

Draft
30 January, 1996

**MEMORANDUM
ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF PREPCOM 3**

The main tasks for PrepCom 3 are the following:

- 1) The organizational matters of the Istanbul Conference (Agenda item 3);
- 2) Outcome of the Conference: Draft statement of principles and commitments and the global plan of action (the Habitat Agenda).

It is clear that the Habitat Agenda will require much time, in fact more than the organizational matters of the Istanbul Conference. This is why Working Group II should prepare to spend enough time on the subject; at the same time the burden or work on Working Group II should be reduced as much as possible.

My proposal for the organization of the PrepCom work is as follows:

- 1) As it says in the note of the Secretariat of the Conference "a general debate during this Preparatory Committee should, to the maximum extent possible, be discouraged, in view of the shortage of time available for negotiations."

Plenary speeches will be limited to 7 minutes.

- 2) Working Group I could share the Conference room with the plenary session.
- 3) Working Group II could have the other big Conference room at their disposal. Work will begin on Monday at 3 p.m. (or, if the plenary ends in the morning, immediately thereafter).
- 4) There are two areas which need special attention. These are
 - International cooperation and coordination, and
 - Institutional issues including monitoring and follow-up (paras 158-162)

This becomes clear from notes 4 and 5 to the Habitat Agenda; it says that paras 146–150 have neither been discussed nor considered by the Informal Drafting Group. Note 6 states that issues contained in a proposal regarding UN system monitoring and coordination were discussed, but were referred to the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee.

I would propose that we set up two informal drafting groups at the very beginning of the session, one to deal with International cooperation and coordination (paras 22, 32–33 and 143–157), the other with Institutional Issues (paras 34–35, 158–162). These groups could assemble in Conference room 6, the former in the mornings, the second in the afternoons. These informal groups would report to the Plenary through Working Group I.

- 5) As there will still be need to reduce the work load of Working Group II, I propose the Working Group I deal with the Habitat Agenda Chapters I, Preamble and II, Goals and Principles.
- 6) I further propose that after Working Group I has received the Secretariat report on issues under Agenda item 3 it will discuss these matters and would revert to discussing paras 1–21 on the Habitat Agenda.

Working Group II, on the other hand, would embark directly on Commitments, by Monday afternoon at the latest.

As the two informal groups mentioned under point 4 will also start work as quickly as possible (one of them could start on Monday afternoon), PrepCom could start working with full force from the very outset.

- 7) The Habitat Agenda will be discussed paragraph by paragraph in such a way that only amendments with short justifications will be allowed to be presented. The proposed amendments should, immediately after presentation, be handed to the chairman in writing, with a clear indication as to which para they refer to.
- 8) In those cases where the proposals are difficult to combine and call for extensive rewriting, the chairman will send the interested parties outside to work out a common proposal. We should also be prepared to nominate special informal drafting groups for other issues than those mentioned under point 4. The chairman will read out the common proposals prepared by ad hoc groups or informal drafting groups, and interpretation will then be available.

If the chairman can formulate a proposal which satisfies member countries, this text will be sent for translation. If this is not the case, the para will, at the first reading, be included among the

bracketed paragraphs.

On Friday afternoon, the plenary session will discuss a summary of progress in the PrepCom.

In this connection it should be noted that all translations cannot be left to begin in the middle of the second week. This is due to the fact that UN translation services no longer work in three shifts, so that translation work has to be levelled out better than at previous meetings.

- 9) Although the work load of Working Group II is to be reduced as explained, there still remain 114 paras to deal with. If we set the aim that the whole Habitat Agenda should be read through once in the first week, we have 14 minutes to deal with each para (i.e. 27 hours of 1 620 minutes divided by 114). Experience shows that the usual drafting speed is approximately one hour per para, or more.

This clearly shows that we must have evening sessions even from the start, and we also have to work on Saturdays, as was done at the Social Summit PrepCom. I therefore propose that Working Group II assemble for evening sessions. These sessions would be held without interpretation.

- 10) We should try to reduce the pressure on Working Group II as much as possible by having a number of informal groups and small ad hoc groups. In this connection we must find out how many small and smallish meeting rooms the PrepCom has at its disposal. It is necessary that a member of the secretariat keeps a continuous check on which meeting rooms are occupied and which are free for use. In scheduling the work of these various groups we will, of course, be sensitive to the needs of small delegations.

- 11) As a summary I would like to state that the timetable for the last Habitat II PrepCom is exceptional as compared with previous PrepComs. The earlier ones had a longer duration, or at least evening and weekend sessions were easier to arrange. Translation services in three shifts were also a more efficient help. For these reasons it is necessary to organise the work as thoroughly as possible: sessions must begin on time, and member countries must prepare to discipline themselves and to act on the basis of written proposals.