REPORT ON THE STATE OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

1. At the informal consultation of the Preparatory Committee, held in May of 1974, it was suggested that the description of the global situation of human settlements should not be a subject for discussion at the Conference itself, but should be turned into a special report to be submitted by the Secretary-General of the Conference and circulated well in advance of the remainder of the Conference documentation.

2. The purpose of the report will be to provide a global review of human settlement conditions and of the factors affecting their present and future development. The report will not include recommendations; instead, it should become the basic source of information and background for the substantive papers prepared for the Conference.

3. Information included in the reports will be presented in global, regional or subregional terms without attempting to deal comprehensively with conditions on a country-by-country basis. However, illustration drawn from the experience of individual countries will be used when appropriate.

4. The report will deal with two main areas:

   (a) A broad view of existing human settlements, their recent evolution and immediate needs;

   (b) A more detailed analysis of the factors affecting the quality of life in human settlements and their interrelationships.

5. The first of these areas will stress existing physical conditions and patterns of change as they have evolved in recent history in different regions of the world.
Particular emphasis will be placed on the location, quality and use of infrastructure and dwelling stock, and on an examination of land use in human settlements.

6. The second area concerns the main sectors of economic activity (agriculture, industry, commerce and trade, transport and communications, community, social and personal services) seen from the point of view of their demographic, economic, financial, social, cultural, institutional, climatic, employment and ecological impact on human settlements.

7. This part of the report is being structured as a matrix, with sectors and aspects as its two dimensions, in order to cope with the variety of the issues and the complexity of their interrelationships, and to facilitate the assignment of specific contributing parts.

8. The report will also include a statistical annex based largely on official data collected by the United Nations Statistical Office and the statistical services of the specialized agencies. The body of the report itself will contain only summary tables, not necessarily compatible with the statistical annex. This is to enable the report to treat issues in quantifiable and meaningful form, even if proper statistical information is incomplete.

9. Maximum use will be made of material already available to the United Nations and specialized agencies; accordingly, requests for additional information from Governments will be reduced to a minimum and centralized within the Conference secretariat to avoid duplication of efforts.

10. The Centre for Housing, Building and Planning of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has accepted the responsibility for the preparation of the final report, in close consultation with the Conference secretariat. United Nations specialized agencies, as well as units of the Department for Economic and Social Affairs, will collaborate with the Centre and the Conference secretariat in drafting those parts of the report in their special competence.

11. To ensure the appropriate co-ordination of these inputs a working group has been established with a full-time secretary designated by the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning and acting in liaison with the Conference secretariat. Appropriate consultative machinery will be set up at the policy level, if required, to ensure the participation of the different contributing parties.