

Twenty-second session
Nairobi, 30 March–3 April 2009
Agenda item 9

Other matters

Draft resolution on cities and climate change

Submission by the drafting group

The Governing Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/221 of 19 December 2008 on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, which, in paragraph 3, “encourages Governments to promote the principles and practice of sustainable urbanization and strengthen the role and contribution of their respective local authorities in applying those principles and practice, in order to improve the living conditions of vulnerable urban populations, including slum-dwellers and the urban poor, and as a major contribution to mitigating the causes of climate change, adapting to the effects of climate change and reducing risks and vulnerabilities in a rapidly urbanizing world, including human settlements in fragile ecosystems, and invites the international donor community to support the efforts of developing countries in this regard”,

Recalling also the Habitat Agenda and its twin goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world,

Recalling also the theme of the twenty-second session of the Governing Council, “Promoting affordable housing finance systems in an urbanizing world in the face of the global financial crisis and climate change” and the related theme paper,¹

Taking note of the launch by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative and the Oslo Statement on Cities and Climate Change of 17 March 2009,

Recognizing that climate change may have consequences for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development, including negative impacts on housing, infrastructure, basic services and the quality of life in cities, and that the urban poor, especially vulnerable groups, including women, will be among those most affected by these impacts,

Recognizing also that cities are one of the major contributors of greenhouse gas emissions and that they have a key role to play in promoting energy efficiency, through more appropriate urban planning, management and building practices for sustainable urban development,

1 HSP/GC/22/4, para. 63.

Recalling the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for the period 2008–2013, which recognizes that urbanization, when poorly managed, can generate social exclusion and poverty and can result in uncontrolled urban sprawl, pollution and unsustainable consumption of land, water and other natural resources, which accelerate environmental degradation and the negative impacts of climate change,²

Recognizing that efforts to enhance sustainable urbanization also offer opportunities to enhance climate change strategies, including mitigation and adaptation, through promoting participatory planning, management and governance; pro-poor land and housing; and environmentally sound basic infrastructure and services,

Recognizing the unique leading role of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in discussions aiming at a global climate change agreement in Copenhagen in 2009,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to increase awareness of the role of cities in addressing climate change, with particular emphasis on the impact of climate change on the urban poor and in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development;

2. *Encourages* the Executive Director to develop in other regions such activities as the “Climate-resilient cities in Africa” initiative, as part of the Joint Partnership Framework established between the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme;

3. *Invites* Governments to undertake further concerted and coordinated action to include the issue of cities and climate change as an integral part of their national climate change strategies, including mitigation and adaptation, in view of continuous urbanization and the fact that over half of humankind lives in urban areas and are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change;

4. *Invites* parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at the fifteenth session of its Conference of the Parties in Copenhagen to take into account the crucial role of cities and towns in climate change strategies, including adaptation and mitigation;

5. *Encourages* the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, within its mandate, to continue the existing cooperation with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on issues of cities and climate change and to continue playing a complementary role in climate-change matters within the United Nations system;

6. *Invites* Governments and other relevant partners to support developing countries through the appropriate mechanism in each country to strengthen their capacities in promoting, among other things, pro-poor clean and affordable technological options, innovative approaches to urban planning and management and education and training on climate change strategies, as they pertain to sustainable urban development, while encouraging all other national and local authorities to strengthen their capacities in the manner set out above;

7. *Invites* Governments which are in a position to do so to provide technical and financial support to the Cities and Climate Change Initiative, to widen the geographical scope of the initiative and to expand the range of capacity-development approaches in order to support local authorities in addressing climate change;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to include a discussion of the implementation of the present resolution in her overall progress report to the Council at its twenty-third session.