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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT**

Sixty-eighth session  
Geneva, 17–18 September 2007

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT  
ON ITS SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION**

*Summary*

At its sixty-eighth session, the Committee on Housing and Land Management:

- Endorsed the proposal on the establishment of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group to the Working Party on Land Administration;
- Held an in-depth discussion on challenges and integrated policy responses for informal settlements, based on the outcome of the joint workshop of the Committee, the Working Party on Land Administration and the International Federation of Surveyors in Athens in March 2007;
- Welcomed the decision of the Bureaux of the Committee and the Working Party to select consultants/experts to prepare a study on informal settlements and to establish a reference group to guide the work;
- Reviewed and approved its Programme of Work for 2008–2009;
- Discussed and approved the publication of the draft study “Spatial Planning –Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance, with Special Reference to Countries in Transition”;
- Endorsed the biennial performance assessment framework for the subprogramme, including the expected accomplishments, indicators of achievements and measurement methodologies by cluster of activities for the period 2008–2009.

## CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Introduction.....	1-5	3
I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.....	6	3
II. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF UNECE.....	7-10	3-4
III. CHALLENGES AND INTEGRATED POLICY RESPONSES FOR INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS.....	11-15	4-5
IV. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2008-2009.....	16-34	5-8
A. Country profiles on the housing sector.....	17-21	5-6
B. Housing modernization and management.....	22-25	6-7
C. Improvement of urban environmental performance.....	26-30	7-8
D. Land registration and land markets.....	31-34	8
V. ENDORCEMENT OF THE PROPOSAL AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REAL ESTATE MARKET ADVISORY GROUP (REM).....	35-37	9
VI. ADOPTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK.....	38	9
VII. REPORTING ON PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE.....	39-42	9-10
VIII. WORK OF THE BUREAU AND REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND URBAN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY NETWORK (HUMAN).....	43-45	10
IX. OTHER BUSINESS.....	46-47	10
X. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU.....	48	10
XI. CLOSING OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION.....	49	10

## ANNEXES

I. In-depth discussion on illegal settlements in the UNECE.....	11-13
II. Programme of work for 2008-2009.....	14-16
III. Annual report on the activities of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN).....	17-18

## **Introduction**

1. The Committee on Housing and Land Management held its sixty-eighth session in Geneva on 17 and 18 September 2007. Ms. Doris Andoni (Albania) chaired the meeting.
2. Representatives of the following countries participated: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States of America.
3. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) was represented by Ms. T. Roskoshnaya (UN-HABITAT Headquarters, Nairobi) and Mr. J.-Y. Barcelo (UN-HABITAT, Geneva Office).
4. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended the session: the International Council of Women (ICW), the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI) and the World Fire Statistics Centre. The following organizations and institutions participated as observers: the General Directorate of Iller Bank (The Bank of the Provinces) of Turkey and the Organization for the Development and Regulation of the Real Estate Economy – Tecnoborsa (Italy).
5. The following members of the Committee's Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN) also attended: Ms. S. Bamford (Chairperson), Mr. M. Doyle, Mr. A. Elbers, Mr. G. Gundersen, Mr. C.-J. Hachmann, Ms. T. Naniova, Mr. H. Pfeiffer and Mr. A. Zehnder.

## **I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

6. The annotated provisional agenda (ECE/HBP/144) was adopted.

## **II. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF UNECE**

7. The secretariat informed the Committee about the process of implementation of UNECE reform, particularly the integration of real estate activities into the work of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) (see chapter V below).
8. The Committee was informed that the Commission had adopted the Terms of Reference of the Committee at its sixty-second session.
9. The secretariat provided information on the third UNECE Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa, to be held in Geneva on 28 and 29 January 2008.

10. The Committee:

- (a) Took note of the progress made in the implementation of UNECE reform;
- (b) Acknowledged the adoption of its Terms of Reference as a basis for practical work;
- (c) Agreed to provide a contribution to the Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development, and invited the secretariat to reflect the work on “land” carried out by the Committee and WPLA in the background paper to be prepared for that meeting.

### **III. CHALLENGES AND INTEGRATED POLICY RESPONSES FOR INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS**

11. The Committee held an in-depth discussion on challenges and integrated policy responses for informal settlements, based on the outcome of the joint workshop of the Committee, WPLA and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) in Athens in March 2007 (ECE/HBP/2007/7 - ECE/HBP//WP.7/2007/8). The content and outcome of the discussion is reflected in annex I.

12. The expert, Ms. Sasha Tsenkova, gave a keynote presentation on “Urban Futures: Strategic Approach to Informal Settlements in the UNECE Region”.

13. The delegation of Greece reported on the outcome of the Athens workshop on “Informal Settlements: Real Estate Markets Needs Related to Good Land Administration and Planning” and provided a presentation on “Integrated Land-Use Management for Sustainable Development” on behalf of Mr. Stig Enemark, President of FIG.

14. The delegations of Albania and Georgia presented national experiences and challenges with informal settlements in their respective countries.

15. The Committee:

- (a) Highlighted major issues and provided a conceptual framework for the planned study on informal settlements (see annex I) to be carried out jointly with WPLA;
- (b) Welcomed the decisions of the Bureaux of the Committee and WPLA to select consultants/experts to prepare the study, and to establish a reference group to guide the work;
- (c) Welcomed the interest of the delegations of Albania, Georgia and Romania and the representatives of the FIABCI to become part of the reference group, and invited them to send the names of the participating experts to the secretariat by 15 October 2007;

- (d) Invited delegations to financially support the work of the consultants/experts and the reference group;
- (e) Invited WPLA to nominate an expert and members of the reference group for the preparation of the joint study.

#### **IV. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2008–2009**

16. The Committee reviewed its draft Programme of Work for 2008–2009 and took decisions on each programme element.

##### **A. Country profiles on the housing sector**

17. The delegation of Georgia reported on the procedure and findings of the country profile study (ECE/HBP/143) and the Government's intentions and plans for implementing the recommendations, including the organization of a launch event in the country and the involvement of local governments and international donors in the implementation process.

18. The delegation of Belarus informed the Committee about the ongoing country review. A research mission to Belarus was carried out in July 2007.

19. The secretariat provided additional information on the country profiles programme element, namely:

- (a) Stronger linkages between housing, spatial planning and land administration were being made, by including a chapter on spatial planning and land administration in the country reviews;
- (b) The request of the Bureau to seek synergies between the country profiles and the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) in cases where both exercises were being carried out in the same country simultaneously;
- (c) Self-evaluation was being carried out by the secretariat on the preparation and procedural steps of the country profiles in the 2006-2007 biennium, with the objectives of identifying bottlenecks and streamlining preparation of the reviews;
- (d) Written requests by the delegations of Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan had been submitted to the secretariat to carry out country profiles of those two countries. Ukraine and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had expressed their interest at the Committee session in 2005.

20. The delegations of Azerbaijan and Ukraine confirmed their interest in having country profile studies in their respective countries.

21. The Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the integrative approach of the country profiles towards spatial planning and land administration;
- (b) Supported the exploration of synergies between the country profiles and the EPRs;
- (c) Took note of the objective and content of the ongoing self-evaluation, and invited the secretariat to present the results at the next Committee session;
- (d) Decided to carry out the next country profiles on Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan.

**B. Housing modernization and management**

22. The following delegations reported on implementation and follow-up workshops and on related events had taken place in 2007 or were planned in 2008:

- (a) Romania, on the workshop “The Relationship Government – Local Administration – Owner Associations. Partnerships for Sustainable Housing” held in Bucharest on 21 and 22 June 2007 as a follow-up to the Committee’s Ministerial Meeting in September 2006 and to the UNECE Guidelines on condominium management;
- (b) Spain, on the Spanish-Latin American conference on urban best practices held in Madrid from 25 to 27 June 2007;
- (c) Albania, on the outcome of the workshop “Integrated Approaches in Housing Development” (ECE/HBP/2007/8) held in Tirana from 4 to 6 July 2007, organized in cooperation with UN-HABITAT and the Stability Pact as a subregional follow-up to the UNECE Guidelines on social housing, housing finance and condominium management;
- (d) Slovakia, on the preparations of a conference on condominium housing management held in Bratislava on 19 and 20 November 2007;
- (e) The Russian Federation, on the “World Affordable Housing Day” held in Moscow on 28 November 2007, organized jointly with UN-HABITAT. The Committee was invited to present its work on social housing and housing finance at this event;
- (f) Norway, on the planned workshop on homelessness held in Oslo from 15 to 16 May 2008.

23. HUMAN presented a proposal to carry out a study on the management of the multifamily housing stock.

24. The delegation of Austria put forward a proposal to establish an expert group on energy savings and energy efficiency in the housing sector, with the objectives of elaborating good practices for both existing housing stock and new construction and of emphasizing the practical implementation of energy savings measures.
25. The Committee:
- (a) Acknowledged the implementation and follow-up activities that had taken place in the member countries, and highlighted the importance of such events as a way to assist countries in their policy formulation and implementation;
  - (b) Supported the HUMAN proposal on the management of the multifamily housing sector, and invited HUMAN to prepare a written project proposal to be sent to the secretariat by 30 October 2007, including criteria for the selection of pilot countries. The proposal would be sent to the Bureau for consultation and approval by 20 December 2007. The Committee would be informed accordingly. The following countries expressed their interest in participating as pilot countries: Albania, Belarus, Georgia, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine;
  - (c) Supported the proposal by the delegation of Austria to initiate a project on energy efficiency and energy savings in the housing sector in cooperation with the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division. The Austrian delegation was invited to prepare a written proposal, to be submitted to the Bureau for its next meeting in 2008.

### **C. Improvement of urban environmental performance**

26. The Committee held an in-depth discussion on spatial planning based on the draft study “Spatial Planning – Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance, with Special Reference to Countries in Transition” and an executive summary (ECE/HBP/2007/9).
27. The delegation of Portugal, member of the reference group, presented the draft study. The presentation was jointly prepared by Portugal and Slovenia.
28. The delegation of Germany elaborated on the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities and the Territorial Agenda of the European Union in relation to spatial planning.
29. The delegations of Armenia, Belarus, France and Switzerland briefly presented their national systems and practices of spatial planning. The delegations of the Czech Republic and Portugal provided written information to be posted on the Committee’s website.

30. The Committee:
- (a) Approved the publication of the draft study, with its main focus on setting up a governance structure as well as public participation in planning procedures;
  - (b) Invited member countries to develop follow-up activities;
  - (c) Welcomed the organization of a workshop on “Sustainable Development of Small and Medium-sized Cities”, to be held in Minsk from 25 to 28 September 2007.

**D. Land registration and land markets**

31. The Chairperson of WPLA reported on the progress made in its work, in particular:
- (a) Preparations for the fifth session of the WPLA (Geneva, 19–20 November 2007). In-depth discussions would be held on: (i) institutional challenges and changes in land management; (ii) fees and charges; and (iii) informal settlements;
  - (b) Progress made with regard to the land administration reviews. The review for Azerbaijan was carried out in 2006 (ECE/HBP/2007/3). A research mission to Bulgaria was scheduled for October 2007;
  - (c) Recent and upcoming workshops, with a focus on their conclusions and their relation to the Working Party’s Programme of Work. Workshops had been held in Prague (“Land Administration in the Era of e-Society”, 26–27 October 2006, ECE/HBP/2007/4); Athens (“Informal Settlements: Real Estate Markets Needs Related to Good Land Administration and Planning”, 29–31 March 2007, ECE/HBP/2007/7 - ECE/HBP/WP.7/2007/8); and Munich, Germany (“Effective and Sustainable Land Management”, 24–25 May 2007, ECE/HBP/2007/5). Workshops were upcoming or planned in Dublin (“Registering the World”, 26-28 September 2007); Bergen, Norway (“Legal Empowerment of the Poor”, 10–11 April 2008); Dubrovnik, Croatia (“Influence of Land Administration on People and Business”, 2–3 October 2008); Sofia (Spring 2009); and Baku (autumn 2009);
  - (d) International cooperation of WPLA.
32. The delegation of Greece invited participants to the joint workshop of the Committee and FIG on “Spatial Information Management Toward Environmental Management of Mega Cities”, to be held in Valencia, Spain, from 18 to 21 February 2008.
33. ICW emphasized the importance of considering the role of women in land ownership and land issues within the work of WPLA.
34. The Committee welcomed the work of WPLA.

## **V. ENDORSEMENT OF THE PROPOSAL AND TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE REAL ESTATE MARKET ADVISORY GROUP**

35. The secretariat presented the proposal on the establishment of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM) to WPLA (ECE/HBP/2007/6 - ECE/HBP/WP.7/2007/7), following up the provisions of the Work Plan on UNECE reform (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1, para. 63), decisions of the Bureaux of the Committee and WPLA, and coordination meetings with real estate experts.

36. The Committee discussed modalities of participation of the REM Chair and Vice-Chair at WPLA Bureau meetings. Additional REM experts would be invited to attend when special topics were to be dealt with and their expertise was needed.

37. The Committee endorsed the proposal on the establishment of REM, and agreed on its Terms of Reference, looking forward to the decision of the WPLA.

## **VI. ADOPTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK**

38. The Committee considered and adopted its Programme of Work for 2008–2009, as presented in annex II.

## **VII. REPORTING ON PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE**

39. The secretariat informed the Committee about performance assessment exercises to be held in each biennium, and presented expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for the subprogramme.

40. The Chairperson of the Committee reiterated that the questionnaire annexed to the agenda was a crucial tool, which enabled the secretariat to collect information and data for the mandatory performance assessments.

41. The delegation of Norway presented concrete housing policy initiatives, as described in the reply to the questionnaire.

42. The Committee:

- (a) Acknowledged the importance of the performance assessment exercises;
- (b) Endorsed the expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and measurement methodologies by cluster of activities for the period 2008–2009;
- (c) Reviewed the 2010–2011 strategic framework before its submission to the Executive Committee;

- (d) Requested member countries to complete the questionnaire annexed to the agenda by 30 October 2007;
- (e) Invited the secretariat to send out the questionnaire for the next biennial evaluation in 2009.

### **VIII. WORK OF THE BUREAU AND REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND URBAN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY NETWORK**

- 43. The Chairperson reported on the work of the Bureau, based on the Bureau minutes.
- 44. HUMAN presented the annual report on its activities (see annex III), and proposed Ms. Naniova and Mr. Zehnder as new members of HUMAN.
- 45. The Committee:
  - (a) Approved the work of the Bureau and of HUMAN;
  - (b) Agreed with the nomination of Ms. Naniova and Mr. Zehnder as new members of HUMAN.

### **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

- 46. The World Fire Statistics Centre presented its report.
- 47. The secretariat provided information on the UNECE Trust Fund on Human Settlements.

### **X. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU**

- 48. The Committee elected the following Bureau for its sixty-ninth session: Ms. Andoni (Albania) as Chairperson, Mr. Wolfgang Foerster (Austria), Mr. Azer Khanlarov (Azerbaijan), Ms. Natia Jokhadze (Georgia), Mr. Peter Creuzer (Germany), Mr. Hubert van Eyk (Netherlands), Mr. Bogdan Suditu (Romania), Mr. Andrey Starovoytov (Russian Federation), Ms. Elena Szolgayova (Slovakia), Mr. Marcos Vaquer Caballeria (Spain) and Mr. Ernst Hauri (Switzerland).

### **XI. CLOSING OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION**

- 49. The Chairperson closed the sixty-eighth session. The sixty-ninth session of the Committee is planned to be held on 22 and 23 September 2008.

## Annex I

### **IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION ON ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE UNECE REGION**

1. The discussion was informed by several presentations on the significance of the problem in the UNECE region in countries such as Albania, Greece and Georgia. It incorporated constructive input from the UNECE Workshop on Informal Settlements, Good Land Administration and Planning held in March 2007. A keynote presentation by Ms. Tsenkova framed the debate, emphasizing the need for strategic policy approaches to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of illegal settlements.

2. The discussion of the Committee on Housing and Land Management addressed several important themes — factors influencing illegal settlements, diverse patterns and correspondingly diverse policy solutions to address the problem. Highlights from the discussion along these lines are summarized below.

#### **A. The Phenomenon of Illegal Settlement Formation: Factors and Patterns of Diversity**

3. In some countries, the formation of illegal settlements was a phenomenon associated with the wave of urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s; in others, it was a phenomenon related to the influx of illegal immigrants in the 1980s. As a long-term process, it had transformed urban societies over the last three decades in a significant way. People congregating rapidly in larger European cities to look for increasingly diverse economic opportunities often settled in the peri-urban areas.<sup>1</sup> With the growth of jobs in the industry and service sectors, the proliferation of illegal settlements and informal neighbourhoods was part of the ad hoc response to rapid urbanization. Furthermore, the discussion pointed out important differences: this “first generation” of informal settlements in Italy, Portugal and Greece did not necessarily exhibit the characteristics of slums. On the contrary, the areas were frequently inhabited by middle-class families and contained housing construction of good quality, often on privately owned land. The illegal nature of these developments was associated with the lack of formal urban plans and/or building licenses.<sup>2</sup> Reportedly, the informalities were due to different factors — inadequate spatial planning, old and complex legislation, lack of housing policy and outdated public administration structure.

4. By contrast, current illegal settlement formation today was often driven by poverty and social exclusion. The discussion reflected the fact that urban poverty in some countries manifested itself in the peri-urban areas of large cities as well as in inner-city ghettos. Despite their affluence, in western European countries about 6 per cent of urban dwellers lived in extremely precarious conditions, often excluded in rundown inner-city areas that were not necessarily illegal but exhibited poverty, social exclusion and housing deprivation. While public expenditure for subsidized housing and urban rehabilitation was spiraling downward, the need to address the social and economic challenges in these areas was growing. In transition countries, the process of economic and social adjustment in the 1990s, coupled with urbanization, had led to rapid proliferation of illegal settlements in some urban agglomerations. The civil war in the Balkans, followed by a refugee crisis and influx of internally displaced people, had further aggravated this situation.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the practices of illegal construction in urban areas, often

due to the lack of clear planning regime or the lack of enforcement of existing plans, had created significant challenges in many cities such as Tirana; Sochi, Russia; Tbilisi; and Bucharest.<sup>4</sup> Poor land administration and cadastre systems aggravated the situation, adding to the problems of managing urban development without a clear and transparent system of land tenure and property rights.<sup>5</sup>

## **B. Diverse Local Policies to Address Different Types of Illegal Settlements**

5. Confronted with a growing problem of illegal settlement formation, policymakers in the UNECE region, particularly in transition countries, were often placed in a very difficult situation. The discussion centred on the need for strategic policy approaches to address different types of illegal settlements with correspondingly different policy interventions. Different types of informality, as well as the evolution of illegal settlements, demonstrated the complexity of the problem embedded in the societal context. Given the diversity of the UNECE region, the manifestations could be different —illegal construction on private land; squatting and takeover of public spaces, riverbanks or railway lands; or the provision of substandard housing by poor urban residents. A deep understanding of the “why” and the “how” of informal settlements formation required the development of contextually sensitive and diverse solutions to the problem and its interrelated economic, social and environmental challenges.

6. The search for policy solutions to address illegal settlements was thus clearly multifaceted and multidimensional. Various projects and urban development programmes had been implemented in countries such as Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal in the last 20 years. These countries could be an important source of good practices for others in the UNECE region facing similar challenges. The solutions ranged from legalization and inclusion in formal urban plans, provision of essential social (e.g. schools, medical clinics) and technical (e.g. safe roads, public transit, water supply and sewerage) infrastructure to illegal settlements, as well as resettlement programs in social housing. While these solutions illustrated different aspects of the policy continuum, they also implied significant political will and financial commitment on the part of central and local state institutions.<sup>6</sup> The discussion underlined the importance of integrated urban planning at different levels as well as good land cadastre and land administration. Participants acknowledged the need for inclusive approaches and contribution by specific players (public, private and community-based), both on an individual and institutional level.

## **C. Next Steps**

7. The Committee concluded that the phenomenon of illegal settlements was an important policy issue, affecting the lives of more than 8 million people in the UNECE region. As an attribute of some urban agglomerations, where the combined dynamics of urbanization, globalization and social polarization had created a dual city with areas of prosperity and areas of social exclusion, illegal settlements required effective programmes and policy intervention. Without overly simplifying the issues, the Committee concluded that a possible resolution required a variety of approaches and intervention at three levels: city, neighbourhood, and family (individual). Such a multilevel approach, integrating urban planning and housing and land

management policies, could transform illegal settlements into healthy and vibrant urban environments.

#### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> The Government of Portugal launched a special relocation programme (costing over €1 billion) to provide adequate housing to 150,000 persons living in “*barracas*” between Lisbon and Porto.

<sup>2</sup> Although the official discourse revolved around poverty and social disparities, in several countries in the region the process of illegal settlement formation is associated with the provision of second homes by middle-class families and illegal housing construction in coastal areas. In Greece, the manifestations are significant, leading to a “second generation” of illegal settlement formation, adding 40,000 dwellings each year.

<sup>3</sup> A study by the Urban Institute of Belgrade documents 90 illegal settlements in the inner city, mostly inhabited by Roma. Large illegally constructed areas on the periphery of Belgrade (e.g. Kalugerica, with more than 50,000 residents) were incorporated in the city boundaries in the new Master Plan.

<sup>4</sup> For example, rapid urbanization in the early 1990s added 350,000 people to the population of greater Tirana, resulting in the growth of peri-urban areas where 70 per cent of the construction is without any urban plans or building permits. In Azerbaijan, more than 4 per cent of the population lives in informal settlements.

<sup>5</sup> A very important and pressing problem in Russian cities is the extent of illegal construction not only in high growth urban areas but also in recreational/tourist centres. Capacity constraints of local governments, corruption, and the lack of effective planning and land management systems are some contributing factors.

<sup>6</sup> Different solutions need to target different groups — the urban poor, developers and land speculators avoiding development costs, owners of second homes, etc.

## Annex II

### PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2008-2009

#### SUBPROGRAMME 10: HOUSING, LAND MANAGEMENT AND POPULATION

##### 10.1.1 Country profiles on the housing sector

Description: The housing sector plays a critical role in ensuring the success of economic and social development in the UNECE region and the reform process in countries in transition. At the same time, the transition to a market economy has had a profound impact on housing policy implementation and management. This item of the Committee's programme of work enables Governments to analyse their housing policies, strategies, and institutional and financial frameworks for the housing sector and to compare these with progress made internationally. The country profile is a process-oriented activity. At its core is an analytical study on the housing sector drafted by international experts and members of the secretariat. Stronger emphasis will be put on linkages between housing, spatial planning and land administration policies. Recommendations for improving policies and practices are an essential part of this activity. It also aims to provide housing-related information to potential investors.

Work accomplished: The country profiles on the housing sectors of Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Romania, Moldova, Albania, Armenia, the Russian Federation, and Serbia and Montenegro have been published. The draft study for Georgia was finalized and submitted to the host country for acknowledgement. The review for Belarus is under preparation. A pre-mission of the UNECE secretariat took place in May 2007, and a research mission in July 2007.

The streamlined concept of the country profiles has been applied for the country profile of Georgia. The focus on country-specific thematic areas was increased. Descriptive parts were reduced, and analytical components, including conclusions and recommendations, strengthened.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will continue its activities to prepare country profiles on the housing sector. The country profile study for Georgia will be translated into Georgian by the host country. Thereafter, it is envisaged to organize a launching event, involving all stakeholders and especially local governments. The new approach of the country profiles will also be applied for the study of Belarus, which also includes a chapter on land administration and spatial planning. Synergies between the country profiles and the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) will be sought in cases where both exercises are being carried out in the same country, such as for Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan are the next countries to be reviewed. Further follow-up workshops and meetings of experts will be held to discuss the results of the studies and the implementation process. Cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union and the World Bank will be maintained and strengthened. Especially important is the collaboration with UN-HABITAT to organize follow-up activities and work to implement related recommendations.

### 10.1.2 Improvement of urban environmental performance

Description: Cities and towns are efficient starting points for promoting sustainable quality of life. Numerous initiatives have already been launched in cities and towns to raise public awareness of the environmental impact of individual consumption behaviour, as well as to promote environmentally sound goods and services and the sustainable use of energy, water, raw materials and land by individuals and communities. The spatial planning process focuses on a broad range of issues and factors, including social, economic, environmental, financial and cultural ones. It is important to develop an effective local planning process as an integral part of strategic national and regional development planning.

Work accomplished: A workshop on Sustainable Urban Transport was held in Tbilisi from 18 to 20 October 2006 within the framework of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP). A draft study “Spatial Planning –Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance, with Special Reference to Countries in Transition” was prepared with the assistance of a consultant and a reference group.

Work to be undertaken: The draft study on spatial planning will be published. A workshop on spatial planning for small and medium-sized towns will be held in Belarus in October 2007. Other follow-up activities will be developed.

### 10.1.3 Land registration and land markets

Description: Proper land registration is crucial for security of tenure and property rights, effective housing policies and the promotion of reforms in economies in transition, as well as in the context of European integration and implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The activity is aimed at providing assistance to countries in transition in reforming cadastral and land registration systems and sharing information and experience regarding the modernization of land administration systems in the more advanced economies through education, training, research and development, exchange of experience, transfer of technology, and standardization.

Work accomplished: The land administration review of Azerbaijan was finalized in June 2007 Azerbaijan (see documents ECE/HBP/2007/3 and Add.1). Workshops were held on institutional aspects of land administration in Tbilisi (11–12 May 2006); on land administration and e-society in Prague (26–27 October 2006); on informal settlements in Athens (28–30 March 2007, jointly organized by the Committee, the Working Party and the International Federation of Surveyors), and on sustainable land management in Munich, Germany (24–25 May 2007).

Work to be undertaken: The fifth session of the Working Party will be held on 19 and 20 November 2007. A study on informal settlements will be carried out jointly by the Committee and the Working Party. A study on fees and charges is under preparation. The next land administration review will be carried out in Bulgaria (14–19 October 2007). Workshops will take place in Dublin (“Registering the World”) from 26 to 28 September 2007; in Bergen, Norway, (“Legal Empowerment of the Poor”) on 10 and 11 April 2008; and in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on 2 and 3 October 2008. Real estate activities will be integrated through the proposed establishment

of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM). Cooperation with key partners, such as the World Bank, the Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union and EuroGeographics and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), will be further developed.

#### 10.1.4 Housing modernization and management

Description: This activity mainly aims to identify and provide tools for tackling problems related to the housing stock and its management. Housing systems are an important factor in safeguarding social cohesion in the UNECE countries. The activity namely focuses on urban renewal and housing refurbishment policies and on existing and emerging housing problems, especially regarding housing financing. As a result of privatization in countries in transition, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in multifamily housing is the major form of tenure. It is therefore important to establish property rights, define mixed ownership, and establish a legal and institutional framework for operating housing condominiums. This programme element also focuses on the basic mechanisms for social housing development.

Work accomplished: The study on *Housing Finance Systems for Countries in Transition* (ECE/HBP/138) and *Guidelines on Social Housing* (ECE/HBP/137) was published. The Committee and its Bureau promoted the practical application of the *Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing for Countries in Transition* (ECE/HBP/123) and widely disseminated it in countries in transition. A follow-up workshop, “The Relationship Government-Local Administration-Owner Associations. Partnerships for Sustainable Housing”, was held in Bucharest on 21 and 22 June 2007. A workshop “Integrated Approaches in Housing Development” was held in Albania from 4 to 6 July 2007 as a subregional follow-up to the UNECE Guidelines on social housing, housing finance and condominium management.

Work to be undertaken: A workshop on homelessness is planned in Norway in 2008. The Committee supported a HUMAN project proposal on the management of the multifamily housing stock, which will start with a pilot phase in 2008. The Committee also supported a proposal by the delegation of Austria to establish an expert group on energy efficiency and energy savings in the housing sector. A written proposal will be submitted to the Bureau in 2008.

**Annex III**

**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HOUSING AND  
URBAN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY NETWORK**

1. This report sets out the main activities of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN) since the Committee's sixty-seventh session.
2. The main activities of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network during 2006–2007 have focused in five main areas:
  - (a) Preparation of a more detailed proposal for a multi-unit housing management study and the identification of potential donors to support it;
  - (b) Active participation during meetings of the Committee's Bureau, and at other Committee-sponsored seminars and workshops;
  - (c) Encouraging practical cooperation between the Committee and other organizations and institutions working within the strategic areas of the Committee, with the focus this year on the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), CECODHAS (European Liaison Committee for Social Housing) and the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Organizations (USA);
  - (d) Active distribution and implementation of the products of the Committee's work;
  - (e) Discussions and the provision of advice to the Committee on increasing the effectiveness of the Committee's strategy objectives.
3. The preparation of a proposal for a study on multi-unit housing management. The proposal was supported by the Committee, with an invitation to submit a more detailed project structure. The project aims at:
  - (a) Contributing to improve the management of multi-family housing stock and raising the quality of the housing stock in the longer term;
  - (b) Raising the living standards and improving the quality of life of homeowners, and enhancing social stability through effective management and maintenance of the multifamily housing stock;
  - (c) Building capacity across the region, by providing necessary skills and techniques for housing management.
4. Given the limited resources available to the Committee, HUMAN is endeavouring to raise financing to support the implementation of the programme over a two-year time frame. Fonds Werken aan Wonen (a fund of the umbrella organization of Dutch housing corporations, Aedes) provided some financial support to HUMAN to assist in preparing the detailed proposal.

5. There has been active participation from HUMAN during the Committee and Bureau's meetings. HUMAN members also participated in the workshop "Integrated Approaches to Housing Development" held in Tirana from 4 to 6 July 2007.

6. As identified in previous reports to the Committee, HUMAN sees considerable need and great opportunities for increased practical cooperation between the Committee and other institutions and organizations working within the Committee's priority fields of activity. HUMAN members participated in several meetings organized by the above organizations (see subpara. 2(c)). HUMAN has continued to promote and participate in the implementation of the Committee's policy guidelines and publications.

7. Mr. Andrey Starovoytov and Ms. Tara Clifford resigned from HUMAN. Mr. Starovoytov was appointed Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for Construction and Housing of the Russian Federation. Ms. Clifford retired from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, United States. HUMAN would like to thank them for their commitment and valuable work.

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