PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
Resumed first session
New York, 25-29 August 1975

HABITAT: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
(Vancouver, 31 May to 11 June 1976)

DRAFT PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE
PROVISIONAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE

CONTENTS

I. REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Composition of delegations</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Alternates and advisers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Credentials</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Credentials Committee</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provisional participation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. OFFICERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. Election</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Acting President</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Voting rights of the President</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. GENERAL COMMITTEE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. Composition</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Functions</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Duties of the Secretary-General</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Duties of the Secretariat</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Statements by the Secretariat</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Report</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Quorum</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. General powers of the President</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Points of order</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. Speeches</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Precedence</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Closing of list of speakers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Right of reply</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Suspension or adjournment of the meeting</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Adjournment of debate</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Closure of debate</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Order of motions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Submission of proposals and substantive amendments</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Withdrawal of proposals and motions</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Decisions on competence</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Reconsideration of proposals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VII. VOTING AND ELECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30. Voting rights</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Majority required</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Meaning of the phrase &quot;representatives present and voting&quot;</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Method of voting</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Explanation of vote</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Conduct during voting</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Division of proposals</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Amendments</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Order of voting on amendments</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Order of voting on proposals</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Elections</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### VIII. SUBSIDIARY ORGANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42. Main committees, other committees and working groups</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Representation on committees</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Officers and procedures</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS (continued)

IX. LANGUAGES AND RECORDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45. Languages of the Conference</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Interpretation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Languages of official documents</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Records of meetings</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49. General principles</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Communiqués on private meetings</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XI. OTHER PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51. Representatives of national liberation movements</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Representatives of United Nations organs and agencies</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Observers for other intergovernmental organizations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Observers for non-governmental organizations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XII. AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55. Method of amendment</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Method of suspension</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Composition of delegations

Rule 1

Each State participating in the Conference shall be represented by a head of delegation and no more than five other accredited representatives and such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.

Alternates and advisers

Rule 2

The head of delegation may designate an alternate representative or an adviser to act as a representative.

Credentials

Rule 3

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 date fixed for the opening of the Conference. Credentials shall be issued either by the head of the State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Credentials Committee

Rule 4

A Credentials Committee of nine members 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 of the United Nations at its twenty-ninth session. It shall examine the credentials of representatives and report to the Conference without delay.

Provisional participation

Rule 5

Pending a decision of the Conference upon their credentials, representatives shall be entitled to participate provisionally in the Conference.
II. OFFICERS

Election

Rule 6

The Conference shall elect the following officers: a President, ... Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur-General, as well as a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur for each of the main committees provided for in rule 42.

Acting President

Rule 7

1. If the President is absent from a meeting or any part thereof, he shall designate a Vice-President to take his place.

2. A Vice-President acting as President shall have the powers and duties of the President.

Voting rights of the President

Rule 8

The President, or a Vice-President acting as President, shall not vote, but shall appoint another member of his delegation to vote in his place.

III. GENERAL COMMITTEE

Composition

Rule 9

The President, the Vice-Presidents and the Chairmen of the main committees, as well as the Rapporteur-General of the Conference, shall constitute the General Committee. The officers of the Conference shall act as officers of the Committee. The chairmen of other committees established by the Conference may participate in the General Committee without the right to vote.

Functions

Rule 10

The General Committee shall assist the President in the general conduct of the business of the Conference and, subject to the decisions of the Conference, shall ensure the co-ordination of its work.
IV. CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Duties of the Secretary-General

Rule 11

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, or the Secretary-General of the Conference, shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the Conference, its committees and other sessional bodies. They may designate a member of the Secretariat to act in their place at these meetings.

2. The Secretary-General of the Conference shall direct the staff required by the Conference.

Duties of the Secretariat

Rule 12

The Secretariat of the Conference shall, in accordance with these rules:

(a) Interpret speeches made at meetings;

(b) Receive, translate and circulate the documents of the Conference;

(c) Publish and circulate the report of the Conference;

(d) Make and arrange for the keeping of sound recordings of meetings;

(e) Arrange for the custody of the documents of the Conference in the archives of the United Nations; and

(f) Generally perform all other work that the Conference may require.

Statements by the Secretariat

Rule 13

The Secretary-General of the United Nations or the Secretary-General of the Conference, or any member of the Secretariat designated by either for that purpose, may, subject to rule 18, make oral as well as written statements concerning any question under consideration.

V. CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

Report

Rule 14

The Conference shall adopt a report, the draft of which shall be prepared by the Rapporteur-General.
VI. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Quorum

Rule 15

The President may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when representatives of at least one third of the States participating in the Conference are present. The presence of representatives of a majority of such States shall be required for any decision to be taken.

General powers of the President

Rule 16

1. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these rules, the President shall preside at the plenary meetings of the Conference, declare the opening and closing of each meeting, direct the discussion, ensure observance of these rules, accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote and announce decisions. The President shall rule on points of order and, subject to these rules, have complete control of the proceedings and over the maintenance of order thereat. The President may propose to the Conference the closure of the list of speakers, a limitation on the time to be allowed to speakers and on the number of times the representative of each State may speak on a question, the adjournment or the closure of the debate and the suspension or the adjournment of a meeting.

2. The President, in the exercise of his functions, remains under the authority of the Conference.

Points of order

Rule 17

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may at any time raise a point of order, which shall be decided immediately by the President in accordance with these rules. A representative may appeal against the ruling of the President. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately, and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting. A representative may not, in raising a point of order, speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Speeches

Rule 18

1. No one may address the Conference without having previously obtained the
permission of the President. Subject to rules 17, 19 and 21-24, the President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak.

2. Debate shall be confined to the question before the Conference and the President may call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

3. The Conference may limit the time allowed to speakers, and the number of times the representative of each State may speak on a question; [1] permission to speak on a motion to set such limits shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of and to two opposing such limits, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately. Interventions on procedural questions shall not exceed five minutes. When the debate is limited and a speaker exceeds the allotted time, the President shall call him to order without delay.

**Precedence**

**Rule 19**

The Chairman or Rapporteur of a committee may be accorded precedence for the purpose of explaining the conclusions arrived at by the committee.

**Closing of list of speakers**

**Rule 20**

During the course of a debate the President may announce the list of speakers and, with the consent of the Conference, declare the list closed. When there are no more speakers, the President shall, with the consent of the Conference, declare the debate closed. Such closures shall have the same effect as closure by decision of the Conference.

**Right of reply**

**Rule 21**

The right of reply shall be accorded by the President to the representative of any State participating in the Conference who requests it. Representatives should attempt, in exercising this right, to be as brief as possible and preferably to deliver their statements at the end of the meeting at which this right is requested.

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[1] It is suggested that normally this limit should be 15 minutes for the representative of each State, but that the representatives of several States should be permitted to pool such limits and to reallocate the total time thus calculated among themselves. /...
Suspension or adjournment of the meeting

Rule 22

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may at any time move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. No discussion on such motions shall be permitted, and they shall be put to the vote immediately.

Adjournment of debate

Rule 23

A representative may at any time move the adjournment of the debate on the question under discussion. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of and to two opposing the adjournment, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately.

Closure of debate

Rule 24

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate on the question under discussion, whether or not any other representative has signified his wish to speak. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be put to the vote immediately.

Order of motions

Rule 25

The motions indicated below shall have precedence in the following order over all proposals or other motions before the meeting:

(a) To suspend the meeting;
(b) To adjourn the meeting;
(c) To adjourn the debate on the question under discussion;
(d) To close the debate on the question under discussion.

Submission of proposals and substantive amendments

Rule 26

Proposals and substantive amendments shall normally be submitted in writing...
to the Secretary-General of the Conference, who shall circulate copies to all
delegations. Unless the Conference decides otherwise, substantive proposals shall
be discussed or put to the vote no earlier than 24 hours after copies have been
circulated in all languages of the Conference to all delegations.

Withdrawal of proposals and motions

Rule 27

A proposal or a motion may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before
voting on it has commenced, provided that it has not been amended. A proposal or
a motion thus withdrawn may be reintroduced by any representative.

Decisions on competence

Rule 28

Any motion calling for a decision on the competence of the Conference to adopt
a proposal submitted to it shall be put to the vote before a vote is taken on the
proposal in question.

Reconsideration of proposals

Rule 29

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered
unless the Conference, by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and
voting, so decides. Permission to speak on a motion to reconsider shall be accorded
only to two speakers opposing reconsideration, after which the motion shall be put
to the vote immediately.

VII. VOTING AND ELECTIONS

Voting rights

Rule 30

Each State participating in the Conference shall have one vote.

Majority required

Rule 31

1. Unless the Conference decides otherwise, decisions of the Conference on all
matters of substance shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the representatives
present and voting.
2. Unless the Conference decides otherwise and except as otherwise provided, decisions of the Conference on all matters of procedure shall be taken by a simple majority of the representatives present and voting. If a vote is equally divided, the motion shall be regarded as rejected.

3. If the question arises whether a matter is one of procedure or of substance, the President shall rule on the question. An appeal against such a ruling shall be put to the vote immediately, and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the representatives present and voting.

**Meaning of the phrase "representatives present and voting"**

*Rule 32*

For the purpose of these rules, the phrase "representatives present and voting" means representatives casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives who abstain from voting shall be regarded as not voting.

**Method of voting**

*Rule 33*

Except as provided in rule 40, the Conference shall normally vote by show of hands, except that a representative may request a roll-call, which shall then be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the States participating in the Conference, beginning with the delegation whose name is drawn by lot by the President. The name of each State shall be called in all roll-calls, and its representative shall reply "yes", "no" or "abstention".

**Explanation of vote**

*Rule 34*

Representatives may make brief statements consisting solely of explanation of their votes, before the voting has commenced or after the voting has been completed. The representative of a State sponsoring a proposal or motion shall not speak in explanation of vote thereon, except if it has been amended.

**Conduct during voting**

*Rule 35*

After the President has announced the commencement of voting, no representative may interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connexion with the actual process of voting.
Division of proposals

Rule 36

A representative may move that parts of a proposal be voted on separately. If a representative objects, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion shall be accorded only to two representatives in favour of and two opposing the division. If the motion is carried, those parts of the proposal that are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal have been rejected, the proposal shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

Amendments

Rule 37

An amendment is a proposal that does no more than add to, delete from or revise part of another proposal. Unless specified otherwise, the word "proposal" in these rules shall be considered as including amendments.

Order of voting on amendments

Rule 38

When an amendment is moved to a proposal, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Conference shall vote first on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal and then on the amendment next furthest removed therefrom, and so on until all the amendments have been put to the vote. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

Order of voting on proposals

Rule 39

1. If two or more proposals, other than amendments, relate to the same question, they shall, unless the Conference decides otherwise, be voted on in the order in which they were submitted. The Conference may, after each vote on a proposal, decide whether to vote on the next proposal.

2. Revised proposals shall be voted on in the order in which the original proposals were submitted unless the revision substantially departs from the original proposal. In that case the original proposal shall be considered as withdrawn and the revised proposal shall be treated as a new proposal.

/...
3. A motion requiring that no decision be taken on a proposal shall have priority over that proposal.

**Elections**

**Rule 40**

All elections shall be held by secret ballot, unless, in the absence of any objection, the Conference decides to proceed without taking a ballot on an agreed candidate or slate. When candidates are to be nominated, each nomination shall be made only by one representative, after which the Conference shall immediately proceed to the election.

**Rule 41**

1. When one or more elective places are to be filled at one time under the same conditions, those candidates, in a number not exceeding the number of such places, obtaining in the first ballot a majority of the votes cast and the largest number of votes, shall be elected.

2. If the number of candidates obtaining such majority is less than the number of places to be filled, additional ballots shall be held to fill the remaining places.

**VIII. SUBSIDIARY ORGANS**

**Main committees, other committees and working groups**

**Rule 42**

The Conference may establish such main committees and other committees as may be required for the performance of its functions. Each committee may establish working groups.

**Representation on committees**

**Rule 43**

Each State participating in the Conference may be represented by one representative on each main committee and on such other committee of which it is a member. It may assign to these committees such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required.
Officers and procedures

Rule 44

The rules relating to officers, the Conference secretariat, conduct of business and voting of the Conference (contained in chapters II (rules 6-8), IV (rules 11-13), VI (rules 15-29) and VII (rules 30-41 above)) shall be applicable, mutatis mutandis, to the proceedings of committees and working groups, except that:

(a) Unless otherwise decided, the Credentials Committee and any working group shall elect a chairman and such other officers as it may require;

(b) The chairmen of committees other than main committees and the chairmen of working groups may exercise the right to vote;

(c) A majority of the representatives on any committee or working group shall constitute a quorum; the chairman of a main committee may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when representatives of at least one quarter of the States participating in the Conference are present;

(d) Decisions of committees and working groups shall be taken by a majority of the representatives present and voting, except that the reconsideration of a proposal shall require the majority established by rule 29.

IX. LANGUAGES AND RECORDS

Languages of the Conference

Rule 45

Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish shall be the languages of the Conference.

Interpretation

Rule 46

1. Speeches made in a language of the Conference shall be interpreted into the other such languages.

2. A representative may speak in a language other than a language of the Conference if he provides for interpretation into one such language. Interpretation into the other languages of the Conference by interpreters of the Secretariat may be based on the interpretation given in the first such language.
Languages of official documents

Rule 47

Official documents shall be made available in the languages of the Conference.

Records of meetings

Rule 48

1. There shall be neither verbatim nor summary records of meetings.

2. Sound recordings of meetings of the Conference and of all committees shall be made and kept in accordance with the practice of the United Nations. Unless otherwise decided by the committee concerned no such recordings shall be made of the meetings of a working group thereof.

X. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MEETINGS

General principles

Rule 49

1. The plenary meetings of the Conference and the meetings of the main committees shall be held in public unless the body concerned decides otherwise.

2. Meetings of other organs of the Conference shall be held in private.

Communiqués on private meetings

Rule 50

At the close of a private meeting, the body concerned may issue a communiqué to the press through the Secretary-General of the Conference.

XI. OTHER PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

Representatives of national liberation movements

Rule 51

1. Representatives designated by national liberation movements invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its committees and, as appropriate, the working groups thereof, upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned, on questions within the scope of their activities.
2. Written statements of such representatives shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations.

Representatives of United Nations organs and agencies

Rule 52

1. Representatives designated by organs of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency or the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its committees and, as appropriate, the working groups thereof, upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned, on questions within the scope of their activities.

2. Written statements of such representatives shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations.

Observers for other intergovernmental organizations

Rule 53

1. Observers designated by other intergovernmental organizations invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its committees and, as appropriate, the working groups thereof, upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned, on questions within the scope of their activities.

2. Written statements of such observers shall be distributed by the Secretariat to all delegations.

Observers for non-governmental organizations

Rule 54

1. Non-governmental organizations invited to the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and its main committees.

2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have a special competence.

3. Written statements submitted by such non-governmental organizations on subjects in which they have a special competence and which are related to the work of the Conference, shall be circulated by the Secretariat in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are made available to the Secretariat for distribution.
XII. AMENDMENT AND SUSPENSION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Method of amendment

Rule 55

These rules of procedure may be amended by a decision of the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the representatives present and voting, after the General Committee has reported on the proposed amendment.

Method of suspension

Rule 56

Any of these rules may be suspended by the Conference provided that 2½ hours' notice of the proposal for the suspension has been given, which may be waived if no member objects. Any such suspension shall be limited to a specific and stated purpose and to a period required to achieve that purpose.
48. The inadequacies of current technologies and the gravity of the mal-distribution of resources are particularly apparent in human settlements where some of these problems are compounded by the natural inertial of institutions and by the sheer weight of capital investment accumulated over the generation.

49. To improve the use and distribution of resources, consideration should be given to the following:

(a) Wider use of local materials suitable for human settlements by undertaking systematic surveys of their availability, by developing better techniques for their use and by removing artificial restraints on their use;

(b) Formulation of plans for more rational use of key resources (energy, water, etc.), with particular reference to the conservation of non-renewable resources and the role of public agencies in allocating those that are in short supply;

(c) More systematic and imaginative use of existing investment in human settlements, especially that which has been contributed by the people themselves;

(d) Research and development of more appropriate technologies for human settlements, especially those utilizing currently available skills and materials and respecting ecological constraints;

(e) Encouragement of systems and institutions for directing financial resources to human settlement improvement, with particular reference to private savings;

(f) Effective and innovative use of human energies at all levels in human settlements, including better training programmes, the encouragement of popular participation, the creation of greater opportunities for the employment of highly qualified personnel, etc.
Institutions

50. Consideration of the themes and issues of the Conference would be incomplete without mention of institutions dealing with human settlements at all levels (local, regional, national, international) and of all kinds (political, sectoral, administrative, financial, educational, etc.). However, recommendations for national action at the Conference are unlikely to deal with institutional forms in a specific way, because these are inevitably determined by the political system, experience and needs of each nation.

51. Current institutional arrangements have proved unequal to the task of solving problems of human settlements on a world-wide scale. Underlying the infinite variety of local situations, the increasing gap between problems and institutions can often be traced either to the fact that the original objectives for which an institution was designed are no longer valid or relevant, or that the scale of the problem has outrun the responsive capacity of the institution.

52. Institutions tend towards obsolescence as conditions change. New policies and conditions will require new and, it is to be hoped, more vital institutional forms. In human settlement planning and management, a requisite of such new institutions capable of overcoming tendencies towards stultification should be new forms of popular participation in decision-making and the planning and implementation of programmes.