

# Talking Points of Alexander Zuev, UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Tajikistan at the launch event of the UNECE Country Profile on Housing and Land Management of Tajikistan

May 14, 2013, Dushanbe Plaza

Dear Mr. Chair,

Dear participants of this launch event of the Country Profile on Housing and Land Management of Tajikistan,

I am very glad to welcome you at this important meeting.

Housing and land management issues are very important topics globally.

- Cities worldwide are responsible for **75 %** of global energy consumption **80 %** of greenhouse gas emissions

In Europe and Central Asia:

- Buildings are responsible for over a 1/3 of total final energy consumption
- 23% of the total income expenditure is a housing related expenditure
- Housing is 40% of the expenditure of income for 12% of the population
- 40% of the population in the region still does not have access to drinking water and sanitation
- 1 in 10 Europeans lives in a household unable to pay utility bills
- Natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, landslides destroy thousands of homes, leave millions without electric and caused billions of dollars in damage.

In Tajikistan, a country with a rapidly growing population and limited land resources due to the mountainous landscape, high seismicity and soils prone to landslides, accessibility of housing is one of the key challenges.

Given the history of the transition from the centrally planned to market economy, many challenges in the housing sector and in land management remain. Those include low housing affordability, deterioration of the existing housing stock, high energy losses in the residential sector, absence of working mechanisms for the housing finance and management of multi-apartment houses, weak infrastructure for heating as well as for water supply and sanitation.

The Government of Tajikistan has already implemented diverse measures to promote the housing construction and its improvement. A new Urban Code of the Republic of Tajikistan has been adopted in 2012; procedures for administrative tasks associated with the construction activities in Tajikistan have been streamlined. The Government Decree "On Approval of the Concept of energy efficiency in housing and communal services in the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020 year" was adopted and preparations of a national programme to promote energy efficiency in the residential sector have started. These and other adopted measures undoubtedly help to improve quality of life of people in Tajikistan.

To further tackle challenges in housing and land management, clear priorities need to be established and cooperation links at the national as well as international level need to be further strengthened. The UNECE Country profile on housing and land management is an important instrument to identify priority directions in the policy reforms in the housing sector and in land management in Tajikistan as well as to foster interagency coordination on the implementation of the country profile policy recommendations. The housing profiles provide a detailed analysis of the housing and land management situation in the countries and highlight challenges which are of particular concern to the country.

The UNECE Country Profile on Housing and Land Management in Tajikistan was published in 2012. Today it is a good opportunity to discuss which of the Tajikistan country profile recommendations were already implemented and which will need to be implemented.

Undoubtedly, implementation of those policy recommendations will require cooperation not only between national organizations in Tajikistan but also active involvement of the international and donor organizations. I can assure you that the UN agencies working in Tajikistan are committed to continue the cooperation with the Government of Tajikistan to improve the housing and land management situation in the country.

This event is a very good example of the effective coordination and cooperation between different UN agencies and the World Bank. This launch event is organized by the Agency on Construction and Architecture of the Republic of Tajikistan in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the World Bank and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. I am confident this cooperation will continue in a proactive and forward-looking manner and I would like to call also for other international and donor organizations to join this platform and work together with the Government of Tajikistan to address the housing and land management challenges in this country.

I wish you all a very successful meeting and the continuation of this started cooperation.