

UN-Habitat. 26th Governing Council. Nairobi, 8 May 2017

Mr. President, Honorary Ministers, Executive Director, Excellences, Distinguished delegates,

Norway has always been committed to international cooperation and to the United Nations. In these times where more and more of our challenges can only be solved by working together, we remain as committed as ever.

At the same time, our taxpayers are increasingly concerned with how their money is spent, and expect that we deliver on our promises. That we strive for best practices and focus on results on the ground.

Fortunately, we see a new spirit in the UN under the very experienced and capable new Secretary-General.

Secretary General Guterres is clear that he wants a stronger, less bureaucratic and more effective UN family, working in community with each other and in partnership with others, including the private sector.

This is an ambition we fully share!

Mr. President,

As we have heard earlier today, how urbanization is handled will determine the future of billions of people.

It is therefore essential that UN-Habitat joins the Secretary General in modernizing how it thinks and how it works.

In Norway's view, UN- Habitat's field work is generally good. But, as others have pointed out, UN Habitat's normative work should be strengthened.

When it comes to reform, we believe UN-Habitat has made some highly required changes, as duly noted by the recent MOPAN assessment.

It is, however, essential that further reforms are carried out in line with the recommendations in the MOPAN and other reports, including strengthening cooperation and coordination with other UN organizations.

It is further important that UN-Habitat responds to the requests to increase transparency and accountability.

In addition, the results from this year's UN Global Staff Survey must be addressed in a serious way.

Mr. President,

At this Governing Council Norway hopes to see a work program that incorporates air quality, health, environment, civil society, youth and gender in its priorities.

We also hope to see a renewed mandate for the working group on program and budget.

Further, we expect stronger efforts towards securing increased voluntary contributions from member states. While UN-Habitat has been very successful in resource mobilization to ear-marked projects, it has been much less successful in convincing member states to contribute to core funding.

Norway also looks forward to see the results from the UN independent assessment of UN-Habitat, and hope that the Independent Assessment Panel take due note of the views conveyed to it by the CPR and the Governing Council this morning.

We further hope that the work in New York on reform of the UN Development Organization, will help clarify the role and contribution of UN-Habitat within the broader UN system.

Mr. President,

Before I end, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director for their efforts to improve and strengthen UN-Habitat.

Finally, let me underline that Norway would like to see a strong and effective UN-Habitat that can be in the forefront of meeting the many urban challenges before us, playing a leading role in implementing the New Urban Agenda and beyond.

That, in our view, requires continued improvements within UN-Habitat itself, with UN-Habitat's cooperation with others and with UN-Habitat's ability to be seen as a trustful and effective partner by the member states.

On the basis on continuous improvements in these areas, Norway is prepared to remain a strong partner for UN-Habitat also in the future.

Thank you!