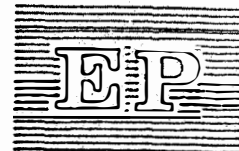




United Nations Environment Programme



Distr.
GENERAL
UNEP/GC/6
12 April 1973
Original: ENGLISH

GOVERNING COUNCIL

First session

Geneva, 12-22 June 1973

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE-EXPOSITION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Plan for and anticipated costs of the Conference-Exposition

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>
A. Introduction	1 - 2
B. Reasons for a Conference-Exposition	3 - 12
C. Objectives of the Conference-Exposition	13
D. The preparatory process	14 - 18
E. Organization of the Conference-Exposition	19
F. Time and place of the Conference-Exposition	20 - 21
G. Substantive subjects for the Conference	22 - 25
H. Demonstration projects:	
1. Purpose and concept	26 - 28
2. Selection	29 - 35
3. Management and financing	36 - 37
4. Presentation at the Conference-Exposition	38 - 40
5. Continuation of the programme	41 - 42
I. Conference documentation	43
J. Public information	44 - 45
K. United Nations system	46

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>
L. Intergovernmental bodies	47
M. Non-governmental organizations	48 - 50
N. National organization by the host country	51
<u>Annex:</u> Text of Recommendation No. 2 of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment	

Note: An addendum to this document will give particulars
of the estimated costs of the Conference-Exposition

A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, at its twenty-seventh session, having considered the report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment ^{1/} and the report of the Secretary-General thereon, ^{2/} adopted three resolutions ^{3/} dealing inter alia with the improvement of human settlements. By one of these, resolution 3001 (XXVII), the General Assembly decided to hold a "United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements". In the preamble to the resolution the Assembly stated in the following terms its considerations underlying its decision:

"Desiring to maintain the momentum of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in this area through a conference-exposition on human settlements, the preparation for which should generate a review of policies and programmes for human settlements, national and international, and should result in the selection and support of a series of demonstration projects on human settlements sponsored by individual countries and the United Nations."

By paragraph 2 of the resolution the Assembly accepted the offer of the Government of Canada to act as host to the Conference-Exposition.

2. By paragraph 3 of the same resolution the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General:

"to prepare and submit to the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its first session a report containing a plan for and anticipated costs of the Conference-Exposition."

It is in response to that resolution that this report has been prepared for consideration by the Governing Council.

B. Reasons for a Conference-Exposition

3. The subject of human settlements was one of the major topics considered by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held at Stockholm in June 1972. In the course of the preparations for that Conference, a great deal of material was assembled on that subject which reflected the concerns and views of governments, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations. In addition, the debate to which it gave rise at Stockholm underscored the gravity and urgency of the problems associated with human settlements in nearly all parts of the world.

4. One of the main reasons for the unsatisfactory conditions which characterize human settlements is the inadequacy of public policies in this field. Present policies are still largely rooted in the concepts of the 19th century. They have

^{1/} Report of the Conference held at Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972 (A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1)

^{2/} A/8783 and Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1 and Add.2

^{3/} Resolutions 2998 (XXVII), 2999 (XXVII) and 3001 (XXVII) all of 15 December 1972.

not fully responded to the fundamental changes which have occurred throughout the world, in developed as well as developing countries, during the past several decades. The crisis of human settlements stems from a misunderstanding of the effects of urbanization, from indifference to the consequences of interventions in the natural environment and from remissness in taking the necessary preventive or corrective actions.

5. While the problems of human settlements may take different forms under different conditions - unemployment or underemployment, poor housing and inadequate basic sanitary services in developing countries, congestion and pollution in the industrial societies - what is needed is action tending to influence policy relating to human settlements, to correct, where appropriate, prevailing views regarding their function and to introduce a new conception of their role. One consequence should be the adoption of a new and comprehensive approach to the planning, development and management of human settlements, an approach which embraces environmental concerns, which reflects more accurately the dynamics of a changing world and which is related to overall social and economic policy and development priorities.

6. Such a new approach will have to take account of the many different facets of human settlements and their interrelationship. Each has a unique character and geographical scale. It must also take into account often conflicting requirements, and yet the whole must fit into an integrated plan, sufficiently flexible to respond dynamically to the rapid evolution of society.

7. In a large number of countries, poverty and unemployment are at the root of the deplorable condition of human settlements. In many cases governments seem to have given insufficient priority to human settlements in their economic development plans. Even countries with high per capita incomes, where human settlements have been the subject of government policies for more than a century, face persistent problems associated with unsatisfactory regional and urban planning, rural poverty and migration, very rapid rates of concentration in cities, urban degradation and a shortage of housing, inadequate transportation, poor sanitary and water systems and the harmful social and cultural consequences of these conditions.

8. Housing, together with its associated infrastructure, is one of the most critical determinants of living conditions in human settlements. Although house construction is one of the world's oldest crafts, it is one of the least rationalised and often the most ill adjusted to local circumstances. Various United Nations resolutions and documents have stressed the need for devising new modes and systems of housing and shelter and, especially, for methods to mobilize domestic savings and international resources for these purposes.

9. Bold new thinking may provide innovative solutions for a number of problems, as successes in some countries have demonstrated. The risks are considerable, however, and failures may result in human suffering as well as financial losses. Fear of these risks has often led authorities to adopt a conservative and largely passive posture. It is, therefore, of great importance that, as and when new solutions in the field of human settlements are shown to be successful, they should become known as soon as possible to others who are confronted with similar problems. Governments may well be willing to apply solutions that have been tested elsewhere.

10. It must be recognized, of course, that different political, economic and social systems with different concepts of property, landholding, and ways of employment call for different policy responses. Variations in climatic conditions and in local materials and labour dictate the use of new technologies or the adaptation of those existing technologies which are the most suitable for specific locations. The demonstration of such policy responses and technologies could effectively contribute to international transfers of experience.

11. Human settlements demonstration projects also have an important role to play at the national level. Well-conceived, soundly planned and managed demonstration projects can act as a catalyst for innovation, while reducing the risk associated with such innovation. The improvement of human settlements often requires considerable time and the commitment of vast resources, and it is these decisions which determine the shape, form and environment of human settlements for long periods. The associated risks can be reduced through experimentation conducted on a smaller scale.

12. The planning and management of demonstration projects, together with their evaluation and the application and transfer of their results to a larger scale; call for techniques that are not widely known and require further study and development.

C. Objectives of the Conference-Exposition

13. The Conference with its preparatory process would be a single, although critical, event in a long-term programme of action within the international community to support national initiatives in the field of human settlements. The following objectives are proposed for the Conference-Exposition:

(a) To stimulate innovations, serve as a means for the exchange of experience and ensure the widest possible dissemination of new ideas and technologies in the field of human settlements by:

- (i) exposing ideas, policies and programmes which have been successfully applied in various parts of the world in dealing with the problems of human settlements and which may be applicable in other countries;
- (ii) selecting and presenting a series of projects which demonstrate successful solutions of settlement problems;
- (iii) showing how demonstration areas and demonstration projects can become nuclei of urban and rural innovation and devising methods for the selection of such areas and projects;
- (iv) elucidating the problems and demonstrating the opportunities arising from transfers of technology;

(b) To formulate and to make recommendations for an international programme which will assist governments in:

- (i) reaching a fresh and better understanding of the present and future role of human settlements in economic, social and ecological life, with due regard for the differences in stages of economic development, culture, climate and national aims, and for the evolution of the form and function of human settlements under differing conditions;
- (ii) establishing long-term goals for the development and management of human settlements together with national and international measures designed to achieve these goals;
- (iii) formulating human settlements policies, based on this understanding, which embody a comprehensive inter-disciplinary approach to their planning and management;
- (iv) establishing national and international priorities in the allocation of efforts and resources which are consistent with these policies;
- (v) developing methods and techniques for the effective utilization of technological, financial and other resources in the achievement of policy objectives;
- (vi) establishing or strengthening appropriate institutions capable of providing intellectual leadership as well as technical and financial assistance to requesting Governments.

(c) To stimulate interest in developing appropriate financial systems and institutions for human settlements among those making financial resources available and those in a position to use such resources.

D. The preparatory process

14. The Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements should provide an opportunity for high-level representatives of governments to come together and address themselves to these and other policy issues characterizing the world-wide crisis of human settlements. It would seem desirable that the preparatory work should isolate the key issues and draft recommendations for action at the international and regional level and that it should also make suggestions for action at the national level.

15. In view of the urgency and importance of the problems of human settlements, the Conference should attract great public interest. Many people will think of the Conference as offering a means of improving their environment. In planning the Conference, this aspect will, no doubt, be well considered.

16. The Governing Council may wish to recommend to the General Assembly that preparations for the Conference be guided by an intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Conference-Exposition. The Governing Council may also wish to consider to what authority such a Committee should report.

17. The Governing Council may wish further to recommend to the General Assembly that the Secretary-General appoint a Secretary-General for the Conference who would be assisted by a small secretariat drawing on the resources of the United Nations system, and especially those of the Department for Economic and Social Affairs and its Centre for Housing, Building and Planning. Additional resources may have to be made available for this purpose. It would seem advisable that the Conference secretariat should work in close consultation with the Under-Secretary-General for Social and Economic Affairs and with the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. In view of the importance of regional action, the United Nations regional economic commissions will also have an important role to play. It is expected that the Secretary-General of the Conference would convene panels of experts as required during the preparatory process.

18. To ensure full and efficient co-ordination with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the host Government, the secretariat of the Conference should be located at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

E. Organization of the Conference-Exposition

19. The scope of the Conference, as described above, would make it necessary to provide for:

(a) Plenary meetings, in which heads of delegations would have an opportunity to describe their countries' human settlement problems and their Governments' policies and programmes for dealing with these problems. The plenary Conference would also consider and, as appropriate, adopt recommendations formulated during the preparatory process or during the Conference itself;

(b) One or two committees of the whole, in which senior government representatives would consider draft recommendations to be referred to the plenary;

(c) Working groups where appropriate, consisting of experts designated by governments and by various organizations, would consider the demonstrations of solutions, and their implications for policies, and relate them to policy recommendations for consideration in the committees and the plenary.

F. Time and place of the Conference-Exposition

20. As mentioned earlier, the General Assembly by its resolution 3001 (XXVII) accepted the offer of the Government of Canada to act as host to the Conference-Exposition in 1975. In order to allow adequate time for the preparation of an undertaking of this size and scope, the Government of Canada, at the suggestion of the Secretary-General, agreed to its postponement to the late spring of 1976.

It is expected that a formal proposal to that effect will be made to the General Assembly at its 28th session. However, to permit the host Government to proceed with the necessary arrangements, the Secretary-General consulted Member States, by his note verbale SO 145 (19) of 2 February 1973, on the postponement. As noted in his second note verbale SO 145 (19) of 14 March 1973, no objection to this suggestion has been raised by any Member State.

21. The Government of Canada has decided that the Conference will be held at Vancouver, British Columbia. It is expected that a period of two weeks will be required for the Conference-Exposition, and the proposals contained in this report are based on this assumption.

G. Substantive subjects for the Conference

22. In this connexion, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in concurrence with the Government of Canada, called a meeting of experts to discuss substantive themes for the agenda of the Conference-Exposition and methods for the selection, management and presentation of demonstration projects. This meeting was held in Canada in May 1973. A report on the meeting will be submitted to the Governing Council. In its subsequent report to the General Assembly, the Governing Council may wish to include recommendations concerning the agenda of the Conference-Exposition.

23. The Conference-Exposition will need to focus on a number of substantive areas. The close relationship which exists between policies concerning human settlements and economic and social development deserves special attention. International assistance for human settlements also deserves an important place on the agenda. So do the questions of the growth and patterns of human settlements as well as issues relating to their form and structure. The critical determinants of housing, transportation and communications will need to be examined. The crucial subject of the mobilization of savings and resources for improving human settlements will have to be thoroughly explored.

24. By 1976 the Secretary-General will have made some progress in implementing General Assembly resolutions 2998 (XXVII) and 2999 (XXVII) which recommend actions in support of human settlements by international financial institutions. The Governing Council may wish to propose that the Conference-Exposition consider the progress achieved.

25. The results of the 1974 World Population Conference may have a bearing on the Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements and should be taken into account in the preparations for the Conference-Exposition.

I. Demonstration projects

1. Purpose and concept

26. Human settlements demonstration projects will be a unique feature of the Conference-Exposition. The purpose and concept of demonstration projects are very broad. They are intended to:

- (a) Focus the attention of the preparatory work of the Conference-Exposition, and of the Conference itself, on available solutions to human settlement problems;
- (b) Provide a pragmatic basis for the active participation of governments in the Conference-Exposition;
- (c) Provide illustrations that will assist governments to understand their human settlement problems and encourage them to undertake demonstration projects that can become nuclei for rural and urban transformation;
- (d) Clarify various aspects of the policy issues and recommendations to be considered by the Conference.

27. Human settlements demonstration projects can be viewed as one illustration of the concept of the "designated areas" referred to in recommendation No. 2 of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. ^{1/} These demonstration projects should go much beyond this concept, however. Unlike such designated areas, demonstration projects may or may not be location-specific. They may be "hard" and concern, for instance, building technologies or communications systems or new communities. Or they may be "soft" and concern, for example, growth management policies or financial institutions. Demonstration projects may include:

- (a) Projects which are already completed and in operation;
- (b) Projects initiated as a result of the preparatory work for the Conference-Exposition;
- (c) Projects that will begin after the Conference-Exposition; and
- (d) Projects that have a strong chance of being implemented.

Projects should meet the twin criteria of demonstrating innovative solutions to human settlements problems and of containing features that could be of value to other countries and regions.

28. The most valuable benefit of demonstration projects will be their effect of stimulating the development and testing of new ideas and techniques and of providing for the widest possible dissemination of these ideas and techniques. More particularly, demonstration projects could illustrate a variety of practical means for dealing with even the most intractable problems of human settlements. The problems and solutions to be illustrated need not be confined to the physical environment, nor should the projects be limited to the strictly physical aspects of human settlements. They may also show how policy formulation, financing mechanisms and legislative and administrative techniques have helped to deal with problems in human settlements and to achieve satisfactory environmental and social solutions.

^{1/} See annex I.

2. Selection

29. The early selection and availability of demonstration projects is a prerequisite for the success of the Conference-Exposition.

30. In many cases, projects already under way will be selected. Whilst governments should be encouraged to undertake as many demonstration projects as are feasible and useful, the number of projects that can be actually presented and discussed at the Conference-Exposition is inevitably limited. A selection process will, therefore, have to be devised.

31. The basic decision to select and submit demonstration projects is, of course, that of the governments concerned. The secretariat of the Conference-Exposition will ask all governments to indicate, before 31 March 1974, which of their projects they wish to propose for selection and presentation at the Conference.

32. It is conceivable that no suitable projects may be proposed that relate to certain subject areas of the Conference. In this case the secretariat and the Preparatory Committee should consult with governments to ascertain whether there are actual or potential projects in these areas which could be used for demonstration purposes.

33. To the extent possible, demonstration projects should relate to the main substantive themes as determined by the Governing Council.

34. The process of selecting projects for presentation at the Conference-Exposition might best take place in two stages: first, at the regional level, and then at the international level. The selection at the regional level might best be arranged through meetings organized by the Secretary-General of the Conference under the auspices of the regional economic commissions. Projects proposed by governments from the region would be discussed and a selection would then be made for consideration at the international level.

35. The Preparatory Committee for the Conference-Exposition will have to make a preliminary selection of demonstration projects for the Conference by the autumn of 1974. In the selection process, over-lapping should be avoided as much as possible but care should be taken that all potential subjects for demonstration projects are covered. Special attention should be given to demonstration projects which make use of intermediate technology and which have special relevance to conditions in developing countries.

3. Management and financing

36. The primary responsibility for presenting demonstration projects will rest with the sponsoring governments. However, on the request of the country concerned, the secretariat could provide technical assistance within the limits of its available resources for this purpose or support requests to other potential sources of assistance. Whenever necessary and possible, the Secretary-General of the Conference should be authorized to assemble teams of experts for the planning, development and co-ordination of those demonstration projects that have been accepted for presentation at the Conference.

37. Although the Conference secretariat will support the planning and execution of demonstration projects as far as possible, its means for this purpose will, of necessity, be limited. It is expected, however, that bilateral or multilateral assistance from normal development assistance sources may be obtained for the planning and operation of developing countries' projects which are selected for presentation at the Conference-Exposition.

4. Presentation at the Conference-Exposition

38. The Conference secretariat should have at its disposal resources for the preparation of reports and other means of presenting the demonstration projects at the Conference-Exposition.

39. There are many possible methods of presenting demonstration projects. As a result of international co-operative efforts, such as Expo 67 and Expo 70, techniques of presentation have advanced constantly. Emphasis will be placed on audio-visual techniques; and other modern communications media can be used to great advantage.

40. In a number of cases, it may be desirable to present projects at the regional level instead of, or as well as, at the world level at Vancouver, before and after the Conference-Exposition.

5. Continuation of the programme

41. With a view to the future continuation of the demonstration programme, a systematic study should be undertaken of the methods of selection, planning, management and evaluation of demonstration projects. The Secretary-General of the Conference-Exposition may convene a panel of experts to prepare a report on such a study for the Conference.

42. It is of vital importance that the momentum gained during the preparatory process of the Conference should not be lost. It may be desirable to provide for the continuance of demonstrated projects, or even for new projects, after the Conference. The Conference might give special consideration as to how continuing assistance might be provided to such a demonstration project.

I. Conference documentation

43. While it is premature at this stage to attempt to identify the specific components and exact volume of documentation, adequate provision must be made for necessary documentation for the preparatory process, the Conference itself and Conference follow-up.

J. Public information

44. The preparatory process should be accompanied and supported by a continuous flow of information to the public about human settlements and about the plans for the Conference. The Centre for Economic and Social Information of the United Nations could be entrusted with an important part of this task. As far as means are available, motion pictures, radio and television programmes and material for display should support written material. Governments, together with professional and other non-governmental organizations should be encouraged to give contributions to a systematic coverage not only of the Conference itself, but also of the preparatory process.

45. Conference arrangements at Vancouver will include all the facilities needed for the world information media.

K. United Nations system

46. Several of the specialized agencies belonging to the United Nations system already operate programmes related to human settlements. Their involvement, support and co-operation are, therefore essential.

L. Intergovernmental bodies

47. Whenever possible and useful, the secretariat should establish contacts with intergovernmental bodies not belonging to the United Nations system.

M. Non-governmental organizations

48. The close co-operation and support of non-governmental organizations have proved to offer an important contribution to the success of United Nations activities. The same may be true of the Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements. In order to foster this co-operation and support, good working relations should be established as soon as possible with those non-governmental organizations accredited to the United Nations which are actively interested in the questions relating to human settlements. They should be informed of the objectives and purposes of the Conference-Exposition and their advice should be sought.

49. All organizations can contribute by stimulating the interest of their members. A number of organizations will, in addition, be able to make a substantive contribution to the preparatory process.

50. The international associations of natural scientists have created an effective means for co-operation by the establishment of a common scientific council (International Council of Scientific Unions) with a Special Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE). As regards questions relating to human settlements, it might also be most useful if arrangements could be made to bring together existing organizations active in the areas of the social and medical sciences, town and country planning, and architecture and construction technology.

N. National Organization by the host country

51. The Government of Canada has initiated arrangements for receiving the Conference-Exposition. An early reservation of the conference site and of hotel accommodation was necessary. Preparations are also under way for a possible programme of post-conference technical visits. A national host secretariat and a national participation staff are being set up under separate directors for Canada's responsibilities as host country and for the substantive part of Canada's contribution.

ANNEX

Text of Recommendation No. 2 of the United Nations
Conference on the Human Environment

Recommendation 2

1. It is recommended that Governments should designate to the Secretary-General areas in which they have committed themselves (or are prepared to commit themselves) to a long-term programme of improvement and global promotion of the environment.

(a) In this connexion, countries are invited to share internationally all relevant information on the problems they encounter and the solutions they devise in developing these areas.

(b) Countries concerned will presumably appoint an appropriate body to plan such a programme, and to supervise its implementation, for areas which could vary in size from a city block to a national region; presumably, too, the programme will be designated to serve, among other purposes, as a vehicle for the preparation and launching of experimental and pilot projects.

(c) Countries which are willing to launch an improvement programme should be prepared to welcome international co-operation, seeking the advice or assistance of competent international bodies.

2. It is further recommended:

(a) That in order to ensure the success of the programme, Governments should urge the Secretary-General to undertake a process of planning and co-ordination whereby contact would be established with nations likely to participate in the programme, international teams of experts might be assembled for that purpose;

(b) That a Conference/Demonstration on Experimental Human Settlements should be held under the auspices of the United Nations in order to provide for co-ordination and the exchange of information and to demonstrate to world public opinion the potential of this approach by means of a display of experimental projects;

(c) That nations should take into consideration Canada's offer to organize such a Conference/Demonstration and to act as host to it.