



HABITAT FORUM

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The Habitat Forum which took place in Vancouver simultaneously with the UN Conference on Human Settlements was a colourful, exciting, memorable and controversial happening. 3,500 Persons from 86 countries registered as participants, but as registration was not obligatory, the actual number of attendants and visitors was estimated at over 6,000.

The following report only sketches the contours of this wide-ranging event and its preparations. It carries one step further the discussion on the aims and procedures of "parallel" NGO meetings of this kind.

I realise that the views expressed in the report are not shared by all Forum participants and possibly not by all members of the NGO Committee for Habitat. I take the sole responsibility for its contents.

The Habitat Forum was not the least remarkable because it was the product of inspiration, imagination and many hours of hard work contributed by hundreds; Canadians and citizens of many other countries. It is impossible to name a few without doing injustice to many others.

J.G. van Putten

REPORT ON THE

H A B I T A T F O R U M

Vancouver, 27 May - 11 June 1976

Habitat, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, was one of a series of large UN conferences dealing with urgent world problems. Habitat was an intergovernmental conference; decisions could therefore only be made by the 136 governments represented. Nevertheless, like had been the case at some of its predecessors, simultaneously with the Governmental meeting a conference took place of representatives of professional organizations, voluntary bodies and interested individuals: the Habitat Forum.

In his first letter to UN Member-governments Mr. Enrique Penalosa, Secretary General of Habitat, wrote on 18 June 1974: " we should also consider some sort of parallel meeting, similar to the Stockholm Environment Conference Forum or the Bucharest Population Conference Tribune. At such a meeting the concerns, proposals and expertise of all the non-governmental organizations and groupes could be expressed and then transmitted collectively to the policy makers meeting in their official sessions. The active participation of non-governmental organizations is not only important but essential if we are to achieve the impact and follow-through on which the success of the Conference depends."

The UN and Non-Governmental Organizations

The relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental bodies has seen the beginning of a new development over the past five or ten years. A formal structure for consultation between them had been in existence since the beginning of the United Nations. It is based on Article 71 of the UN Charter which reads: "The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence."

Up to now over 650 non-governmental organizations have been granted such consultative status. According to their importance to the UN they have been divided into three categories, each having its own rights and privileges, such as those of proposing items for the ECOSOC agenda, speaking at meetings, circulating documents to government delegates, etc.

Apart from this formal relationship a number of non-governmental organizations have been able to establish less formal, but often quite effective, working relationships with the UN Secretariat for instance in the form of specialist reports, the participation in expert seminars or in carrying out certain activities "in the field", such as disaster relief operations.

During the last years the UN is increasingly making an appeal on NGO's to mobilise support for its policy, a well-known example being its efforts to rally public opinion behind its strategy for the Second Development Decade. At the same time efforts of NGO's to influence UN policies have increased. On the other hand several UN member-governments have recently protested against what they consider too much influence of NGO's in UN affairs.

In 1972, during the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, for the first time a parallel NGO Forum was held. It was encouraged by the UN as a method to obtain publicity and support for its activities. NGO's considered it a means by which

they could express their points of view to the governments. Not only NGO's in consultative status with ECOSOC were admitted as observers to the Stockholm Conference; others, often only of national or local membership, were also allowed to attend. Statements by youth and NGO groups were read at the governmental conference. Simultaneous Forums or Tribunals were thereafter held at other UN Conferences in Bucharest, Rome and Mexico.

NGO Committee for Habitat

In the wake of the Stockholm Conference several meetings of NGO's concerned with the environment took place. During one of these assemblies, in June 1973 in Geneva, attended by representatives of over 140 NGO's, a Working Group on Human Settlement was founded. Its principal task was the preparation of the involvement of NGO's in the Vancouver Conference. When the 'environment NGO's' created their own organization, in March 1974 in Nairobi, the Working Group on Human Settlements was officially established as one of the groups to be coordinated by the Environment Liaison Board.

The Working Group was reorganized in November 1974 following an exchange of letters between the Deputy Secretary General of Habitat, the Chairman of the Conference of NGO's in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, and the Chairman of the Working Group. Agreement was reached on the transformation of the Working Group into an International NGO Committee for Habitat. The Conference and the Working Group accepted joint responsibility for the composition of the Committee, whose purpose was 'to assist NGO's in contributing to the preparations of the Habitat Conference and more specifically to coordinate and organize parallel NGO activities.' A list of members of the Committee is contained in enclosure 1.

In the course of 1974 a number of Canadian NGO's had created the "Association in Canada Serving Organizations for Human Settlements (ACSOH)" based in Vancouver. ACSOH was to act, under the auspices of the International Committee, as the local host organisation for NGO participants in Habitat.

The Committee met three times: in New York in January 1975, in Geneva in September 1975 and in Vancouver in January 1976. It considered as its main task the organisation of the Habitat Forum with the following objectives:

- to increase public awareness of some of the gigantic problems with which man is confronted; of the solutions which are available to many of these problems; and of the consequences which the solutions may have on human life styles;
- to build up the popular support which governments need in order to make the far-reaching decisions and undertake the actions which are needed to cope with these problems;
- to coordinate the points of view of NGO's for presentation to the Conference and to make an effort to have these points of view reflected in the Conference decisions;
- to enable the UN and member governments to make use of the vast experience and expertise of professional and other organizations from developed and developing countries around the world, in fields related to human settlements.

The Committee decided to make a special effort to involve the developing countries in the Forum and its preparatory process.

A division of work was agreed upon between the Committee and ACSOH, according to which programme development and policy matters were carried out by a small staff in the office of the Committee's Chairman in The Hague, while physical arrangements such as meeting rooms and living accommodation were being handled in Vancouver. The Vancouver secretariat was also to act as the main information center for the Forum.

The Preparations

In order to give publicity to Habitat and the Forum, as well as to prepare NGO's for their participation in it, three issues were published of a Habitat Forum Newsletter. With the help of the Canadian Government and the UN they were given a wide circulation. Publicity on the Forum was also disseminated via a magazine published for Habitat by the Canadian Government. In addition, the UN Development Fund, in cooperation with the Committee, devoted an issue of its NGO newsletter, "Commitment" to human settlement issues and the Habitat Forum.

The Committee urged NGO's to devote attention to human settlement problems in their own programmes of activities. They were encouraged to approach their governments at an early stage in order to influence the positions taken by their national delegates at the Habitat Conference and its Preparatory Committee. At the suggestion of the Committee, national NGO committees for Habitat were set up in several countries to guide the preparatory process. Regional NGO meetings were held in Paris and Geneva where the Forum programme was discussed. Both secretariats, in The Hague and Vancouver, in reply to requests, sent out thousands of leaflets containing practical information for Forum participants.

After intensive consultation the Committee selected nine central themes for a core programme of the Forum. In order to introduce these they invited three to four well-known experts per theme. At the same time they stimulated NGO's to contribute programme items in the form of papers, panel discussions, exhibits, films, etc. The Committee acted as coordinator by bringing participating groups together and, where deemed necessary, taking the initiative to fill obvious gaps. While most of the correspondence involved in programme preparation was done from the Chairman's office in The Hague, the center of activity in this respect shifted to Vancouver during the last five or six weeks prior to the opening of the Forum. This was notably the case with regard to the exhibits which for the greater part were contributed by groups from North America, mostly Vancouver-based agencies.

Early in 1976 the Canadian Government made to the Committee the services available of an 'emissary', who during visits to East Asia and Latin America encouraged the participation of NGO representatives from those parts of the world.

Jericho Beach

The Habitat Forum became a spectacular event because of the environment in which it was held. It was located at Jericho Beach Park, a place where Indians traditionally gathered, at the water front of English Bay against the background of snow-clad mountains. A former naval airbase was converted into a conference and

exhibition site. Five large airplane hangars were transformed into meeting rooms, theatres, exhibition halls, workshops and restaurants. A main amphitheatre could seat more than 2,000 persons; three halls had a capacity of about 800, 600 and 400 respectively, while there were a dozen other meeting rooms of various sizes. The three largest halls were equipped with simultaneous interpretation: English, Spanish and French. The renovation of the site was done with a maximum use of donated and recycled material by a work force numbering at some periods more than 160 persons; partly volunteers and partly employed under a special Federal/Provincial Labour Programme. The buildings were decorated inside and outside with Indian and folk-art motives. Pergolas linked the various buildings and totem poles were erected at the main entrances.

It was the first time facilities were especially built for a non-governmental meeting taking place during a UN Conference. Their functional, but at the same time artistic and informal, atmosphere made a special contribution to the exchange of views among the participants. Although there were bus and boat shuttle services connecting Jericho Beach with downtown Vancouver, the distance from the area of the governmental Conference was felt by some as a disadvantage. The fact was that there was no site nearer the city center where conference and exhibit facilities of a comparable size could have been made available.

The Forum Programme

The opening session of the Forum took place on Thursday, 27 May. After greetings from Indian Chiefs of the region, the participants were addressed by the Rt.Hon. Barney Danson, Minister of State for Urban Affairs in the Canadian Government, and President of the UN Conference, Enrique Penalosa, Secretary General of Habitat, Edgardo Martinez, a young architect-planner from Uruguay, and the Chairman of the NGO Committee.

The Forum started a few days prior to the UN Conference to enable the participants to orient themselves on the governmental discussions. The main Conference documents were introduced by member of the UN Secretariat. At the same time the first discussions took place on a joint statement for presentation to the Conference. Also during the first days the report of the 'Vancouver Symposium' was presented at the Forum. The Vancouver Symposium was a meeting of 25 experts convened by the International Institute for Environment and Development together with two North American NGO's. Its report drew attention to the most urgent human settlements issues and greatly stimulated the Forum discussions.

As has been mentioned the Committee had selected nine central themes which constituted the subjects of plenary sessions. They were:

- The Man-made and the Natural Environment
- Social Justice and the Question of Differing Values and Cultures
- Sharing and Managing the World's Resources
- National Settlement Policies
- People's Participation in Planning and Administration
- Land Use and Ownership
- Community Action for a Better Habitat
- Rural Development
- Appropriate Technology.

Speakers were invited to consider these subjects against the background of the interrelated problems of environmental degradation, the scarcity of resources, population growth, the food crisis and international economic and trade relations.

On several occasions the discussions started in the mornings' plenary sessions, were continued in smaller meetings in the afternoons or during the following days.

Simultaneously with the 'central themes' sessions, usually two 'workshop' sessions were held on themes prepared by one or several NGO's. On different subjects such 'appropriate technology', 'self-help and low-cost housing' and 'community action' a series of meetings took place. In addition, participants were given an opportunity to read papers or show films and slide programmes. Many of the audio-visual presentations prepared by Governments for the UN Conference were also shown at the Forum. Several groups presented artistic performances like theatre shows, ballets or concerts.

Recurring programme items were the daily briefings on Conference proceedings by delegates and secretariat members organized with the help of the UN Department of Public Information and a series of lunch lectures by prominent speakers, arranged in cooperation with the International Institute for Environment and Development in London.

Although most programme items had been scheduled in advance, many were announced at short notice. The Committee was happy to be able to comply with all requests for rooms and other meeting facilities, but not always at the time of the first preference of the requesting group. It was less successful with regard to requests for exhibit space. Over 70 groups were allocated space for inside and over 30 for outside exhibits. The indoor space proved to be too small, however, for the Committee to fulfil all last minute requests, though only a few candidates had to be disappointed.

Taken all lectures, discussion sessions, film shows, excursions, etc. together, the Forum participants could during the 16-day programme, choose among more than 700 items.

Each morning the programme was announced in "Jericho", the newspaper published under the auspices of the Committee, which kept the participants on both the Conference and the Forum informed about the Habitat events.

By the newspaper, daily briefings and a two-way closed circuit television connection the Forum and the Conference were kept informed of each others' proceedings.

Several hundreds of Forum participants took part in extended sessions at which joint statements were discussed for submission to the Conference. Two such statements were drafted. The first was read to the plenary session of the governmental Conference; no time could be allotted for the second one which was distributed in writing only. The texts of the statements are enclosed as annexes 2 and 3. A number of NGO representatives who did not agree with the first statement issued a 'counter-declaration', the text of which is also enclosed (annex 4).

Under the auspices of the Committee an 'advanced NGO headquarters' was established in the Georgia Hotel near the governmental Conference. Here, NGO representatives were assisted in their lobbying activities. A small staff helped to arrange informal meetings among governmental delegates and NGOs while Conference sessions

were monitored in order for NGO's to plan their approaches as effectively as possible.

Finances

By far the greater part of the costs of the Forum were those for the renovation works at Jericho Beach. It is expected that at least a number of the buildings will continue to be used by the Vancouver community. These costs, as well as those for the pre-conference newsletters, the Jericho newspaper and the local staff in Vancouver were financed through ACSOH, mainly with funds made available by the Canadian Government.

The Committee received from ACSOH an amount of roughly \$55,000 partly to finance programme activities and partly for clerical and administrative expenses including staff travel and the organization of Committee meetings.

The Netherlands and the Norwegian Governments donated \$40,000 and \$10,000 respectively to enable representatives from developing countries to take part in the Forum and its preparation. Through the Canadian NGO Participation Group the Committee received from the Canadian International Development Agency an amount of \$10,000. NGO's contributed another \$1,400.

The Committee spent more than \$ 53,000 to enable Committee members from developing countries to attend Committee meetings and to assist 43 persons of developing countries in defraying their costs of participating in the Forum.

In addition, the Committee advised the Canadian Participation Group Secretariat on the spending of funds it had received from CIDA for travel assistance to Forum participants from developing countries.

Evaluation

An evaluation of a happening with as many aspects as the Habitat Forum is not an easy matter, if only because there are different opinions about the criteria which determine its failure or success. The following is therefore a subjective account summarizing the views of the author but not necessarily those of the Committee members.

One of the purposes of the organizers of the Forum was to promote the exchange of knowledge among professionals and representatives of voluntary agencies on human settlement problems. Most of the 700 items on the Forum programme were aimed at this objective and there was a wide variety in technical level, intensity and attendance among the many meetings and discussion groups. A general impression is that those dealing with new developments (such as environmental problems and resource management) and problems of a general social or political nature drew more attention than those addressing themselves to more traditional subjects or the members of one particular profession or a NGO.

Especially successful was the Forum where it provided a meeting ground for persons or groups who had been working on the same problem but up to then in isolation from each other. At one of the last sessions a participant mentioned that she had been able to work out with others she had met at the Forum, a division of work concerning research into new pesticides. In this way a more efficient use could be made of the modest resources of a number of voluntary groups engaged in this activity.

A relatively large number of agencies active in the field of appropriate technology were represented at the Forum and they decided to create a center for permanent contact and exchange of information. One of the most useful activities at the Forum was a symposium on low-cost and self-help housing. It met in three plenary and 27 working group sessions. No less than 1,000 participants made known that they wanted to continue the contacts established at the Forum and plans for an international 'network' in this field are now under way.

Several NGO's represented at the Forum have decided to devote part of their programmes during the next few years to human settlement problems as a follow-up to discussions started at the Forum.

One of the criticisms on the Forum was that there were too many 'spectators', inhabitants from Vancouver who visited the Forum for a day or a few hours. This made the discussions sometimes diffused and unsystematic. On the other hand, the result was that many persons (some estimates mention more than 20,000) who had little or no previous exposure to international gatherings, were confronted with global issues.

The interdisciplinary combined with the international character of the event made that not only they but also many NGO representatives received a new insight in the world-wide ramifications of problems which they hitherto had only looked at from a narrow national or local point of view. This educational function of the Forum was greatly reinforced by the attention it received from local t.v., radio and press. It was encouraging to observe how many thousands of participants, sometimes for many hours and often in a most uncomfortable low temperature, took part in a discussion or listened to a prominent speaker. If only a few hundreds of them will continue to interest themselves in the issues debated and will help to create in their own cities and countries a public opinion favourable to a more intensified international cooperation, the Forum will have been worthwhile.

Influencing Governments

If there was one subject about which participants came to Vancouver with widely different expectations, it was the measure to which the Forum should or could influence the decisions of the governmental Conference. Many did not seem to realise that the Forum had no statutory power whatsoever and that its influence could therefore only be exercised in an informal way. Others were rather strongly opposed against the idea of the Forum addressing itself as such to the Conference. They were of the opinion that it would not be able to present a representative view, that NGO's could never agree on one statement and that the governments would not listen anyhow. Even within the NGO Committee for Habitat this point of view was represented.

On the side of the United Nations there was also no unanimity about the role of the Forum. As has been mentioned above the function of NGO's and their relationship to the UN is a matter of some controversy among member governments. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that at every meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat which consisted of the representatives of 58 member states, the Chairman of the NGO Committee for Habitat was invited to give a short report on the progress of the Forum, and on several occasions government representatives declared that they considered the Forum as an essential component of Habitat.

A special word of appreciation should go to the Canadian Government which not only donated generously towards the local infrastructure costs of the Forum, but also helped to create a climate which was favourable to its functioning. At the opening session of the Forum, the Canadian Minister Barney Danson, the President elect of the UN Conference, declared that he expected "the Forum to act as the conscience of the governments" and "to prod them if necessary, to act in accordance with this conscience". At the eve of the Conference the Canadian Government staged a reception for both government delegates and Forum participants at Jericho Beach, the Forum site. Another sign that a simultaneous non-governmental meeting has started to be accepted as part and parcel of a UN conference, was the fact that several speakers in the Conference referred to the Forum in their interventions.

As the input of the Forum into the Conference had to take place in an informal way, it is difficult to measure exactly what its influence has been. There is no doubt, however, that the wording of the Habitat documents on such subjects as land policy, popular participation, the supply of clean water, the involvement of NGO's in the implementation of the Conference decisions, and the coherence between human settlement issues and the problems of economic and social development, was changed because of non-governmental action.

Non-governmental influence was exercised in several ways. Some well-organized NGO's which had started to approach the Habitat Secretariat and member governments a year or more prior to the Conference, continued their lobbying, alone or in small coalitions, in Vancouver. They, as well as representatives of NGO's with less experience in lobbying activities were helped and advised by the small Forum staff in the Georgia Hotel referred to above. Many NGO's had not realised that to present statements to governmental delegates at the Conference had little effect unless these referred to the actual text which was being discussed and they could find a representative willing to submit the amendment which they advocated.

Many NGO representatives tried to get their point of view across through the adoption of a paragraph in the two joint statements adopted at the Forum. Others took the position that they could not take part in the discussions on these statements as their NGO had no agreed view on all the issues debated. What actually happened was that open discussions took place on the two statements in three and two sessions respectively of about four hours each. In between, small drafting groups which were also open, prepared new texts. Several times procedural questions were raised but those who participated in these meetings seemed to agree with the suggestion put forward by the Chairman that they should not consider themselves as representing their NGO, their country or their profession but as "concerned world citizens", trying to formulate the point of view of the people as distinguished from that of the governments. It was logical that in this context the statements should give special attention to the urgent human settlement problems of the most deprived groups of the world population. Representatives from developing countries took a very active part in both the discussions and the drafting of the statements. They were adopted by acclamation in the 'statement sessions' and over 800 signatures were collected in support of the first statement (for the second no signatures were invited). When they were presented to the Conference it was pointed out that the statements

did not reflect the unanimous point of view of the Forum participants.

The influence of the statements was reinforced by the publicity they received in the media as well as because many of the issues had been the subject of lectures and panel discussions at the Forum by famous speakers. A case in point was nuclear energy. Although a draft resolution calling for a moratorium on nuclear power plants was not adopted at the Conference, many governmental delegates must have been impressed by the fact that well-known experts expressed doubts on the wisdom of that decision.

The Future

It is not certain whether a 'parallel NGO Conference' in the nature and of the dimensions of the Habitat Forum will ever happen again. The need for a 'voice of the people' pronouncing itself on international issues and trying to influence decisions of intergovernmental bodies is, however, greater than ever. The decrease in percentages of G.N.P. devoted by the rich countries to international development cooperation, the horrendous armaments race which endangers the survival of mankind, even the statements on the New International Economic Order which speak about equality among nations but are silent about equality among people, are a few of the many symptoms of a dangerous nationalism.

The pressure put on international organizations and national governments during UN conferences should continue in between meetings and at national as well as international levels. It should be exercised through voluntary agencies, the press, the churches, the trade unions, members of parliament, political parties and all those who can influence the decision making.

International Non-Governmental Organizations can obviously play an significant role in this respect, as they represent important segments of public opinion. The way in which they are internationally organized seems, however, to discourage rather than to encourage that role. Political issues are often avoided at meetings among NGO's because they might be controversial. The statutes of the Conference of NGO's in Consultative Status with ECOSOC, which plays a useful role in defending the formal relationship between the UN and NGO's, prescribes that it cannot pronounce itself on substantial issues.

There is an urgent need for an independent center which could act as a catalyst for international NGO action on problems of world concern like economic and social development, resource management, disarmament and human rights. Its role would be to stimulate the formation of (changing) coalitions between NGO's and to provide technical assistance in the development of strategies.

Not all international NGO's, however, are able to act as political pressure groups. Many are of a strictly professional or technical character and their statutes prevent them from pronouncing themselves on issues outside their immediate sphere of interest. Nevertheless, because of their experience and knowledge, they can make important contributions towards the implementation of UN programmes. In the field of human settlements the recommendations adopted by the Habitat Conference open up new possibilities for NGO-cooperation. A special effort should be made to work out

meaningful arrangements on the basis of these recommendations, including the mobilization of hitherto untapped sources of knowledge such as those available in university institutes.

J.G. van Putten
September 1976.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE NGO COMMITTEE FOR HABITAT

Chairman:

J.G. van Putten

International Union of Local
Authorities - IULA
The Hague, the Netherlands

Members :

Mrs. Z. Daysh x)

Commonwealth Human Ecology Council
London, Great Britain

T. Farvar

Centre for Endogenous Development
Studies
Tehran, Iran

Mrs. R. Harris

Conference of NGO's; International
Social Service
New York, USA

K. Kielan

World Peace Council
Helsinki, Finland

J.L. Lalonde

International Union of Architects
Montreal, Canada

M. Luvecce xx)

Latin American Federation of Building
and Woodworkers - FLATICOM
Caracas, Venezuela

W. Parker Mauldin

The Population Council
New York, USA

Mrs. Ch. Nsekela

Family Planning Association of
Tanzania
Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania

R. Radović

International Federation for Housing
and Planning; Serbian Association of
Planners
Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Mrs. K. Lakshmi Raghuramaiah

All India Women's Conference; Inter-
national Alliance of Women
New Delhi, India

C. Ritchie

Environmental Liaison Board; Inter-
national Council of Voluntary Agen-
cies
Geneva, Switzerland

F. Szekely

O.I. Committee International
Mexico D.F., Mexico.

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x) Succeeded Sir Robert Matthew who died in June 1975.

xx) At the Forum represented by Mr. N. Marcano.

STATEMENT OF THE HABITAT FORUM TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, Vancouver, Canada, 1 June 1976

INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the Human Settlements Conference will only be fulfilled if it addresses itself to the fundamental causes of the most serious of the human settlements problems.

Without an adequate and historical analysis of man's habitat, and without a proper explanation of the existing barriers which prevent the implementation of effective policies for improving that habitat, we cannot expect to offer a proposal with positive results. We believe that an effective improvement of human settlements conditions implies a change in national and international socio-economic structures.

THE PROBLEM OF HABITAT

1. One can only understand man's habitat— i.e., the bio-physical, socio-economic and political expression of man's social activities by first understanding the way in which that habitat is produced and used.

In general, man's habitat is, in different countries, an expression of society's economic structure, of the power relationships amongst social groups, and of the structure of the state. More specifically, type and level of industrialization, the relations between rural and urban area, the dominant form of ownership and the distribution of income. Each of these factors is, in its turn, conditioned by the place of each country in the world system of domination and dependency.

2. Partial explanations which fail to consider the problem in its historic perspective, run the risk of overemphasising ecology, urbanistic developments or catastrophic predictions about overpopulation.

3. Even if one accepts that in all countries in the world human settlements are in a precarious condition, and that poverty and social exclusion exist everywhere, it is in the underdeveloped countries that their situation is most dramatic because of the sheer dimensions of the problem. In these countries the so-called "deprived areas" are not the exception but frequently the rule. According to World Bank statistics, more than 900 millions have to survive on an annual income of less than \$75.

In these countries the basic resources necessary for the creation of settlements are often controlled by monopolies. Moreover, the absence of sufficient job opportunities and the concentration of income in the hands of a few as a result of the prevailing organization of the production, makes that no attention is given to the housing, infra-structure and social service needs of the vast majority of the population both in urban and rural areas.

4. It is important to realize that the forms of urbanisation in these countries are not the result of an incidental process but rather the logical products of the prevailing social system which, in a large number of countries, benefits small minorities to the detriment of the majority of the population.

5. The type of tenure of land is one of the most important factors that determine the characteristics of each habitat. We strongly support the Recommendation for National Action in your document No. 5 which states that "Land, because of its unique nature and the crucial role it plays in human settlements, cannot be treated as an ordinary asset, controlled by individuals and subject to the pressure and inefficiencies of the market. Private land ownership is also a principal instrument for the accumulation and concentration of wealth and therefore contributes to social injustice..."

Furthermore, the private sector is motivated by an exclusive concern for profit which does not often coincide with social requirements. Equally, the interest of governmental groups which in some countries make common course with the private sector use the benefits of settlements and in this way, make enormous profits. In doing so, they deprive the majority of the population from essential goods and services.

6. These factors present such obstacles, especially in underdeveloped countries, that the right to a habitat, and notably the right to produce and utilise it in accordance with their particular interests and needs, has become a farce for most people. For this reason they, and especially the newcomers among them, are forced to set up their own settlements which are considered illegal. Thus they suffer not only from a substandard habitat but are also subjected to repressive action. Governmental policies tend to institutionalize such unjust situations.

7. Under such circumstances the notion of participation is often abused in order to disguise the real causes of the problem, and to permit the maintenance of low income levels and to load the settler with many non-remunerative tasks.

8. We propose a new style of development that:

1. provides for new forms for the allocation of resources to society.
2. allows for a redistribution of income and wealth.
3. guarantees everyone the right to work.
4. promotes a shift from private to public consumption of goods and services.
5. directs the activity of governments towards satisfying the needs of the majority of the population.
6. stimulates the active participation of the population in decision making.

These proposals require the establishment of a new pattern of international economic relations and a confirmation of the principle that nations control their own resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

9. All governments should establish at all levels of decision-making a framework wherein people and communities can make the maximum number of decisions for themselves and be given the means to implement them. The opinion of the elderly, the handicapped, the poor, the newcomers, must be obtained and acted upon, particularly with regard to social services, employment opportunities, building design, transportation policies and the provision of utilities.

10. We consider it fundamental, however, to propose a policy which goes much further and is radically different from the general notion of participation.

This new policy should promote the control by those concerned of the elements of the production process (land, technology, material, professional services, etc.) by the creation of autonomous mechanisms for social participation, possessing sufficient powers to fulfill their tasks.

In this context we should like to associate us with another recommendation of document.5 which states that, "By definition, popular participation cannot be planned or ordered from above; it can only be encouraged, in particular by removing political or institutional obstacles standing in its way. Among these obstacles we should like to draw special attention to the lack of access to information and the absence or one-sidedness of education.

The concept that the mass of the population have the right to control the production as well as the use of their habitat must also be one of the guidelines directing future international technical and financial co-operation.

11. Security of land tenure, building materials and credit facilities are the instruments by which governments can help people to build their own settlements. Specific goals should be set for the improvement of basic services and these should include the following:

- Provision of clean water for everyone.
 - Provision of an adequate system for human and solid waste disposal incorporating concepts of recycling and energy conserving technologies; and
 - Provision of appropriate forms of transport to enable all segments of the population to have inexpensive, safe and easy access. Priority should be given to public transport.
- Furthermore:
- Those technologies should be applied which are in the social interest of the users and in accordance with the specific and ecological requirements of their location.
 - Indiscriminate transfer of knowledge, experiences, and resources based on exogenous interests should be avoided.
 - Land use and ownership policies should guarantee public control of land in the public interest. Owners of land shall not profit from an increase in the price of land that results from public investment in the infrastructure.
 - There should be imposed a global moratorium on the construction of nuclear power plants and those presently operative should be phased out. Research into alternative sources of energy like solar and wind power should be intensified.
 - Governments should implement the World Population plan adopted by the World Population Conference.
 - No real improvements of human settlements around the world will take place without the mobilization of the necessary political will and Governments, especially those of the richer countries should be prepared to finance the programs for achieving the goals of HABITAT. As a first step towards the

goal of total disarmament which will make human settlements much safer places to live in, it is proposed that:

- 10% of all appropriations presently allocated to military purposes by member nations (approximately \$300,000 million) be transferred annually to a fund for improving human settlements and the quality of life for the poorest of the earth's inhabitants.
- The Recommendations For National Action are perhaps the most important document of this Conference. As a modest step towards ensuring the implementation of the recommendations, we propose that Governments be requested to submit biannual progress reports to the United Nations.
- Finally, we request the Governments, when they decide on the organizational structure, which within the United Nations will be responsible for human settlement issues, to make appropriate arrangements for the involvement of non-governmental organizations both in the planning and implementation stages of its programs.

May 31, 1976