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**Meeting with the Chair of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and  
Land Management**

**Report by the Chair**

## **Report by the Chair of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management**

1. The Chair of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, Ms. Doris Andoni (Albania), is pleased to submit her report to the 112<sup>th</sup> meeting of EXCOM on 14 December 2020.

2. This report outlines the main achievements of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management in implementing its programmes of work for 2018-2019 and, for 2020, from October 2019 to the present time. More information on the implementation is contained in the report of the eighty-first Committee session (ECE/HBP/206); the session was held on 6-8 October 2020 in Geneva.

### **I. Achievements of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management since its eightieth session**

#### **A. Sustainable urban development**

##### *Forum of Mayors 2020*

3. On 6 October 2020, the first Forum of Mayors was held in Geneva. It brought together 40 mayors and vice-mayors from the 36 countries in the UNECE region to share their experiences in addressing the key challenges of our time. Under the theme of “City Action for a Resilient Future: Strengthening Local Government Preparedness and Response to Emergencies and the Impact of Disasters and Climate Change”, mayors exchanged innovative ideas and solutions to address the COVID-19 emergency and, simultaneously, combat the climate crisis and move towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation across all levels of government to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda).

4. The mayors endorsed, by acclamation, the Geneva Declaration of the Forum of Mayors 2020, an ambitious document purporting to “place the SDGs at the centre of our recovery efforts and create new urban realities for the benefit of all”. The Declaration aligns city leaders’ efforts with the initiative of the UN Secretary-General to “build back better” and turn the COVID-19 recovery into a real opportunity for shaping a healthy and resilient future. It provides a blueprint with concrete steps for local authorities to take to realize their cities’ potential for greater sustainability.

5. The Forum took place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, and allowed for online participation. It was also webcasted live on UN Web TV. Over 1,000 people participated, in person and remotely. The webcast was viewed by 875 people, from 65 countries. The first Forum created a media attention. The estimated reach through media and social media channels was around 13 million people. This includes 40 recorded media articles, in nine languages. The event had 150 mentions on social media, reaching over 480,000 people on Twitter alone.

##### *In Focus: SDG 11 roundtable*

6. On 5 October 2020, prior to the Forum of Mayors, the In Focus: SDG 11 roundtable was held, in cooperation with the Geneva City Hub. This event was jointly organized by the Geneva Cities Hub and UN-Habitat. It brought together representatives of 24 organizations, and was one of the largest gatherings in the world of city networks. Participants discussed successes and challenges in the implementation of SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and other urban-related SDGs.

## B. Sustainable Smart Cities

### *Implementation of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC) initiative*

7. The UNECE is an active partner of the U4SSC initiative, a global platform dedicated to supporting cities worldwide in becoming smarter and more sustainable. The U4SSC is coordinated by the ITU, the UNECE and UN-Habitat, with the support of 13 other United Nations agencies. In the framework of the U4SSC initiative, the Committee secretariat supports cities in their transition to becoming smart and sustainable by conducting evaluations of their performance using the Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities (KPIs for SSCs) and preparing City Profiles.

8. KPI evaluations were conducted and City Profiles were prepared for the cities of Grodno, Belarus, and Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan; the City Profile for Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, is under preparation. City profiles for four cities in Norway - Alesund, Asker, Rana and Trondheim - were prepared within the “Improved sustainable urban development in 17 Norwegian cities” project, which was supported by the Government of Norway.

9. Given the need to develop official procedures to evaluate the performance of a city using the U4SSC KPIs for SSCs, the Committee secretariat developed the draft “ECE Protocol on the Evaluation of City Performance Against the Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities” (ECE/HBP/2020/5), which was endorsed by the Committee at its eighty-first session.

10. Within the U4SSC initiative, the secretariat also coordinated the preparation of two publications:

- The “Guide to Circular Cities”<sup>1</sup>, which contains guidance to support cities in implementing circular economy approaches; and
- The “Guidelines on tools and mechanisms to finance smart sustainable cities projects” containing practical recommendations for city governments on how to develop sustainable projects that are easily understood by, and attractive to, potential investors.

## C. Support to the efforts of national and local governments in developing and implementing their immediate response and elaborating recovery plans for the COVID-19 pandemic

11. As the COVID-19 pandemic impact unfolds, with cities being the main hotspots for the transmission of the virus, the Committee initiated activities to support efforts of national and local governments across the UNECE region in developing and implementing their response and elaborating recovery plans for the pandemic. Within the UN Development Account “Urban economic and financial recovery and resilience building in the time of COVID-19” project, the Committee secretariat, in cooperation with project partners, is developing following activities:

- A series of studies and guidance documents, of which “Global Compendium of Practices in Local Economic and Financial Recovery” and “Guiding Principles and Practices for Urban Economic and Financial Recovery and Resilience Building” have been already prepared;
- Support to local governments in three pilot cities - Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Kharkiv, Ukraine; and Tirana, Albania - to conduct an in-depth assessment of the economic

<sup>1</sup> The ECE appreciates the leadership of Mr. Okan Geray, Strategic Planning Advisor of Smart Dubai, on the study. The Guide was published by the ITU in May 2020, and is available at <https://www.itu.int/en/publications/Documents/tsb/2020-U4SSC-A-guide-to-circular-cities/index.html>.

and financial consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to design local economic and financial recovery and rebuilding plans.

12. In September 2020, the secretariat initiated the “Post COVID-19 Recovery in Informal Settlements in the ECE Region” project, which supports local authorities in four pilot countries – Tirana, Albania; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Podgorica, Montenegro, and Skopje, North Macedonia; – in their efforts towards recovery and upgrading informal settlements plans. An overall objective of this project is to strengthen the capacity of the national and local governments in the UNECE countries to address the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the populations living in the informal settlements. The project will result in the development of a Post-COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements for countries in the UNECE region, as well as concrete recommendations for the four pilot cities for upgrading the informal settlements and supporting the cities in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This project is implemented in cooperation with the UNECE Nexus on Smart Sustainable Cities for All Ages.

#### **D. Affordable, adequate, healthy, safe and energy-efficient housing**

##### *Publication of guidance materials to support access for all to affordable, adequate and healthy housing*

13. The Committee continued to support national and local governments in their efforts to implement the principles of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, a non-legally binding document that aims to support member States as they seek to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all. The Committee published the following guidance materials:

- [Guidelines on the Management and Ownership of Condominium Housing](#) (ECE/HBP/198), developed by the Committee’s Real Estate Market Advisory Group in 2019;
- [Guidelines for the formalization of informal constructions](#), prepared by the Bureau of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) Task Force on Property and Housing; and
- [Survey on costs for registration and transfer of real estate and mortgages for the ECE region](#), which presents the results of a study implemented by the WPLA on the benchmarking in land administration of the costs for the registration/transfer of real estate and mortgages for the ECE region.

14. In addition, a report on the “Housing for Migrants and Refugees in the UNECE region: challenges and practices” study was finalized, and will be published on the UNECE webpage.

##### “#Housing2030 - Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE Region” Study

15. The need for effective, affordable housing policies to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all, as demanded by the 2030 Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter, was amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. To facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices between the UNECE national and local governments and the stakeholders on approaches to improving access for all to affordable, adequate and healthy housing, the Committee, in cooperation with Housing Europe and UN-Habitat, initiated the “[#Housing2030 - Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE Region](#)” study.

16. The study will explore the following four topics: housing governance and regulation; access to finance and funding; access and availability of land for housing construction; and climate-neutral housing construction and renovation. The study also addresses the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the housing sector.

17. In 2019-2020, the following online workshops were held in support of the study:
- the first workshop on “Access and Availability of Land for Housing Construction” on 20 May 2020;
  - the national workshop entitled “National Housing Policy in Albania: Financing for affordable housing and the role of housing agencies” on 18 June 2020 in cooperation with the Albanian Ministry of Finance and Economy;
  - the second online workshop on “Housing for Tomorrow: Towards Sustainable Homes and Neighborhoods in the Mediterranean Region” on 17 September 2020 in cooperation with the Government of Malta and the Union for the Mediterranean; and
  - the third workshop on “Climate change, environmental and health impacts on housing affordability” on 10 November 2020 in cooperation with City of Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
18. As part of the study, a survey of UNECE member States was conducted in 2020, with the aim of collecting information on housing affordability challenges in countries and cities of the UNECE region, and with a view to developing relevant solutions, tools, measures and policy instruments and to enabling the exchange of good practices.
19. The study report will be finalized in 2021, and will include a compendium of good practices based on discussions at the study workshops and responses to the 2020 survey.

*Promoting energy-efficiency standards in buildings through the activities of the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings*

20. Energy efficiency of housing is an important component of adequate housing. The main outcome of activities undertaken by the UNECE Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings, which is made up of two UNECE committees – the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management – was the publication of the [Promoting Energy Efficiency Standards and Technologies to Enhance Energy Efficiency in Buildings report](#). This report includes a gap analysis of the status of energy-efficiency standards, an assessment of available technologies in relation to the existing standards, the mapping of existing technologies in buildings in relation to the existing standards, and a compendium of best practices of standards and technologies for energy efficiency in buildings.

*Supporting fire safety standards in buildings*

21. The Committee, at its eighty first session, welcomed the IFSS: Common Principles: “Safe Buildings Save Lives” (ECE/HBP/2020/7) and the Framework for the Application of the Common Principles (ECE/HBP/2020/INF.8), to be published as an UNECE standard, and invited representatives of national and local governments and stakeholders to apply the Common Principles to promote the safety of buildings.

*Activities of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group*

22. The Real Estate Market (REM) Advisory Group continued to contribute to the work of the Committee on affordable and energy-efficient housing, smart sustainable cities, and land administration. The main activity of the Group was the preparation of the “*Sharing Economy in the Housing Sector in the UNECE Region*” report which is planned to be finalized in 2021.

## **E. Activities of the Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence**

23. The implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing on the ground was supported by the work of the Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence. The following key activities were implemented by the Charter Centres in 2020:

- **The Centre of Excellence on Smart Sustainable Cities in Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**, contributed to the development of a concept note for the ECE “#Housing 2030: Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE region” study, and supported the organization of the #Housing 2030 workshop on “Climate change, environmental and health impacts on housing affordability”.
- **The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Housing in Tallinn, Estonia**, organized trainings on the management of multiapartment buildings for housing managers from Belarus and Ukraine.
- **The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Development Goal City Transition in Trondheim, Norway**, used the KPIs for SSCs to evaluate the performance of four Norwegian municipalities, and supported their transition to achieving the SDGs. The Centre also contributed to the UNECE workshop at the 2019 Smart City Expo World Congress, presenting its project to assess the smartness and sustainability of the 17 Norwegian cities.

24. In addition to those already established, at least three new centres are expected to be created in 2021: in Geneva, Switzerland, to be hosted by University of Geneva; in Toronto, Canada, to be hosted by York University; and in Italy, to be hosted by the LIUC University. The UNECE is cooperating with the University of Geneva on a joint project entitled “Reliable Data for Evidence-Based Housing Policies”, with funding from the Geneva Science-Policy Interface Initiative. The University of Geneva is further supporting the preparation of five online workshops on urban resilience and building back better as part of the project “Post COVID-19 Recovery in Informal Settlements in the ECE Region”.

25. To support the expanding network of the Centres, the Committee endorsed the “Guidelines for establishing Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Sustainable Smart Cities and modalities of their work” (ECE/HBP/2020/11 and ECE/HBP/2020/11/Corr.1).

## **F. Land administration and management**

26. The Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) contributed to the Conference and Plenary Meeting of the Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union, entitled “The Ecosystems Related to Real Estate Conveyancing” (Helsinki, Finland, 20 and 21 November 2019). The WPLA Working Party continued to actively contribute to the work of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM). In this context, it provided input into the development of the Framework for Effective Land Administration prepared by the UN-GGIM.

27. The UNECE continued its cooperation with the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), the UN-GGIM, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN-Habitat and its Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) on land management issues. At the invitation of the PRINDEX Research Advisory Group, which is a joint initiative of the Global Land Alliance and the Overseas Development Institute to measure perceptions of property security, the WPLA joined the Advisory Group and contributes to its activities.

### *Studies on selected topics in land management*

28. The WPLA continued working on the preparation of studies on:

- Challenges of Fraud for Land Administration Institutions;
- Guiding Principles for Public-Private Partnerships in Land Administration; and
- Scenarios for Future Land Administration and Management.

## II. Major activities planned for 2020 and beyond

29. The following planned activities highlight key themes that address some of the major challenges facing the urban and housing sectors.

### A. **Organization of the Twelfth Session of the Working Party on Land Administration, the Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management 2021, and the eighty-second session of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management**

30. The twelfth session of the WPLA will take place on 31 May and 1 June 2021 in Valletta, Malta.

31. The Committee will work on the organization of the Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, which is to take place tentatively in October 2021. The Committee agreed, at its eighty-first session, that the Ministerial Meeting will be entitled “Affordable, adequate, and resilient housing in liveable cities, including cities which face extreme weather conditions”. The Ministerial Meeting is expected to launch a report of the #Housing 2030 study, and a regional action plan for the UNECE region, entitled “#Housing 2030 - Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE Region”.

### B. **Support the efforts of national and local governments in developing and implementing their immediate response to, and elaborating recovery plans for, the COVID-19 pandemic**

32. Within the “Urban economic and financial recovery and resilience building in the time of COVID-19” project, the Committee secretariat will support local governments in three pilot cities - Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Kharkiv, Ukraine; and Tirana, Albania - to develop plans for the recovery and rebuilding of the local economy, through the preparation of guidance materials, capacity building, and the facilitation of the exchange of experiences between the cities.

### C. **Sustainable Smart Cities**

#### *Implementation of the U4SSC initiative*

33. The Committee secretariat will continue its work, already started in 2020, on the evaluation of cities’ performance, and in capacity-building activities to promote evidence-based policies and the application of innovative financing in the cities of Grodno (Belarus), Almaty and Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Tbilisi (Georgia), and Podgorica (Montenegro). These activities will be implemented within the UNDA twelfth tranche project, entitled “Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda in the UNECE Region”.

34. SSC profiles will be finalized in 2021 for 17 cities in Norway within the “Improved sustainable urban development in 17 Norwegian cities” project, supported by the Government of Norway. Information on, and best practices of, the Norwegian cities regarding the acceleration of the achievement of the SDGs and the promotion of the alignment of policy and budgets with SDGs will be widely circulated in the UNECE region.

35. The Committee secretariat will lead the work of the U4SSC thematic groups entitled “Economic recovery in cities and urban resilience building in the time of COVID-19” and “Tools and mechanisms to finance smart sustainable cities projects”. Compendiums

of best practices within the two thematic groups will be developed in cooperation with the U4SSC partner and member organizations.

36. A workshop on “Promoting circularity in cities” will be organized as a side event to the High-level segment of its 69th UNECE Commission session “Promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources in the UNECE region” in April 2021.

#### **D. Integrated approach to the planning of cities and human settlements**

37. A sub-regional workshop on land-use planning and industrial safety has been postponed from October 2020 and is planned to be held jointly with the secretariat of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, in Belgrade, Serbia, in October 2021. Other regional and national events may be organized, and studies may be developed within the ECE Nexus on Smart Sustainable Cities for All Ages, in cooperation with other UNECE divisions, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

38. A regional workshop on strengthening the resilience of water and sanitation in cities will be organized jointly with the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe Protocol on Water and Health in autumn 2021. The objective of the workshop is to support national and local governments in promoting the resilience of their water supply and sanitation systems to climate change impacts, by bringing together community experts on water, sanitation and health, urban planning, and climate change.

#### **E. Affordable, adequate, healthy, safe and energy-efficient housing**

##### “#Housing2030 - Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE Region” study

39. Work on the “#Housing2030 - Improving Housing Affordability in the UNECE Region” study will continue, in cooperation with UN-Habitat, Housing Europe, the Union for the Mediterranean, and other partners. This work is supported by extrabudgetary funds from the Governments of Slovenia and Czechia.

40. In 2020-2021, the Committee secretariat will further:

- finalize the survey to collect good practices on improving housing affordability in the countries and cities of the UNECE region; both rental and homeownership housing will be addressed;
- organize thematic online events, including:
  - “Housing governance and regulation towards housing affordability” conference, focusing on housing affordability challenges in South-Eastern Europe, to be hosted by the Government of Slovenia on 23-24 February 2021; and
  - “Improving housing affordability through access to finance and funding” workshop, to be hosted by Irish Housing Agency on 14 April 2021.

41. The study report will be launched at the Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management in October 2021.

##### Planned activities of the UNECE Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings

42. The activities in 2020-2021 under the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency in Buildings will include:

- gap analysis between the performance objectives set forth in the Framework Guidelines and current energy-efficiency standards and their implementation in the

countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Russian Federation;

- national studies for a three UNECE member States to be selected, with a more detailed gap analysis;
- maintenance of the network of experts on energy efficiency in buildings in the UNECE region;
- a workshop for stakeholders to validate the gap analysis, seminars on high-performance energy-efficiency standards, and a workshop for stakeholders to discuss and launch the studies;
- impact discovery on how member States could better use best practices and guidelines in national and/or sub-national measures to address the issues of energy efficiency in buildings.

43. These activities will be led by the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division, with financial support from the Russian Federation.

*Promoting fire safety in buildings*

44. The Committee will continue to cooperate with the IFSS on the implementation of the Common Principles on fire safety in buildings, through the organization of the exchange of good practices and studies.

*Activities of the REM Advisory Group*

45. The REM will continue its work on the ongoing studies on the sharing economy in the housing sector and on housing finance. It will also support the Committee in its activities on: affordable housing; energy efficiency in buildings, including energy poverty; the use of land in urban contexts; bringing brownfield land into use; the revitalization of neighbourhoods; finding new uses for old buildings and infrastructure; and other topics within the Committee's mandate.

## **F. Activities of the Geneva UN Charter Centres on Sustainable Housing**

46. Concerning the network of Centres of Excellence, the secretariat will continue implementing the recommendations of the 2019 evaluation to increase the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the operations of the Centres. This includes strengthening the network of the Centres, by setting up a shared online space for the exchange of information, organizing biannual meetings (online or in person), and fostering the exchange of best practices between the Centres. In addition, it is planned to identify opportunities for joint fundraising. In 2020-2021, it is expected that the existing Centres will deliver their specific activities, including the following:

- The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Housing in Tallinn, Estonia, will conduct training for housing managers in countries with economies in transition, based on the requests of the countries to the Committee secretariat.
- The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Development Goal City Transition in Trondheim, Norway, will continue to assess the performance of 17 Norwegian municipalities against the KPIs for SSCs. Further, the Centre plans to run a pilot test on the development of VLRs to measure progress in attaining the 17 SDGs in several cities in Norway, based on the U4SSC KPIs for SSCs standard. It will also establish in cooperation with its partners a networking website at <http://learningsociety.net>, to connect city officials with the private sector on the topic of smart cities.

## **G. Regional observatory on urban-related SDGs**

47. The UNECE will launch a regional observatory on urban-related SDGs as a web-based platform. Activities on the development of the observatory in 2020 will focus on the:

- development of a set of e-learning material on data and knowledge for the review of progress towards the achievement of the SDGs and on evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land management; and
- dissemination of the outcomes of the Committee activities.

48. Subject to the availability of funding, an UNECE Online Academy will include a series of online lectures from UNECE experts, including government officials, and representatives of academia and partner organizations; as well as other supporting learning materials, such as articles, case studies, references to existing relevant guidelines and policy recommendation documents, etc. Activities of the Academy will be promoted through social media channels.

## **H. Land administration and management**

49. To assist member States in improving land administration and land management, the WPLA will promote security of tenure and improvement of cadastres and land registries, including institutional arrangements for land administration. These activities will address land registration, e-governance, land tenure, spatial information and cadastres. Emphasis will be placed on issues such as innovation, digitalization and capacity building in land administration. Possible impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the land sector will be assessed.

50. The WPLA will finalize the update on "Challenges of Fraud for Land Administration Institutions", and work on an update of the Guiding Principles for Public-Private Partnerships in Land Administration. The draft "Scenario Study on Future Land Administration to Encourage Strategy and National Interventions" will be discussed at the twelfth session of the WPLA in spring 2021, and the results of this consultation will be reflected in the final study, which will be launched in 2021.

51. The WPLA is expected to hold its twelfth session during the last week of May 2021, in Valetta, Malta. The UNECE will also continue its cooperation with the FAO, UN-Habitat and the GLTN on land management issues.

## **III. Any proposed changes to the subsidiary structure of the Committee**

52. No changes to the subsidiary structure were proposed at the last session of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. The Executive Committee is invited to approve the extension of the mandate of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group for the period 2021–2022 and adopt its revised terms of reference as contained in document ECE/HBP/2020/8.

## **IV. Follow-up to the 2019 session of the ECE**

53. No relevant decisions were taken at the 2019 session of the ECE.

## V. Intersectoral activities: new activities and/or progress in existing intersectoral activities

54. The Committee continued to cooperate with UNECE subprogrammes, especially on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: Environment, Transport, Statistics, Economic Cooperation and Integration, Sustainable Energy, and Forestry and Timber, within the four UNECE nexuses:

- (a) sustainable management of natural resources;
- (b) sustainable and smart cities for all ages;
- (c) sustainable mobility and smart connectivity; and
- (d) measuring and monitoring SDGs.

55. Under the UNECE nexus “Sustainable and Smart Cities for All Ages”, the Committee secretariat coordinated the preparation of the publication entitled “People-Smart Sustainable Cities: A Policy Nexus for a Prosperous, Green and Liveable Future”, which will be submitted for publishing at the end of 2020 and will be published in 2021.

56. The Committee has engaged in regular cooperation with the Committee on Sustainable Energy on energy efficiency in buildings. The two Committees co-lead the activities of the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings.

## VI. Technical cooperation activities

57. The following projects are being implemented:

58. The UNDA 13<sup>th</sup> tranche project, entitled “Building Urban Economic Resilience during and after COVID-19”. The project will support the development of the “Global Compendium of Practices in Local Economic and Financial Recovery” and the “Guiding Principles and Practices for Urban Economic and Financial Recovery and Resilience Building”. Support will be provided to local governments in the pilot cities - Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Kharkiv, Ukraine; and Tirana, Albania - to develop local action plans to address the economic and financial consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

59. The UNDA 12<sup>th</sup> tranche project, entitled “Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda in selected countries in the UNECE Region”, will support the preparation of SSC profiles and the organization of capacity-building activities in cities in Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Montenegro. Recommendations will be developed on how to generate financing for infrastructure investments and other projects to promote more resilient economic and social development.

60. Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC)-funded project, entitled “Post COVID-19 Recovery in Informal Settlements in the ECE Region”. The objective of this project is to strengthen the capacity of national and local governments in participating countries to address the needs of the most vulnerable groups of the population living in settlements and responding to the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. It will also prepare a course lectures on formalizing informal settlements, which will contribute to the E-Academy’s materials as well as a series of online workshops on urban resilience and building back better in informal settlements.

61. Within the “Improved sustainable urban development in 17 Norwegian cities” project, SSC profiles will be developed for 17 cities in Norway. Recommendations are being developed for the cities' governments on how they can promote the acceleration of the achievement of the SDGs.

62. Activities of several technical assistance projects implemented by the secretariat will be adjusted to support post-pandemic economic recovery in countries with economies in transition. Two projects under the UNDA 12<sup>th</sup> tranche, “Inter-regional cooperation for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda” and “Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda in selected countries in the UNECE Region”, will include activities to support national and city governments in Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Montenegro in addressing the social and economic consequences of the pandemic.

## **VII. Cooperation with other organizations**

63. Regular cooperation of the five United Nations Regional Economic Commissions and UN-Habitat is organized within the two projects: “Inter-regional cooperation for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda”, supported by the UNDA 12<sup>th</sup> tranche; and “Urban economic and financial recovery and resilience building in the time of COVID-19”, supported by residual funds from the UNDA 13<sup>th</sup> tranche. The United Nations Capital Development Fund is also a partner in the UNDA 13<sup>th</sup> tranche project.

64. The Committee is working together with UN-Habitat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Housing Europe, the Geneva City Hub, the World Economic Forum, the Union of Cities and Local Governments, the European Commission, Eurocities, and many other pan-European networks, on issues related to affordable and healthy housing. The “In Focus: SDG 11” roundtable, which took place in Geneva on 5 October 2020, allowed for the discussion of synergies and cooperation of the UNECE Committee with partner organizations and for the planning of joint events and projects.

65. The Committee continues its cooperation with the ITU, UN-Habitat and 13 other United Nations agencies and stakeholders through the U4SSC global initiative.

66. Under the Memorandum of Understanding on Land Administration and Management with the FAO, the WPLA is collaborating under a bi-annual cooperation plan with the FAO, as well as with the World Bank and the European Commission Joint Research Centre. The WPLA regularly cooperates on the organization of joint events and studies with other international organizations involved in land administration in the UNECE region, including UN-Habitat, UN-GGIM, the EU INSPIRE Initiative, the European Land Information Service, EuroGeographics.

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