

**RESOLUTION ON STRENGTHENING OF UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) AND UNITED NATIONS
CENTRE FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS – UNCHS (HABITAT)**

The Assembly of the Heads of States and Government of the Organization of African Unity, meeting its Thirty-Second Ordinary Session in Yaounde, Cameroon, from 8 to 10 July, 1996,

Recalling decision 15/1 of 25 May 1989, of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, which the Governing Council, reaffirmed the central role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the central catalyzing, coordinating and stimulating body in the field of environment within the United Nations,

Recalling further decision 16/1 of 31 May 1991, of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme in which the Council expressed its support for retaining at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme at Nairobi the programme activity centres already located there, decided that future major extensions to the physical or other infrastructure of the Programme, particularly those with global functions, would be centred principally at Nairobi,

Noting paragraphs 38.21 and 38.23 of Agenda 21, in which it was stated that there would be a need for an enhanced and strengthened role of the United Nations Environment Programme and its Governing Council, that, *inter alia*, the regional officers of the Programme should be strengthened without weakening the headquarters.

Recalling United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/174 of 21 December 1993, by which the General Assembly, among other things, acknowledged the grant from the Government of Kenya of an additional forty acres of land for expansion of office facilities and the improvement of the commutations network, and requested the Secretary-General to ensure that programming of meetings related to the Programme is rationalized to facilitate economy and more effective capacity utilization at the headquarters of the Programme,

Recalling also United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/176 of 21 December 1993, which the General Assembly, *inter-alia* requested the Assembly to ensure that in the restructuring of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, UNHS (Habitat) is maintained as the global focal point for human settlements and that its institutional capacities are strengthened at its headquarters,

Noting with appreciation United Nations General Assembly Resolution 48/214 of 23 December, 1993 and 49/142 of 23 December, 1994 on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990's the thrust of which was to secure a central focus and attention for Africa in the United Nations throughout the decade,

Recognizing that environmental and human settlements issues occupy a crucial place in the development endeavours of countries of the African region,

Aware that the presence of the two United Nations institutions in Africa has had a positive impact on the level of awareness, interest and programme activities in environmental and human settlements matters amongst countries of the region,

Concerned that there is currently a decline in political and financial support from the international community to the United Nations Organization and its subsidiary bodies, including the two institutions headquartered in Nairobi, coupled with global economic patterns that generally marginalize the continent of Africa.

Noting with concern that the headquarters of the two institutions in Nairobi are being weakened by the impact of certain measures, notably the location of United Nations Environment Convention Secretariat and regional offices for both United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements away from headquarters, and the unabated tendency of holding important meetings and conferences related to United Nations Environment Programme away from headquarters,

Concerned that the representation of Member States of the United Nations Organization in Nairobi, ie, 80 countries, out of which Africa has only a total of 19 representative missions, is minimal,

Convinced that the survival and optimal delivery of the two United Nations institutions would depend to a large extent on the efforts of the African countries,

Commending the resounding success of the Second UN Conference on Human Settlement – HABITAT II – held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 3 to 14 June, 1996 which instituted a new kind of partnership between Government responsibilities, local authorities, civil society, NGOs, academics and Research Centres, as well as UN Agencies and Institutions to set the priorities of the sustainable development of human settlements in a world undergoing urbanization:

1. **PAYS TRIBUTE** to President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya who ably represented Africa at HABITAT II by presenting the region's common position;
2. **COMMENDS** Dr Wally NDAW, Secretary-General of the Conference and his entire team as well as the host Government for the flawless organization of this meeting on the future of towns and cities at the dawn of the 21st century;
3. **URGES** the Member Countries of the Organization of African Unity to:
 - a. **send representative missions to United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), where such missions are not in existence;**
 - b. **take into consideration the technical nature of the work of United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) when considering the posting or representatives to Nairobi so as to ensure appropriate and adequate representation to the two institutions;**
 - c. **strengthen coordination between capitals and African missions to the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement;**

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4. **URGES** the host country, Kenya, to continue in her efforts of mobilizing support towards the strengthening of the two institutions' headquarters using political and diplomatic instruments in her bilateral and multilateral contracts in the global, regional and sub-regional context;
5. **CALLS UPON** the regional bodies in Africa such as ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC, UMA, ECCAS East African Cooperation (EAC), ADB, PTA Bank, IGAD, CILSS, UN-ECA and Shelter Afrique to work closely with Member States and with the Organization of African Unity in ensuring sustained efforts at strengthening United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) Headquarters;
6. **REQUESTS** the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to bring this resolution to the attention of the United Nations Secretary-General, the Chief Executives of the regional and Sub-regional institutions: ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC, UMA, ECCAS, EAC, IGAD, CILSS, UN-ECA the ADB, PTA Bank and Shelter-Afrique.

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