



UNITED
NATIONS

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UN HABITAT

**Governing Council
of the United Nations Human
Settlements Programme**

Twenty-fourth session

Nairobi, 15–19 April 2013

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

The Governing Council,

Recalling the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976, and of the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul, Turkey in 1996,

Recalling also relevant resolutions of the General Assembly on both the preparations for and implementation of the outcome of Habitat II and on the strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, as well as relevant decisions and resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda,¹

Recognizing the effective roles of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, and of intergovernmental, subregional and regional organizations, in the subregional and regional preparatory processes for Habitat II, through coordination, facilitation and funding of, among other things, interministerial meetings and the participation of countries with insufficient resources,

Acknowledging the changing roles of established Habitat Agenda partners and the new and emerging State and non-State actors engaged in human settlements and urban development at global, regional, national and local levels, such as local governments, civil society, representatives of mobile populations, universities, the private sector, private foundations, and their associations,

Welcoming the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled “The future we want”,² in particular paragraphs 134–137 on sustainable cities and human settlements,

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

² General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

Acknowledging that, while significant progress has been made in implementing the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements³ and the twin goals of the Habitat Agenda, challenges remain, such as, among others, the continuing increase of slum-dwellers in the world, the negative impact of environmental degradation, including climate change, desertification and loss of biodiversity, on human settlements and the need to reduce disaster risks and build resilience to disasters in urban settlements,

Recognizing the specific progress made in meeting and even surpassing goal 7, target 7.D, of the Millennium Development Goals, while noting that slums and urban poverty continue to be a global challenge,

Recognizing also the need for a review and assessment at the national, regional and international levels of the progress made towards the attainment of the goals of the Habitat Agenda,⁴ and of other international goals relevant to human settlements as a basis for the formulation of a new urban agenda,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 66/207 of 22 December 2011, by which the Assembly decided to convene in 2016, in line with the bi-decennial cycle (1976, 1996, 2016), a third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III) to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanization that should focus on the implementation of a new urban agenda,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 67/216 of 21 December 2012, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to prepare, using the expertise of the United Nations system, a proposal for consideration by the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme at its twenty-fourth session, as to how best to provide inputs for and support to the preparatory process of the Conference in the most inclusive, efficient, effective and improved manner, and to proceed accordingly,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Executive Director on the third United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development (Habitat III);⁵

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the conference, in his capacity as Executive Director, and in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to refine his proposed input to the preparatory process for Habitat III, using the expertise of the United Nations system organizations and Habitat Agenda partners, by:

(a) Considering possible contributions from United Nations system organizations and Habitat Agenda partners;

(b) Presenting strategic options for the contribution of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to the preparatory process of the conference, considering the availability of financial resources and implications for the work programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme;

(c) Including the provision of an updated think piece about the future of urbanization and sustainable human settlements and urban development to conceptually inform the inputs;

³ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

⁴ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

⁵ HSP/GC/24/2/Add.3.

(d) Suggesting guidelines and format for the preparation of national reports, which consider the implementation of the Habitat II agenda and new challenges, emerging trends and a prospective vision for sustainable human settlements and urban development, as well as cross-cutting issues, in a balanced way. Such guidelines should allow for different approaches to preparing the reports according to different national circumstances while ensuring their compatibility, and should facilitate contributions from Habitat Agenda partners, including local governments and their associations, civil society groups, the private sector and academic institutions, to the national reports;

3. *Calls upon* Member States, using any available assistance and necessary guidance and support from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to form national Habitat committees where they do not exist and strengthen the existing national Habitat committees to ensure their effective and efficient participation in the Habitat III preparatory process, including the preparation of national reports;

4. *Invites* Member States to prepare, before the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III, to be held in New York during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, national reports which consider the implementation of the Habitat II agenda and of other relevant internationally agreed goals and targets, as well as new challenges, emerging trends and a prospective vision for sustainable human settlements and urban development, as a basis for the formulation of a new urban agenda, in line with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 67/216;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the Conference, using the expertise of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and of the United Nations system as a whole and, specifically, in cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions, and of other relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, to prepare regional reports drawing on the national reports as well as on available knowledge, resources and data as inputs to the first and second meetings of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III;

6. *Also requests* the Secretary-General of the Conference, using the expertise of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and of the United Nations system as a whole and, specifically, in cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions, and of other relevant international, regional and subregional international organizations, to prepare a global report drawing on the national and regional reports, and also on available knowledge, resources and data, as an input to and support for the preparatory process of the Conference;

7. *Further requests* the Secretary-General of the Conference to use planned regional and global meetings such as the seventh session of the World Urban Forum, sessions of the United Nations regional commissions and regular sessions of regional ministerial conferences on housing and urban development, and also of other relevant regional intergovernmental meetings, for the development of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme input to the preparatory process and invites the conveners of these events to facilitate dialogue on key issues in order to provide inputs to the first and second meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, while ensuring that the quality of participation and the outcomes are not compromised;

8. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General of the Conference, using the expertise of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and of the United Nations system as a whole, to provide support to Member States, including through their national Habitat committees and national urban forums, to elaborate the national reports and to strengthen mechanisms for enabling the effective participation and contribution of all Habitat Agenda partners at all stages of the preparatory process and at the Conference itself, including national urban campaigns;

9. *Also calls upon* the Secretary-General of the Conference to continue engaging all Habitat Agenda partners and new partners in the World Urban Campaign in order to identify and collect good practices that could contribute to the new urban agenda and to support national urban campaigns and their communication and outreach activities initiated to contribute to national preparations for Habitat III;

10. *Welcomes* paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 67/216, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to propose to the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III specific support mechanisms to enable the effective contributions and active participation of local authorities and other stakeholders in the preparatory process and the Conference itself, building on the positive experience enabled by the rules and procedures of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the inclusive engagement modalities of Habitat II, and, in that context, invites the Secretary-General of the Conference to encourage all Habitat Agenda partners, including women and youth, local authorities and their associations, to contribute actively to the preparatory process for Habitat III and to the Conference itself;

11. *Invites* the Secretary-General of the Conference to consider establishing an effective United Nations system-wide coordination mechanism so as to enable the effective participation and contributions of United Nations departments, funds and programmes, the regional commissions and specialized agencies, and the international financial institutions, at all stages of the preparatory process and at the Conference itself;

12. *Invites* the Secretary-General of the Conference to adopt where feasible innovative technologies and approaches so as to ensure that the preparatory process for Habitat III is inclusive, participatory and efficient, such as paper-smart meetings and internet platforms that can be used for sharing analytical tools and reports and for promoting dialogue during the Conference's preparatory process, and to ensure that the use of such approaches does not adversely affect the participation of countries with limited information and communication technology capacities;

13. *Urges* the Secretary-General of the Conference to consider mobilizing high-level expertise from within the United Nations system to assist in the preparatory process of the Conference;

14. *Welcomes* the decision of the General Assembly to establish a trust fund for the Conference and urges the Secretary-General of the Conference to put in place all mechanisms and operational procedures necessary to ensure the fund's efficiency and effectiveness, in line with paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 67/216;

15. *Urges* international and bilateral donors, and also the private sector, financial institutions, foundations and other donors, to support the national, regional and global preparations for the Conference through voluntary contributions to the trust fund and to support the participation of representatives of developing countries to meetings of the Preparatory Committee and to the Conference itself;

16. *Welcomes* paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 67/216, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide, in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, all appropriate support to the Secretary-General of the Conference and to the work of the preparatory process and the Conference, while promoting inter-agency support to the maximum possible extent;

17. *Requests*, in that context, the Secretary-General of the Conference, in consultation with the United Nations Secretary-General, to mobilize appropriate resources to support preparatory activities for the first and second meetings of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III, building upon the substantive outputs included in the work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and making full use of the extensive capabilities of the United Nations system to provide capacity-building and technical and expert assistance to Member States to complete their national reports;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the Conference, in his capacity as Executive Director, to submit to the Governing Council at its twenty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including an update on progress made in the preparations for the Conference.

*8th plenary meeting
19 April 2011*