

**European Union**

**ITEM 95 b and c : HUMAN SETTLEMENTS and HABITAT II**

- In the year 2000 more than 50 % of the world's population will be living, and 60% of the total GNP of the world's economy will be generated, in cities. Therefore, the goals of HABITAT II, which are adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world, are extremely relevant in this context. This issue is closely linked with poverty eradication, one of the themes common to all major international conferences held recently. It is also linked with the issue of sustainable livelihoods, sustainable consumption and production patterns and sustainable lifestyles, all fundamental elements for the achievement of sustainable development, as recognized in Agenda 21.

- The improvement of human settlements and shelter conditions are of the utmost importance for combating urban poverty, unemployment, violence and social disintegration and for the protection of the environment. It is therefore an issue which lies at the centre of the economic, social and environmental components of development and which plays an important part in the issue of cultural identity.

- We look forward to the adoption by consensus in Istanbul of a Statement of Principles and Commitments and a Global Plan of Action which promotes sustainable development through a participatory approach , which reflects the positions of all actors involved in the negotiations and which brings forward clear political messages of choices that need to be made, thus contributing to meet the enormous challenges that the issue of human settlements poses. We reaffirm our commitment to reach such an objective.

- The EU has actively participated into and contributed to the preparatory process of HABITAT II and intends to continue to participate actively and constructively in the the next and last preparatory session of the conference, to be held in New York early in 1996 and in the conference itself, next June in Istanbul. We are convinced that the involvement of the civil society, including NGOs, and of local authorities in the preparatory process and the

conference itself is fundamental. The local Agenda 21, which has played a critical role in the follow-up to Rio, should be acknowledged in the preparations of HABITAT II.

Since the issue of "the right to housing" is a very difficult one, we stress that the expert meeting on this issue, that has been under consideration for some time, should be organized by Habitat as soon as possible.

- We consider that the upcoming HABITAT II should be practically oriented and take into account the outcomes of all the recent major conferences

- We stress that its future outcome should be considered in the framework of a coordinated and integrated follow-up and implementation of the results of all these conferences.