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COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Sixty-seventh session
Geneva, 18–20 September 2006
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE REFORM AND MATTERS ARISING FROM
THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMISSION**

Note by the secretariat

This document summarizes the main decisions taken by the Commission at its ad hoc session in December 2005, with the adoption of the Work Plan on ECE Reform (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1), and at its sixty-first session, held in Geneva from 21 to 23 February 2006 (E/2006/37- E/ECE/1444), that are relevant to the Committee on Housing and Land Management.

The note has the following structure:

- I. Work Plan on UNECE Reform
- II. Decisions of the sixty-first session relevant to the Committee on Housing and Land Management
- III. Proposals for decisions of the Committee on Housing and Land Management in the implementation of the UNECE reform

Annex I: Draft Terms of Reference of the Committee on Housing and Land Management

Annex II: Draft Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Land Administration

I. WORK PLAN ON UNECE REFORM

The Commission

1. The Commission is the highest decision-making body of the organization. It is responsible for taking strategic decisions on the Programme of Work of the UNECE and for the allocation of resources without prejudice to the competence of the Fifth Committee.
2. The Commission meets once every two years in Geneva as of 2007, taking into account the provisions of rules 1 and 2 of the Rules of Procedure. At its 2009 session the Commission will review the reform of the UNECE, including the question of the frequency of its sessions.

The Executive Committee

3. According to the Work Plan on UNECE Reform, the implementation of the overall guidance set by the Commission is entrusted to the Executive Committee. Representatives of all UNECE Member States participate in the Executive Committee. In between the biennial sessions of the Commission, the Executive Committee acts on behalf of the Commission and can become involved in all matters related to UNECE activities, in conformity with its Terms of Reference.
4. The Executive Committee:
 - (a) Prepares the sessions of the Commission;
 - (b) Reviews, evaluates and approves the Programmes of Work of the Sectoral Committees, including intersectoral activities and relations with other international organizations;
 - (c) Approves the establishment, renewal, discontinuance, terms of reference and work plans of groups under the Sectoral Committees, based on the criteria of their relevance to the subprogramme, resource implications, avoidance of duplication and overlap in UNECE activities;
 - (d) Examines with the chair and vice-chairs of the Sectoral Committees their reports on the implementation of their Programmes of Work and other relevant issues;
 - (e) Ensures coherence between subprogrammes by, *inter alia*, encouraging horizontal communication within the organization;
 - (f) Deals with all matters related to programme planning and administrative and budget issues, including extra-budgetary funding.

The Sectoral Committees

5. The reference to “Principal Subsidiary Bodies” is discontinued and replaced by “Sectoral Committees”.
6. Each subprogramme of the Programme of Work is attributed to a Sectoral Committee. Each Sectoral Committee is responsible for the preparation and implementation of its Programme of Work under the conditions defined by the Commission and the Executive Committee. The Terms of Reference of the Sectoral Committees shall be approved by the Commission.
7. The Sectoral Committees include the following:
 - Committee on Environmental Policy
 - Committee on Inland Transport
 - Committee on Statistics, further referred to as “Conference of European Statisticians”
 - Committee on Sustainable Energy
 - Committee on Trade
 - Committee on Timber
 - Committee on Housing and Land Management
 - Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration
8. The Sectoral Committees report once a year and on request to the Executive Committee, through a meeting with their chair and vice-chairs. The chairs (or vice-chairs) of the Sectoral Committees are regularly invited to the meetings of the Executive Committee.
9. Sectoral Committees will jointly prepare and submit proposals to the Executive Committee on issues and activities of common interest.
10. All Sectoral Committees must review, by the end of February 2007, their subsidiary intergovernmental bodies in accordance with the Guidelines defined in E/ECE/1407/Add.1, ECE/EX/2006/L.2 and ECE/EX/2006/L.3 (expected to be approved by the Executive Committee in July 2006), as well as their conference servicing needs.

Provisions of the Work Plan on UNECE Reform directly related to the Committee on Housing and Land Management

11. The Subprogramme on Human Settlements is renamed “Subprogramme on Housing, Land Management and Population”. The Sectoral Committee is renamed “Committee on Housing and Land Management”.
12. The programme elements “Development of Human Settlements Statistics” and “Major Trends Characterizing Human Settlements Development” are discontinued.
13. The activities and related resources in the field of real estate (currently carried out under the Industrial Restructuring and Enterprise Development Subprogramme) shall be integrated into the Subprogramme. The Sectoral Committee shall submit proposals to the Executive Committee on the modalities of this integration.

14. The activities and related resources in the field of population shall be integrated into the Subprogramme. The intergovernmental governance of the population activities will be assured by the Executive Committee.

Cross-sectoral issues

15. In order to contribute to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the UNECE shall offer a platform for all stakeholders to share their information, views and experience, and for improving the coordination of these activities.

16. The Sectoral Committees shall review and report to the Executive Committee on the involvement of the private sector and NGOs, in order to strengthen and further improve their relationship and to increase resources and expertise contributions with a view to optimizing the implementation of the Programme of Work.

Monitoring and evaluation

17. The Sectoral Committees shall provide complete information concerning the allocation of resources according to programme items within the programmes of work of their respective subprogrammes.

II. DECISIONS OF THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION RELEVANT TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

18. At its sixty-first session, the Commission decided that UNECE should implement the adopted measures outlined in the Work Plan on UNECE Reform. The Commission stated a number of decisions and conclusions which are of special relevance for the Committee. In particular, the Commission:

(a) Stressed the importance of intersectoral activities among the Committees so as to promote a more coherent UNECE and requested the Committees to pursue and look to strengthen such activities and approaches;

(b) Stressed the need for further strengthening coherence and consistency in action and policy between the line ministries engaged in technical areas of UNECE and the foreign ministries engaged in UNECE work from an overall perspective, as well as stressing the importance of active dialogue between the Sectoral Committees and the Executive Committee;

(c) Noted specific proposals in respect of strengthening cooperation with other regional commissions;

(d) Requested the Sectoral Committees to implement the provisions of the Work Plan on UNECE Reform regarding UNECE's cooperation with other organizations;

(e) Expressed appreciation for the background document (E/ECE/1443) which provided updated information on the development and use of ICT applications in the UNECE

Work Programme and in the UNECE secretariat. It welcomed progress in this regard and emphasized the need to keep ICT issues under review.

III. PROPOSALS FOR DECISIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE REFORM

19. The Committee will discuss the above provisions of the Work Plan on UNECE Reform and the related decisions of the sixty-first session of the Commission, and it may wish to agree to:

(a) Submit its revised Terms of Reference (annex I) to the UNECE Executive Committee for approval (para. 6);

(b) Review its methods of work and those of its subsidiary body, the Working Party on Land Administration, in accordance with the guidelines approved by the Executive Committee (para. 10). The draft Terms of Reference of the Working Party are presented in annex II. The Bureau of the Committee, in cooperation with the secretariat, will submit related information to the Executive Committee in due time;

(c) Note that the UNECE activities in the field of real estate are covered in the new Terms of Reference of the Working Party. The Committee may wish to discuss proposals for integration of activities in the field of real estate as requested in the Work Plan on UNECE Reform (para. 13);

(d) Note with satisfaction that its activities on country profiles of the housing sector and land administration reviews deal with implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (para. 15);

(e) Submit to the Executive Committee a report on involvement of the private sector and NGOs in the Committee's activities (para. 16). Particular attention will be given to the cooperation of the Committee with its Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN);

(f) Invite the Committee's Bureau and the secretariat to submit to the Executive Committee information concerning allocation of resources according to its programme items (para. 17);

(g) Invite the national delegations to establish working relationships with related departments in foreign ministries engaged in UNECE work in order to strengthen coherence and consistency in UNECE activities (para. 18(b)).

Annex I

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

1. Under the general supervision and relevant decisions of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Committee provides policy advice and expert assistance. It develops recommendations, methodologies and guidelines for sustainable housing development and land management. The Committee acts in full conformity with the principles, commitments and global plan of action of the Habitat Agenda, adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996, and the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, adopted by the General Assembly in June 2001.

2. As was decided by the Ministerial Meetings in 2000 and 2005, the Committee is implementing the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the Twenty-First Century (ECE/HBP/120) and endeavours to:

(a) Promote efficient and democratic governance that responds to the needs of local communities, by helping UNECE member countries to improve management of the housing stock, land administration and spatial planning;

(b) Promote better urban environmental performance;

(c) Strengthen social cohesion and security in cities through focused programmes and actions in urban areas;

(d) Encourage consistent legal, economic and institutional reforms to promote housing and land-use development;

(e) Improve land administration and land management through its Working Party on Land Administration;

(f) Raise awareness of gender-related issues in housing and urban development.

3. Bearing in mind the pertinent decisions of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Committee ensures that close cooperation is maintained on matters of mutual interest with other UNECE sectoral committees and with international institutions and organizations in the UNECE region, in particular with the European Community, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Council of Europe, as well as with the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other United Nations bodies.

4. In the implementation of its programme of work, the Committee cooperates with the private sector, with non-governmental organizations and with local authorities, supported in particular by its Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network. As part of the UNECE reform, the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network shall be complemented by experts from the private sector on real estate markets.

Annex II

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING PARTY ON LAND ADMINISTRATION

1. The Working Party on Land Administration operates under the auspices of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. Members of the Working Party are the national land administration authorities and related authorities of member countries of the UNECE.

2. The overall goals of the Working Party are the promotion and improvement of land administration and land management in the UNECE region. The Working Party aims at supporting security of tenure, the introduction and improvement of cadastre and land registry, and the development of real estate markets.

3. The activities of Working Party are based on cooperation and the exchange of experience among all countries of the UNECE region through seminars and workshops organized in UNECE member countries, land administration reviews (LAR), publication of studies and guidelines on specific land management topics, and the provision of policy advice and expert assistance. In particular, the Working Party deals with:

(a) Land administration:

General task: Acquisition, registration, storing, maintenance and dissemination of information on real property rights, as well as the geometric and physical characteristics of land.

Activities: Documentation of ownership rights, leases and mortgages, land cover, land-use and land-use restrictions, geo-referenced addresses; transfer of ownership rights; adjudication of land rights; solving of land disputes; cadastral mapping; database activities; real property valuation; personal data protection; other related activities.

(b) Planning and development of land:

General task: Contribution to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of land policy and geo-data policy (including financial matters).

Activities: Pricing of services; cost-recovery requirements; development of professional skills; taxation of land and real properties; development of e-services; geo-spatial data policy; sustainable development of urban and rural areas; land consolidation; protection of natural resources; other related activities.

4. The Working Party shall review its programme of work to ensure coherence of its activities with the work of the Committee on Housing and Land Management and within the overall objectives of UNECE.

5. The Working Party coordinates its activities in close contact with other international governmental and non-governmental organizations active in related fields, such as the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT) and other United Nations regional

commissions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union institutions concerned with land management activities (e.g. the INSPIRE Initiative, the EULIS Project), the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), the Permanent Committee on Cadastre (PCC), the International Centre of Registration Law (CINDER), the European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information (EUROGI), EuroGeographics and the European Land Registry Association (ELRA).

6. The Working Party cooperates with international financial and donor organizations that fund programmes and projects related to land administration in countries of the UNECE region, such as programmes of the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the World Bank.

7. The Working Party encourages partnership among the public and private sectors and their involvement in managing land resources and capacity-building for sustainable development. The Working Party encourages cooperation with educational institutions for enhancing capacity-building activities.