



ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY

Secretariat
P. O. Box 3243

منظمة الوحدة الأفريقية
السكرتارية
ص. ب. ٣٢٤٣

ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
AFRICAIN

Secretariat
B. P. 3243

البيرو اديبا

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Twenty-Sixth Ordinary Session

Addis Ababa, 23-28 February, 1976

CM/731 (XXVI)

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENT
PROPOSAL FOR AN INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT
(Proposed by Uganda)



CM0731

10p

MICROFICHE



ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY

Secretariat
P. O. Box 3243

منظمة الوحدة الأفريقية
المركز الإفريقي
ب. ب. 3243

ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
AFRICAIN

Secretariat
B. P. 3243

منظمة الوحدة الأفريقية

A CALL FOR OAU POSITION ON HABITAT: UN CONFERENCE ON
HUMAN SETTLEMENT, VANCOUVER, 31ST MAY - 11TH JUNE 1976

=====

A MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY UGANDA AT THE MEETING OF THE OAU
FOREIGN MINISTERS, ADDIS ABABA 23 - 29 FEBRUARY 1976

Delegate of the OAU Foreign Ministers will recall that at its 20th, 28th and 29th Sessions the General Assembly made resolutions 3001(XXVII), 3128(XXVIII) and 3325(XXIX) respectively regarding the establishment of Habitat: UN Conference on Human Settlement to take place in Vancouver, 31 May - 11 June 1976 and of its preparatory processes under a Secretariat and a preparatory Committee of 56 countries.

Delegates will also recall that up to now the Preparatory process have taken place in the forms of 1st Session of the Preparatory Committee, New York, January 1975, the 2nd Session of the Preparatory Committee, New York, January 1976; Regional preparatory Conference of which that of Africa took place in Cairo, June 1975; and a meeting of Ad Hoc Inter-governmental group of experts on international co-operation and declaration of principles in the field of human settlements, Geneva, September 1975.

Besides these major preparatory meetings, the Habitat Secretariat has also made informal contacts with governments and other UN Institutions.

Delegates may wish to note that the Habitat Conference in Vancouver will have before it, three issues for consideration and decision namely:

"The declaration of principles; proposal for national actions; and Recommendations for International Co-operation which amongst others will consider and recommend for the approval of ECOSOC and the General Assembly an institutional arrangement for human settlements."

Delegates may wish to consider that in order that African delegates to Vancouver make an effective and joint positions especially regarding an institutional arrangement for Human Settlement at the international level. In this regard, Uganda as one of the African members of the preparatory Committee and has taken part in all of the preparatory conferences so far held, wish to draw your attention on the following points:-

- a) That so far there has not been a general consensus emerging from the preparatory conference regarding a single institutional arrangement;
- b) That due to reason (a) above, the recent and second meeting of the preparatory committee held in New York, 12 - 23 January 1976 recommended for consideration and decision of the main Vancouver Conference the following alternatives to establish it:-
 - I. Within the existing structure of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as a function of the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning;
 - II. Within the Habitat: UN Foundation for Human Settlement which is so far an embrionic institution established, through the recommendations of Governing Council of the United Nations environment programme, by the ECOSOC resolution 1914(LVII) and the General Assembly resolution 3327(XXIX);

- III. Within a completely new and special institution on human settlement to be known as a programme.
- c) That the main reasons for recommendations b(I&II) above are to avoid a proliferation of UN systems due to the financial and operational burden they place on the UN system and the need to avoid prejudicing the current general exercise on the restructuration of UN systems. The main reasons for recommendation b(III) above are that human settlements issues involve physical, social, economic and environmental aspects of development which require a comprehensive multi-disciplinary approach and should not, therefore, be subjected to and confined within a sectoral institution; and because so far many existing UN Sectoral Institutions have undertaken many unco-ordinated programmes on Human Settlements without much impact and success in this field.

Delegates may further wish to recall that during the UN Conferences on Human Environment held in Stockholm, Sweden in June 1972, the developing countries felt that a conference and actions on Human Environment did not meet their current problems and needs adequately. It was felt and recommended that a conference and actions on Human Settlements, which is the base from which all physical, social and economic activities and environmental problems are generated, was one of the best ways to resolve these issues. This culminated into subsequent decisions on the forthcoming Vancouver Conference.

Because of the above positions, Uganda delegation to 26th Ordinary Session of OAU Foreign Ministers proposed and recommended that the Council considers and adopts an African position regarding institutional arrangements for human settlements. This would facilitate the tasks of African delegates in Vancouver.

The Uganda delegation also wishes to inform the Council of Ministers of Uganda's position on this matter which is as follows:-

- a) A completely new institutional arrangement is the ideal we should strive to achieve in Vancouver. Such an arrangement, however, should not duplicate the settlement functions of the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning and the UN Foundation for Human Settlements. It is, therefore, necessary that the new institution should be constituted of these two existing bodies. This kind of arrangement naturally implies and pre-empts a restructuration which would be considered in the current general exercise for the restructuration of UN systems.
- b) The reasons for financial and operational burden advanced against a new institution by some countries particularly the developed countries stem from the fear that this burden would be thrashed onto them. This fear, however, will be lessened through an arrangement which considers the possibility stated in (a) above.
- c) In considering the need for a new arrangement the following principles are borne in mind:-
 - I. Because of the multidisplinary and intersectoral nature of human settlement problems and solutions, national, regional and international actions must be conceived as part and parcel of economic development and in a way which ensures closest interaction with social, economic and environmental planning;
 - II. The global, regional and national functions of an arrangement for human settlements and the action identified by the preparatory Committee and which will be considered in Vancouver are so large and comprehensive that they

could not be successfully accomplished by incorporating these in those of an existing sectoral institution such as UNEP without overburdening it. The result would be that UNEP would neither achieve its environmental objectives nor those of Human Settlements. Besides, UNEP is essentially a co-ordinating body which would find it difficult to respond positively to the operational requirements of Human Settlement Programmes.

- III. Some of the institutional weaknesses of settlement programmes of the existing UN Institutions can be attributed to the lack of an effective co-ordinating and operational simple mechanism and the fact that these Sectoral institutions have conflicting terms of reference and report on the same subject to different bodies. In addition, the success of global institutions such as agencies and programme can only be ensured by effective and genuine commitment by member-states to contribute towards their funds in hard currency other than in nonmonetary forms usually made by some countries.
- IV. That the new system would facilitate and harmonize the role of the World Bank and other specialized agencies in the field of Human Settlements by proper and comprehensive definition of its activities and programmes;
- V. That there is need for a simplified and unified administrative structure able to respond efficiently to the needs of the developing countries seeking assistance in this field.

CONCLUSION: Since the Vancouver conference takes place 31st May - 11th June 1976 and before this time, there will be no other OAU forums of this level at which this important matter could be discussed, it is imperative that this Session discusses the subject seriously and resolves on the kind of institutional arrangement it wishes to be achieved in Vancouver.

Because of the reasons above, the Uganda delegate finds it plausible to support the alternative III on page 3 for a new institutional arrangement under a UN Programme and calls upon the distinguished delegates to support the same.



AFRICAN UNION UNION AFRICAINE

African Union Common Repository

<http://archives.au.int>

Organs

Council of Ministers & Executive Council Collection

1976-02

United Nations Conference on Human Settlement Proposal for an Institutional Arrangement

Organization of African Unity

Organization of African Unity

<https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/9502>

Downloaded from African Union Common Repository