

Habitat:

United Nations Conference on Human Settlements

Vancouver, 31 May to 11 June 1976

Annotations to the Provisional Agenda

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda



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Note by the Secretary-General of the Conference

1. This document contains annotations to the provisional agenda for the Conference which was approved by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session under its resolution 3438 (XXX) on the proposal of the Secretary-General and the recommendation of the Preparatory Committee.
2. The annotations are intended to facilitate the adoption of the agenda and the conduct of the proceedings.
3. The annotations and suggestions concerning procedural matters are based on the provisional rules of procedure and technical guidelines for the use of audio-visual presentations (A/CONF.70/3), discussions in the Preparatory Committee and past practice of United Nations conferences.
4. The proposed time-table containing a tentative schedule of meetings and the proposed organization of work of the Conference was presented in its preliminary form for consideration by the Preparatory Committee at its second session in January 1976.
5. The document also refers to the third session of the Preparatory Committee to be held at Vancouver on 26 May 1976 and to the pre-conference consultations on 27 and 28 May 1976 which were mentioned in the letter of 23 February 1976 from the Secretary-General of the Conference. Further suggestions may be made nearer to the time of the Conference.

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II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1. Opening of the Conference

6. The Conference will be opened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations at 11 a.m. on Monday, 31 May 1976. Delegates are requested to be seated by 10.45 a.m. His Excellency the Governor-General of Canada and His Excellency the Prime Minister of Canada will deliver a welcoming address.

Item 2. Election of the President

7. Rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure and technical guidelines for the use of audio-visual presentations (A/CONF.70/3) provides that the Conference shall elect a President and rule 40 provides that election shall be held by secret ballot unless otherwise decided by the Conference.

Item 3. Adoption of the rules of procedure

8. The provisional rules of procedure and technical guidelines for the use of audio-visual presentations are contained in document A/CONF.70/3 and endorsed by the Preparatory Committee for adoption by the Conference.

Item 4. Adoption of the agenda

9. Document A/CONF.70/1 contains the provisional agenda as approved by the General Assembly at its thirtieth session for adoption by the Conference. For ease of reference, the provisional agenda has also been incorporated in the present document.

Item 5. Constitution of committees

10. Rule 42 of the provisional rules of procedure provides that the Conference may establish such main and other committees as may be required for the performance of its functions. Each committee may establish working groups.

11. In addition to the credentials committee referred to under item 7 of the provisional agenda, the Preparatory Committee has recommended the establishment of three committees of the whole:

Committee I: agenda items 9 and 11

Committee II: agenda items 10 (a), (b) and (f)

Committee III: agenda items 10 (c), (d) and (e)

12. The proposed time-table and programme of work is indicated in part III of this report, which the Conference may wish to consider for adoption.

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Item 6. Election of officers other than the President

13. Rule 6 of the provisional rules of procedure provides that the Conference elect, in addition to the President, 30 vice-presidents 1/ and a rapporteur-general as well as a chairman for each of the main committees provided for in rule 42. Rule 6 also states that each main committee shall elect three vice-chairmen and a rapporteur.

14. In the election of officers, due account should be taken of the need to ensure an equitable geographic distribution in accordance with United Nations practice.

15. The possible waiver of the secret ballot referred to in the annotation to item 2 above may also be applied to the election of officers other than the President of the Conference.

16. If, as expected as a result of the pre-Conference consultations, a single slate of candidates is put forward for election, the Conference could proceed to the elections without delay. If nominations are to be made from the floor, nominating statements should be limited, in accordance with United Nations practice, to one for each candidate, after which the Conference should proceed immediately to the election. Following the election of the officers, a single statement in the Committee should be made on behalf of all the members, congratulating all the officers on their election. In the plenary, representatives will have an opportunity to offer congratulations during the general debate.

Item 7. Credentials of representatives to the Conference

(a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee

17. Rule 4 of the provisional rules of procedure provides that a Credentials Committee shall be appointed at the beginning of the Conference. Its membership shall, as far as possible, be the same as that of the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly at its thirtieth regular session. 2/

(b) Report of the Credentials Committee

18. In accordance with rule 4, the Credentials Committee shall examine the credentials of representatives and report to the Conference without delay.

1/ Subsequently proposed to be changed to 33 in consultation with the regional groups.

2/ The Credentials Committee of the General Assembly at its thirtieth session consisted of the following nine Member States: Belgium, China, Costa Rica, Libyan Arab Republic, Mali, Mongolia, USSR, United States and Venezuela.

19. Rule 3 provides that the credentials of representatives and the names of alternate representatives and advisers shall be submitted to the Secretary-General of the Conference, if possible not less than one week before the opening of the Conference. Credentials shall be issued either by the head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. By a letter dated 26 February 1976, the Secretary-General of the Conference requested Governments to communicate, as soon as possible and preferably not later than 24 May 1976, the names of their representatives, alternate representatives and advisers.

Item 8. General debate

20. It is expected that, under this item, heads of delegations will make general policy statements covering the key issues on the agenda of the Conference.

21. The Preparatory Committee has recommended a time-limit for the statements in the plenary, including film excerpts, of 10 to 15 minutes for representatives of Governments and 8 to 10 minutes for other speakers. This time-limit would apply only to statements actually made in the plenary. Texts of more extensive statements could be distributed among delegates to the Conference and the press.

22. In order to enable the heads of delegations to plan their participation in the Conference and to make maximum use of the short time available for the general debate, the list of speakers will be opened on Monday, 3 May 1976 at the Office of the Secretary of the Habitat Conference, Room 2977B, Ext. 5267, at United Nations Headquarters in New York and closed on Tuesday, 1 June 1976 at 6 p.m. at Vancouver at the Office of the Secretary-General of the Conference.

Item 9. Declaration of principles

23. The basic Conference document for this agenda item is the Declaration of Principles (A/CONF.70/4).

24. The Conference may wish to consider the intimate relationship between the quality of life and the quality of human settlements, and the challenge facing the world in providing for the basic needs and aspirations of peoples consistent with human dignity.

25. The Conference may wish to recognize the deteriorating circumstances of life for vast numbers of mankind in human settlements and the great disparities in the quality of life among and within nations, the need for positive and concrete action in such areas as rapid population growth, unbalanced economic development, rapid unbalanced urbanization, rural dispersion and deterioration of social, ecological and environmental conditions. Seeing these and other issues as challenges that provide the opportunities for changing the living conditions of mankind, the Conference may wish to adopt a "declaration" incorporating principles and guidelines for action.

Item 10. Recommendations for national action

26. The basic Conference document for this agenda item is entitled "Recommendations for national action" (A/CONF.70/5).

27. The Conference may wish to consider this document both as the basis for discussion in Committees II and III and as a provisional draft of the document to be approved, as amended, by the Conference. The Preparatory Committee has recommended that each subitem be discussed in an integrated and co-ordinated way, under various aspects and spatial scales. It also stressed that each item should be considered from the point of view of global exchange of experience and as recommendations for action, bearing in mind also the links with the Declaration of Principles and programmes for international co-operation.

28. In dealing with the six subitems, the Conference may wish to consider the current situation and trends in human settlements, the main underlying factors and the key concepts outlined in the supporting documents A/CONF.70/A/1, A/CONF.70/A/2 and A/CONF.70/A/3.

(a) Settlement policies and strategies

29. Under this subitem, the Conference may wish to see national settlement policies as an integral part of national development strategies and therefore fully incorporated in the general planning framework. Population growth and rapid changes in the location of human activities necessitate mobilization of all untapped resources and present a unique opportunity for changing the man-made environment. In fact, the very construction of the physical components of human settlements on the volume required to meet the needs of society could become a leading sector of the economy and a major generator of meaningful employment, instead of being treated as a residual of so-called "productive" activities. Throughout the world, the present role of human settlements was determined by economic and political relationships, many of which are by now obsolete. To change these complex and evolving relationships, settlement policies and strategies must be conceived on a scale appropriate to the task and as part of a single concerted effort for the improvement of the quality of life of all people, wherever they live and work.

(b) Settlement planning

30. Under this subitem, the Conference may wish to examine the role of settlement planning in promoting and guiding development at different scales of geographical coverage and over different time spans. In a constant process of adjustment and reconciliation of conflicting requirements, the notion of region as a unit smaller than the national whole but larger than the individual settlement itself becomes crucial in facing the new problems posed by metropolitan complexes and those confronting predominantly rural areas. The Conference may also direct its attention to the individual settlements where most planning decisions and implementation programmes occur, in particular in relation to the better use of the

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present stock through renewal, rehabilitation and other forms of improvement, the expansion of existing settlements, the integration of marginal or peripheral settlements and the creation of new ones.

(c) Shelter, infrastructure and services

31. Under this subitem, the Conference may wish to consider the role of shelter, infrastructure and services in determining the quality of life in human settlements. Making these essential components available to those who need them, in the sequence in which they are needed and at a monetary or social cost they can afford is one of the central issues of human settlements. Standards and procedures should reflect the fact that most people in the third world will continue to provide housing and services for themselves. An important consideration is the location of shelter, infrastructure and services in relation to each other and to the main economic activities. Other essential issues concern the technological choices and their implications in terms of resource use, not only to provide the assets initially but also to maintain them over their expected lifetime. In the fields of education, health, nutrition and social services, the key concepts should be relevance, i.e. appropriate quality and justice in terms of equality of access.

(d) Land

32. Under this subitem, the Conference may wish to consider the crucial role of land and the problems posed by its management and control in the public interest, especially considering the long lasting effect of decisions on location of activities and on specific land uses on the patterns and structure of human settlements. Land is also a primary element of the natural and man-made environment and a crucial link in an often delicate balance. Public control of land use is therefore indispensable to its protection as an asset and the achievement of the long-term objectives of human settlement policies and strategies. To exercise such control effectively public authorities require detailed knowledge of the current patterns of use and tenure of land, and appropriate legislation and suitable instruments for assessing the value of land and transferring, through taxation and other measures, the value added. Above all, Governments must have the political will to evolve and implement innovative urban and rural land policies as a cornerstone of their over-all efforts to improve the quality of life in human settlements.

(e) Public participation

33. Under this subitem, the Conference may wish to view participation as an integral part of the political processes of decision-making as well as a tool for mobilizing the interest of citizens and using their ingenuity and skills to harness otherwise untapped resources. Participation may be considered as the interest of the higher echelons of government in the decisions of smaller groups, as the co-operation between the parallel or competing sectoral interests; or as the direct involvement of citizens in the making of decisions which concern them. The latter, which cannot be planned or achieved by legislation alone, may be encouraged

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by removing political or institutional obstacles standing in its way. The lack of information and the absence of appropriate machinery for conveying alternative views to decision makers appears to be a major hindrance to a more effective involvement of people in shaping the future of their human settlements.

(f) Institutions and management

34. Under this subitem the Conference may wish to consider the role of political, administrative or technical institutions in the elaboration and implementation of policies and programmes. New institutions on human settlements must be designed to promote new concepts and provide leadership in unfamiliar areas. Institutions must be responsive to change, capable of changing themselves and suitable for promoting change by others. Because of their territorial coverage, complexity and relative permanence, human settlements require a diversified system of institutions. Especially in large and complex metropolitan areas, appropriate institutions must be sought continuously to achieve a balance between effective government and accountability to the governed. But institutions are ineffectual unless they are given access to and control over the resources necessary for operation. This is particularly true of institutions catering to the budgetary needs of human settlements which, if inappropriately or insufficiently funded, become the main obstacles to implementing otherwise well-intended policies. The implementation of new programmes may also require new enabling legislation, regulations and by-laws, many of which are outdated or altogether irrelevant to the present needs of the population. Similarly, the curricula preparing for and the codes governing the practice of the professions directly concerned with human settlements are in need of fundamental overhaul throughout the world. In the last resort, the most valuable resource of all is human beings, the channelling of human initiative and the management of human skills for the achievement of the goals of national planning is a task which has received insufficient attention so far, both at national and local levels.

Item 11. Programmes for international co-operation

35. The basic Conference document for this agenda item is entitled "Programmes for international co-operation" (A/CONF.70/6 and Add.1). Additional information is provided in the document entitled "Analysis of Programmes of the Organizations in the United Nations System in the Field of Human Settlements" (A/CONF.70/A/4).

36. The Conference may wish to consider programmes as well as institutional arrangements for effective international co-operation in the field of human settlements. The current and future programmes for international co-operation, at global and regional levels, may be examined with special attention to the role of such programmes in supporting national action.

37. The Conference may wish to make appropriate recommendations regarding long-term programmes and institutional arrangements as well as on the immediate follow-up activities after the Conference.

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Item 12. Adoption of the report of the Conference

38. Under rule 14 of the provisional rules of procedure, the Conference will adopt a report, the draft of which is to be prepared by the Rapporteur-General. The General Assembly, under its resolution 3438 (XXX), requested that the Secretary-General report on the results of the Conference, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements for the preparations which will have to be undertaken after the Conference to facilitate consideration of the recommendations of the Conference by the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

39. In order to facilitate the consideration of the report of the Conference, the Secretary-General suggests that the Rapporteur-General summarize the discussion in the plenary meetings for inclusion in his draft report. The rapporteurs of the committees would prepare draft reports for the plenary, containing their respective bodies' proposals and recommendations to the plenary, as well as a concise account of the main trends and salient features, showing in particular the basis on which the recommendations were reached. These reports would be submitted to the plenary, and the Rapporteur-General would summarize the discussion of them in his draft report.

40. In addition to the summary of the plenary discussion, the report of the Conference will include all the decisions and recommendations of the Conference.

III. PROPOSED TIME-TABLE FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF
WORK OF THE CONFERENCE

| Date | Place | Time | Body |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------|--|
| <u>Informal pre-Conference consultations</u> | | | |
| Thursday 27 May 1976 | Harbourside Holiday Inn | 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. | Informal pre-Conference consultations on procedural matters, Conference arrangements, documentation, use of audio-visual presentations and so forth |
| and Friday 28 May 1976 | | 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. | |

Summary of the proposed organization of work of the Conference

31 May-11 June 1976

| | Monday 31 May | Tues. 1 June | Wed. 2 June | Thurs. 3 June | Friday 4 June | | Monday 7 June | Tues. 8 June | Wed. 9 June | Thurs. 10 June | Friday 11 June |
|--|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|--|------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| PLENARY Opening Procedural matters General debate Reports Closing | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx : | xxx xxx : | ooo xxx |
| COMMITTEE I Election Organization of work Declaration of principles International co-operation | x | x xx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | | ooo. xxx | ooo..... | : | : | |
| COMMITTEE II Election Organization of work National action | x x | x xx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | xxx xxx | | xxx | ooo ooo | : | : | |
| COMMITTEE III Election Organization of work National action | x | xx xxx | xxx xxx | .xxx xxx | .xxx xxx | | xxx | .ooo ooo | : | : | |

xxx Discussion

ooo Consideration of the draft report

PROPOSED TIME-TABLE

Plenary meeting

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|---|---------|---|
| Monday 31 May 1976 Queen Elizabeth Theatre | 11 a.m. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening of the Conference by the Secretary-General of the United Nations (item 1 of the provisional agenda)2. Address by His Excellency the Right Honourable Jules Léger, Governor-General of Canada3. Address by His Excellency the Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada4. Election of the President (item 2)5. Adoption of the rules of procedure (item 3)6. Adoption of the agenda (item 4)7. Constitution of committees (allocation of agenda items and organization of the work of the Conference (item 5))8. Election of officers other than the President (item 6)9. Credentials of representatives to the Conference: appointment of the Credentials Committee (item 7 (a))10. Statement by the Secretary-General of the Conference11. Statement by the Executive Director of UNEP12. General debate (item 8)^{1/} |
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^{1/} After the adjournment of the afternoon plenary meeting, the three main committees will meet to elect their vice-chairmen and rapporteurs.

| Date | Starting time | Plenary | Committee I | Committee II | Committee III |
|--------------------------|---------------|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Monday 31 May 1976 | 11 a.m. | Items 1 and 2 | Opening of the Conference <u>1/</u> and election of the President | | |
| | 3 p.m. | Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7a <u>2/</u> and 8 | | | |
| | 6 p.m. | | ----- Elections of Vice Chairmen and Rapporteurs ----- | | |
| Tuesday 1 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | Item 8 continued | Item 9 | Item 10 (a, b, f) | Item 10 (c, d, e) |
| | 3 p.m. | " " " | " " | " " " | " " " |
| Wednesday 2 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | " " " | " " | " " " | " " " |
| | 3 p.m. | " " " | Item 9 concluded | " " " | " " " |
| Thursday 3 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | " " " | Item 11 | " " " | " " " |
| | 3 p.m. | " " " | " " | " " " | " " " |
| Friday 4 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | " " " | " " | " " " | " " " |
| | 3 p.m. | " " " | " " | " " " | " " " |
| Monday 7 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | Item 8 continued | Item 11 concluded | Item 10 concluded (a, b, f) | Item 10 concluded (c, d, e) |
| | 3 p.m. | " " " | Consider draft report item 9 | | |
| Tuesday 8 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | " " " | Consider draft report item 11 | --- Consider draft report on item 10 --- | |
| | 3 p.m. | Item 8 concluded | | " " " " " " | |
| Wednesday 9 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | Consider report on item 9 | | | |
| | 3 p.m. | Consider report on item 11 | | | |
| Thursday 10 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | Consider report on item 10 | | | |
| | 3 p.m. | " " " | | | |
| Friday 11 June 1976 | 10 a.m. | Item 12 | | | |
| | 3 p.m. | Item 12 concluded | | | |

1/ For details see p. 13.

2/ Regarding item 7 (b), the Credentials Committee will meet as necessary. Its report will be considered by the plenary at a time to be determined later.