



Eighteenth session
Nairobi, 12-16 February 2001
Item 4 of the provisional agenda *

**ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
(HABITAT): PROGRESS REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE
UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (HABITAT)**

Report of the Executive Director

Addendum

Introduction

1. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 17/5 of 14 May 1999 on the role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Commission requested the Executive Director to: take the necessary steps to clarify the current status of the Committee of Permanent Representatives; explore the possibilities for its future status and role; indicate the consequential financial implications; and report on these matters to the Commission at its eighteenth session.

A. Current status of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

2. Currently there is no formal relationship between the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNCHS (Habitat) and the Commission on Human Settlements. The rules of procedure of the Commission provide for the establishment of sessional subsidiary bodies (see rule 17, paragraph 1, of section V) but are silent on the establishment of inter-sessional subsidiary bodies. In fact, should the Commission wish to establish an inter-sessional subsidiary body, it would have to seek the specific approval of the Economic and Social Council as is stipulated in rule 24, paragraph 2, of the Council's rules of procedure which stipulates:

"Except for the regional commissions, the commissions and committees of the Council shall not create either standing or *ad hoc* intersessional subsidiary bodies without prior approval of the Council."

* HS/C/18/1.

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B. Future status and role of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

3. In the view of the secretariat, and pursuant to the above-cited rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, the future status of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and especially its formal relationship with the Commission on Human Settlements, lies within the prerogatives of the Commission and the Council. Consequently, the Commission would, first of all, have to decide whether it wishes to enter into a formal relationship with the Committee of Permanent Representatives and, if so, submit such a decision to the Council for consideration and approval. When that approval is given, the Committee of Permanent Representatives would come into existence as an inter-sessional subsidiary organ of the Commission, either on that date or on a date to be established by the Council.

4. Ideally, such a decision or resolution by the Commission could include the following suggested provisions:

(a) A request to the Council for approval for the establishment, by the Commission, of the Committee of Permanent Representatives as an inter-sessional subsidiary organ of the Commission;

(b) A decision to amend the Commission's rules of procedure so as to provide for a relationship between the Commission and the Committee during the inter-sessional period;

(c) The terms of reference of the Committee of Permanent Representatives serving as a subsidiary organ of the Commission during the inter-sessional period;

(d) The frequency of its meetings;

(e) Its reporting procedures to the Commission;

(f) Provision of the necessary financial resources for servicing the meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and its working groups.

C. Financial implications of institutionalizing the Committee of Permanent Representatives

5. Under rule 23 of the Commission's rules of procedure, the Executive Director is required, prior to the adoption of any proposal involving the expenditure of United Nations funds, including the funds of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, to provide to the Commission a statement of the financial implications of implementing such a proposal. Such financial implications would also have to be approved by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly.

6. The actual financial implications of institutionalizing the Committee of Permanent Representatives as a subsidiary body of the Commission can only be prepared once the final text of the draft resolution to be adopted by the Commission has been made available to the secretariat. Accordingly, the actual financial implications will be submitted to the Commission as an in-session document. However, with a view to assisting member States in the consideration of this matter in advance of the session, the secretariat has prepared, as per the request of the Commission in its resolution 17/5, the attached estimated financial implications (see annex) which are based on the following five assumptions:

(a) That the Committee of Permanent Representatives will meet four times a year in pursuance of Commission resolution 13/3, paragraph 1, which states:

"Decides to request the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to meet at least four times a year with the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to review progress in the implementation of the programme of the Centre and Commission resolutions, as well as specific issues proposed by the Permanent Representatives or the Executive Director, and to report the recommendations of the Committee to the Commission".

(b) That its two present working groups - the Working Group on Budget, Finance and Administrative Matters and the Working Group on Policy and Programme Matters - will each meet at least once a month, as has been the practice during the past two years;

(c) That all the meetings will be held in one day;

(d) That the costs for interpretation will be absorbed by the regular budget of the United Nations Office at Nairobi;

(e) That for each meeting, UNCHS (Habitat) would be requested to prepare a maximum of four pre-session documents with a total maximum of 32 pages, and one post-session document, with a maximum of 10 pages. No in-session documents are foreseen as the meetings will be held in one day. Each document will be distributed in 150 copies.

7. The cost estimates are presented according to the following three options:

(a) Meetings to be held in English only;

(b) Meetings to be held in English and French only (working languages of the secretariat);

(c) Meetings to be held in all six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

Annex

Annual cost estimates for servicing the Committee of Permanent Representatives and its two working Groups (4 Committee of Permanent Representatives meetings, 24 working group meetings)

	Option 1 English only	Option 2 English, French	Option 3 Six UN languages
1. CPR Meetings (four meetings per year)			
Conference Services preparatory work	3500	3500	3500
Pre-session documentation (32 pages per session)	6144	27776	115328
Conference Services staff	6552	6552	6552
Post-session documentation (10 pages per session)	1920	8680	36040
Miscellaneous	3000	3000	3000
Total CPR meetings	21116	49508	164420
2. CPR working group meetings (24 meetings per year)			
Conference Services preparatory work	10500	10500	10500
Pre-session documentation (32 pages per session)	36864	166656	691968
Conference Services staff	39312	39312	39312
Post-session documentation (10 pages per session)	11520	52080	216240
Miscellaneous	18000	18000	18000
Total CPR working group meetings	116196	286548	976020
Grand total	137312	336056	1140440

It is assumed that interpretation will be provided by UNON interpreters at no cost to UNCHS (Habitat) out of existing regular budget allocations of UNON.
