

CSD-13 Interactive Discussion on Human Settlements
Remarks by Daniel Rochberg, U.S. Department of State
April 12, 2005

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The challenge of human settlements is a perfect example of the distributed nature of the challenge we face. The difficult challenge of improving the lives of slum dwellers, of providing access to basic services, is being faced city-by-city, region-by-region, around the world.

The solutions to these challenges will not likely be top-down, centralized solutions. The efforts to address these challenges are increasingly spread out, increasingly specialized, and increasingly local.

To reiterate comments made by my colleague from Indonesia, as well as by our distinguished panelists, the distributed nature of this problem underscores the need for us to share best practices and lessons learned.

In that regard, we welcome the CSD Chairman's matrix from the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting. This document not only identifies policy options and practical measures, but specific examples of how those practical measures have been implemented. Some have commented that the examples column is a bit thin right now, but it is a good start. We have heard some more good case studies today, which we hope will be taken into account, and ultimately added to the matrix.

Related to this, we want to highlight and welcome paragraph 4 of the decision taken last week by the UN Habitat Governing Council regarding CSD-13. In that decision, the Governing Council encouraged UN-HABITAT to contribute to this CSD session "relevant case studies on good urban governance for inclusion in the 'Examples' column" of the Chair's matrix. UN-HABITAT has done a lot of good work on their database of best practices and we hope that they can draw from this resource in contributing examples to the Chair's matrix.

Finally, to follow up on a comment made by Australia yesterday, we hope that this matrix will be a living document and that additional case studies and examples will be provided after CSD concludes. We hope that the CSD Secretariat and UN-HABITAT can identify ways to work together on this effort.

Thank you Madam Chair.