.

8. The Objectives, functions and responsibilities of the Governing Council pursuant to resolutions **A/RES/56/206** are set out in resolution **A/RES/32/162** of 19 December 1977, which is the resolution that originally established UN-Habitat as a Commission and also in paragraph 222 of the Habitat Agenda.

9. The **Objective** of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat is to:

1. Promote integral and comprehensive approach to human settlements
2. Assist countries and regions with human settlements problems
3. Strengthen co-operation and co-participation in all countries on human settlement issues

The **Functions and Responsibilities** of the Governing Council are to:

1. Develop and promote policy objectives, priorities and guidelines with respect to the Organization's programme of work
2. To study new issues, problems and solutions in human settlements at national, regional and international level
3. Provide policy guidance and supervision of the Foundation
4. Review and approve the utilization of funds of the Organization
5. Provide overall direction to the Organization
6. Promote effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda

10. The Governing Council is assisted by an intersessional subsidiary body known as the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) which is based in Nairobi. The CPR is made up of all Member and Observer States to UN-Habitat.

11. Like the Governing Council, the CPR officers are made up of a Chair, three Vice-Chairs and a Rapporteur representing all the Regional Group of States at the UN. These officers make up the

Bureau of the CPR. This Bureau is elected every two years. The current Bureau was elected on 4 December 2013 and will serve for two years, 2014 -2015.

The composition of the current Bureau is as follows:

1. **Chair:** Slovak Republic (representing Eastern European Group)
2. **Vice-Chairs:** Indonesia (representing Asia-Pacific Group), Colombia (representing Latin America and Caribbean Group)u and USA(representing Western European and Other Group)
3. **Rapporteur:** Nigeria (representing Africa Group)

12. The CPR meets at least four times a year to monitor progress in the implementation of the activities of the Organization. It has two Subcommittees namely, the Subcommittee on Finance and Administration and Subcommittee on Policy and Programme of Work. These Subcommittees review the work of the Organization prior for its submission to the CPR, including and where required for onward transmittal to the Governing Council.

14. Currently, and in addition to carrying out its main functions as an intersessional body, one of main focus of the CPR is the review of the Governance of UN-Habitat. This review emanates from **Resolution 22/5** of 3 April 2009 which requests “**the Executive-Director and the Committee of Permanent Representatives to undertake jointly, within the work programme and budget, an examination of the Governance of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme with a view to and implementing ways to improve the transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the existing governance structure and to identify options for any other potential relevant changes for consideration Governing council at its twenty-third session.**”

15. The Governance review is further supported by the General Assembly resolution **A/RES/68/239** which ‘**Takes note of the governance review process of UN-Habitat, and encourages the Committee of Permanent Representatives to continue its consideration of proposals,**

including recommendations and options for reform, with a view to reaching a consensus on how to proceed with the governance review”.

16. During its sessions, the Governing Council communicates its instructions with respective activities to be undertaken by the Organization through resolutions. These activities contained in the resolutions require the Organizations to provide a Report to the subsequent Governing Council on the activities undertaken to implement the resolutions of the previous sessions.

17. In carrying out the activities required by the said resolutions as preparation for an up-coming Governing Council, the Secretariat consults and seeks guidance from the CPR through the CPR Subcommittees. These take the form of reports and briefings of all kinds from the Organization to the CPR and its Subcommittees and discussions.

18. In preparation for the upcoming 25th session of the Governing Council, the Organization has been reporting to, discussing with and seeking guidance as appropriate from CPR Subcommittees and the CPR with respect to the work already carried to implement some of the resolutions that come from 24th sessions of the Governing Council held in April 2013

19. In the end and in preparation for the 25th session of the Governing Council, Reports will be prepared as has always been done on the status and outcome of the Resolutions adopted for instance during the 24th sessions of the Governing Council. It is mostly based upon this Report that the 25th session of the Governing Council will issue new resolutions.

20. During the recently concluded 24th session of the Governing Council there were 15 Resolutions that were passed. These are:

Resolution 24/2: Strengthening the works of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme on urban basic services

Resolution 24/3: Inclusive and sustainable urban planning and elaboration of international guidelines on urban and territorial planning

Resolution 24/5: Pursuing sustainable development through national urban policies

Resolution 24/6: Supporting action for the creation of safer cities

Resolution 24/8: Regional technical support on sustainable housing and urban development including the Arab States Ministerial Forum on Housing and Urban Development

Resolution 24/9: Inclusive national and local housing strategies to achieve the Global housing Strategy paradigm shift

Resolution 24/10: Urbanization and sustainable urban development in post – 2015 development agenda

Resolution 24/11: promoting sustainable urban development by creating improved economic opportunities for all , with special reference to youth and gender

Resolution 24/12: Youth and sustainable urban development

Resolution 24/13: Country activities by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Resolution 24/14: Inputs for and support to the preparatory process of the third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable development (Habitat III)

Resolution 24/15: Strategic plan for 2014-2019 and the work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the biennium 2014-2015

21. It should be noted that, pursuant to the request by the General Assembly in its **resolution 56/206**, the Governing Council has amended its **rules of procedure** to provide for the effective participation of local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners in its deliberations. The partners include parliamentarians, civil society organizations, local authorities, professionals and researchers, academia, foundations, women and youth groups, trade unions, indigenous peoples organizations, financial institutions, and private sector; as well as organizations of the United Nations system and Intergovernmental Organizations. These provisions are contained in rules 64 to 67 of the rules of procedure.

22. In terms of future meetings of the Governing Council, unless an extraordinary meeting is called to discuss an urgent matter which could not wait for the 25th session in 2015, it is not anticipated that the Governing Council will meet at a seating until 17 April 2015.