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Special Session

Geneva, 1-2 December 2016

Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management at its Special Session

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1-7	2
A. Attendance	2-4	2
B. Adoption of the agenda	5	2
C. Organizational matters	6-7	2
II. Preparations for the seventy-eighth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management	8-18	3-4
A. Celebrations of the seventieth anniversary of the Committee	8-12	3
B. Organization of the Ministerial segment.....	13-16	3
C. Review of, and amendments to, the draft declaration on Housing and urban development on the occasion of the Committee's seventieth anniversary	17-18	4
III. Review of the mandate of the Working Party on Land Administration	19-22	4
IV. Briefing on the outcomes of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development – Habitat III	23-27	4-5
V. Other business	28-30	5
VI. Adoption of the report and closing of the session	31-33	5
Annex I		6-11
Annex II		12-13

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I. Introduction

1. The Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) held its Special Session in Geneva on 1-2 December 2016.

A. Attendance

2. Representatives of the following ECE countries participated: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Montenegro, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States.

3. Representatives of the following United Nations (UN) programmes and specialized agencies attended: UNEP, UN-Habitat, the Habitat III Secretariat, and the WHO.

4. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations attended: the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) and the Organization for International Economic Relations (OiER).

B. Adoption of the agenda

5. The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Ms Daniela Grabmüllerová, Czech Republic, chaired the Special Session. She presented the provisional agenda (ECE/HBP/S/2016/1) and it was adopted without any amendments.

C. Organizational matters

6. The Chair informed the participants that a briefing on the outcomes of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development – Habitat III - would be given as part of the session, with the participation of the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations at Geneva, the Executive Secretary of the ECE, and a representative of the Habitat III Secretariat.

7. The Director of the Forests, Land and Housing Division, Ms. Ivonne Higuero, welcomed the participants. She noted the important role the Committee has played in addressing major challenges in the area of housing, land management and sustainable urban development since its establishment. She highlighted the continued and increasing importance of the Committee's work in the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the New Urban Agenda, and gave a briefing on the activities of the Committee since the seventy-seventh session and those planned so far for 2017. Ms. Higuero also reminded the Committee of the dates of the Working Party on Land Administration on 8-9 March 2017.

II. Preparations for the seventy-eighth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management

(A) Celebrations of the seventieth anniversary of the Committee

8. The Committee noted that the dates for the seventy-eighth session have been changed to 8-10 November 2017.

9. The Committee discussed further the proposals made at its seventy-seventh session for activities to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Committee, and in particular, the organization of a Ministerial segment and the adoption of a Seventieth Anniversary Declaration, the publication of a brochure with a timeline of the Committee's history, the preparation of a video with highlights of the Committee's work; the translation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing (Geneva UN Charter) into the national languages of the member States to be made available on the Committee website and a compilation of best practices of activities in countries which are in line with the Geneva UN Charter.

10. The delegate from Azerbaijan proposed that the secretariat ask the focal points if and when they would be able to translate the Geneva UN Charter into their respective languages. The delegate stated that it would be translated into Azerbaijani. The delegate also proposed that Azerbaijan could offer in-kind support for the production of the video of the Committee's work. Following a question from the delegate from Albania, it was clarified that activities to mark the celebration can be nationally or internationally focused to promote awareness-raising, and can occur in the months leading up to the anniversary celebration in November 2017.

11. The secretariat drew attention to the letter sent to the Committee focal points which contained the indicative resources needed to implement these activities.

12. The Committee agreed with the proposed activities, tasked the Bureau with finalizing the preparations with the support of the secretariat, and invited countries to provide the financial and in-kind support necessary to enable the celebration of the anniversary, including for the organization of the Ministerial segment.

(B) Organization of the Ministerial segment

13. The Committee discussed the format and themes of the Ministerial segment. While there were different suggestions concerning the duration of the session, the general view was that the Ministerial segment should last half a day. Different options were suggested for its exact timing, with preferences expressed both for a morning session and for an afternoon one.

14. The Committee agreed that the Ministerial segment should be organized in the form of interactive round-table discussions, one focusing on housing and the other on strategies for sustainable urban development. Each round-table discussion would last for one and a half hours. There would be a keynote address for each of the round tables and the ministers would decide in which round table they would like to participate.

15. The Committee decided that the topics for the round-table discussions should be finalized by the Bureau. It agreed that a background document or documents should be prepared to support the discussion.

16. The Committee requested the Bureau to proceed with the preparation of the background documents and the detailed planning of the organization of the Ministerial segment with the support of the secretariat.

(C) Review of, and amendments to, the draft of the declaration on housing and urban development on the occasion of the Committee's seventieth anniversary

17. The Committee discussed the draft revised Ministerial Declaration prepared by the secretariat, made it available as an informal document for the session, and agreed on a number of amendments. Participants agreed that the Declaration should be further shortened and that the positive aspects and achievements of the Committee should be emphasized.

18. The Committee agreed to consult further on the amended draft of the Ministerial Declaration (Annex I) before submission for adoption at the Ministerial segment during the seventy-eighth session of the Committee. The Committee requested that the Bureau and the secretariat organize a process of consultation for this, including the organization of an informal committee session.

III. Review of the mandate of the Working Party on Land Administration

19. In accordance with the guidelines for the establishment and functioning of working parties within the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE/EX/1), the mandate of the Working Party on Land Administration for 2016-2020 was presented to the Committee for review.

20. Mr. Elshad Khanalibayli (Azerbaijan), Chair of the Working Party, presented the Draft Terms of Reference contained in document ECE/HBP/S/2016/2, which were endorsed by the Working Party.

21. The Committee considered the Draft Terms of Reference and the additional comments and proposals made at the session.

22. The Committee approved the Terms of Reference as amended (Annex II) and recommended that the Executive Committee extend the mandate and the Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Land Administration for 2016-2020.

IV. Briefing on the outcomes of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development – Habitat III

23. As part of its special session, the Committee had a briefing on the outcomes of the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development – Habitat III, held on 17-20 October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador.

24. On behalf of the Minister of Regional Development of the Czech Republic, H.E. Ms. Karla Slechtova, Mr. Daniel Míč, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations at Geneva, highlighted the regional contribution to the Habitat III Conference. He said that existing structures should be used and common international standards should be developed, and harmonized with the New Urban Agenda. He also promoted the effective cooperation among the UN Regional Commissions for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. He stated that the Geneva UN Charter serves as an example to other regions and should be part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He said that the Czech Republic is interested in hosting a Geneva UN Charter centre in Prague.

25. The Executive Secretary of the ECE, Mr. Christian Friis Bach, welcomed the integrated approach of the New Urban Agenda, which promotes close links in the

implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement and other important global political frameworks. He summarized the events that the ECE co-organized in Quito. He also said that, in order to achieve impact, it was vital for the New Urban Agenda to build upon and reinforce the SDGs. He stressed the importance of leveraging and making full use of regional platforms and mechanisms, notably the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development convened by the Regional Commissions, as platforms for peer learning, addressing regional priorities, and linking the national and global levels.

26. The representative of the Habitat III secretariat, Mr. Roi Chiti, gave an overview of the Habitat III Conference, and highlighted the events that were held in Quito as part of it. He presented the principles of the New Urban Agenda, a non-legally binding agreement, which also outlines how cities can achieve SDG 11. He stated that guidelines on the implementation need to be established, and a framework for monitoring and reporting developed in the next one to two years.

27. The Committee took note of the information provided.

V. Other Business

28. Mr. Geoffrey Hamilton, representative of the ECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, informed the Committee about relevant work on People First Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). He gave an overview on the development of a PPP standard with the IESE Centre of Excellence in the area of smart sustainable cities, and expressed readiness for cooperation with the Committee. He noted that, due to the highly ambitious scale of the SDGs, funding from the private sector would be needed for their achievement.

29. Mr. Scott Foster, Director of the ECE Sustainable Energy Division, informed the Committee on recent developments in the work of the ECE Committee on Sustainable Energy, highlighting the status of the joint work on energy efficiency in buildings and the progress in the development of principle-based performance guidance for energy efficiency in buildings. He drew attention to the upcoming events leading up to Expo 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan, including an ongoing consultation on the outcome document for the back-to-back Energy Ministerial meeting. He confirmed the interest in, and willingness for, continued cooperation with the Committee and the secretariat.

30. The Committee took note of the information provided and agreed to take it into consideration in planning future activities in collaboration with these relevant ECE programmes.

VI. Adoption of the report and closing of the session

31. The Chair summarized the major decisions taken by the Committee.

32. The Committee adopted its report based on a draft prepared by the secretariat.

33. The Chair closed the session.

Annex I

Draft Geneva Declaration on Housing and Urban Development

to be adopted by the Heads of UNECE national delegations and stakeholders participating in seventy-eighth session of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Committee

(Geneva, 8-10 November 2017)

1. We, the national government delegations from the member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), as well as relevant stakeholders, including local and regional authorities, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies, professionals and academia, the private sector, civil society, women and youth participating in the seventy-eighth session of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management in Geneva on 8-10 November 2017, met to discuss the challenges and opportunities of housing in liveable cities and human settlements, and to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Committee.

2. [New paragraph on the history and achievements of the CHLM over the past 70 years.]

3. We welcome the adoption of the New Urban Agenda by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development - Habitat III¹. We reiterate the importance for governments at all levels and relevant stakeholders to promote the implementation of the Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030², the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030³, the UN Climate Change Paris Agreement⁴, the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy⁵, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing⁶, the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, and the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE Region for the Period 2014-2020⁷. We underline the need to promote synergies and cross-sectoral links in implementing the above-mentioned global and regional accords.

A. We further note that:

4. The ECE region is home to 1.3 billion people, some 17% of the total global population. It contains at least 263 cities of 500,000 or more inhabitants, and contributes to more than 40% of the world's GDP. The already large proportion of its population living in its cities is still growing, albeit slowly, but in some cities in the region it is decreasing.

5. The countries are very diverse in almost all features: size, geography, economy and culture. It corresponds mostly to what is referred to as 'the Global North'⁸.

¹ <https://www.habitat3.org/>

² <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

³ <http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>

⁴ <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/paris-agreement/>

⁵ <http://unhabitat.org/urban-themes/housing-slum-upgrading/>

⁶ http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/UNECE_Charter_EN.pdf

⁷ <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2013/draft.strategy.post.pdf>

⁸ The Part A of the Declaration is based on the analyses, conclusions and recommendations of the Habitat III Regional Report for the UNECE Region, <http://www.unece.org/housing/habitat3regionalreport.html>

6. The region is characterized by the following trends and patterns:

(a) *Urbanization and demography*

7. Within the urban population, there is a trend towards urban concentration and agglomeration into super-cities, such as those in the metropolitan regions from Boston to Washington, D.C., or London through the Randstad and the Ruhrgebiet to the cities of Northern Italy.

8. Using approaches to planning and managing city development that place quality of life at the core of decision-making and integrate health considerations into urban plans, policies and projects is therefore key to avoiding health risks, protecting vulnerable groups and enhancing health benefits for the urban populations.

9. There is a countervailing trend towards shrinking cities within less successful and more remote regions where the population is declining. This often goes along with ageing, as the young and/or highly qualified leave. This problem is almost exclusive to the ECE region.

10. There is a general tendency towards urban sprawl, not only in cities experiencing population growth. This poses problems for environmental and economic sustainability. These problems are likely to be exacerbated by the consequences of the ageing of the population.

11. A rapidly-ageing population is most prominent in Western, Central and Eastern Europe. Ageing and population decline both pose serious challenges for cities, particularly in regard to diminishing local tax revenues, the provision of services, transportation, and housing, and the accessibility of public space. Conversely, Central Asian countries in the region are experiencing growth in the young population, posing difficulties regarding housing and job provision.

12. Migration is a key issue throughout the region. Its magnitude and significance has increased in the past 20 years. It has led to increased diversity in some cities, but also brings challenges for social cohesion. Migrants settle mainly in large cities, which leads to urban polarization

(b) *The Economy of Cities*

13. A substantial part of the region has undergone economic transition in recent decades, from centrally-planned economies to market ones. In general, large and capital cities have prospered, while smaller ones have fared less well, economically, socially, physically, environmentally and culturally. The economic restructuring posed huge challenges for some industrial cities, company towns in particular, in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

14. The manufacturing industry has declined in the region since Habitat II. However, it remains important. There is a shift to cleaner, greener manufacturing with smaller spatial demands. The rise of the knowledge economy in the region, built on a digital revolution, is bringing both opportunities and challenges for cities. These changes demand different forms of space that better suit the new conditions of economic production, social requirements and cultural institutions. While globalization remains significant, the local qualities of cities become ever more important.

15. The digital revolution brings both challenges and opportunities for governments in the region. Technical innovation and ICT⁹ offer new opportunities for urban planning and development, land use (e.g. driverless vehicles), interaction with the public (e.g. crowd

⁹ Information and communication technologies.

sourcing), public participation in decision-making, awareness-raising, and transparency of urban management. However, data privacy, security and ownership are challenging the capacity of governments to utilize these technical innovations in defence of the public interest.

(c) *Living in cities*

16. The global financial crisis that started in 2008 has led to more inequality in the region, lowering the income of a substantive part of the population, and affecting many aspects of people's lives.

17. Social interactions in cities have changed over the past 20 years. There has been, on the one hand, a tendency to develop closed communities and shopping malls, and, on the other, a reaffirmation of the central role of public spaces as frameworks for innovation and social interaction.

18. Many of the factors that support equity in a city also support the health and well-being of all its citizens. These include access to housing, transportation, energy and water supplies, public services, public participation in decision-making, the availability of, and access to, safe and healthful food, green spaces, and the reduction of emissions. There is a growing recognition of the relevance of healthy urban settings and buildings in countries throughout the region.

(d) *Housing*

19. Lack of affordability of housing is a critical matter, leading to problems of accessibility to adequate housing, social exclusion, and increased spatial stratification in cities. Despite being less acute than in other regions, homelessness and informal settlements remain a problem. The housing sector needs to address these problems while meeting new aspirations, such as energy efficiency and customer-adjusted design, along with the provision of additional services (e.g. for the elderly, the homeless and migrant people).

20. The past two decades have witnessed a general trend towards increasing home ownership and reinforcing housing markets in the region. The total stock of, and investment in, social and public housing is decreasing. Social housing stock in advanced economies has been reduced, while the former public housing in countries with economies in transition has been rapidly privatized, leaving little time for local governments and individuals (especially owners) to adapt.

21. In the eastern part of the region, the phenomenon of 'poor owners' has become endemic, as a result of the privatization of public housing, a lack of maintenance, and energy inefficiency. Delays caused by collective decision-making by owners of large housing estates, whether in 'affluent' or 'poor' areas, have increased costs and often resulted in the deterioration of apartment blocks, particularly in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

(d) *Environment and disaster risks*

22. The region is among the largest emitters of greenhouse gases (GHGs) per capita, and atmospheric pollutants remain high. Environmental threats are often also health threats. Action taken to reduce environmental pollution will also help secure public health and well-being.

23. Air pollution, flooding and heat-waves are the most prevalent environmental issues of the region, with cities being the most vulnerable. Disaster risk reduction (DRR) is an issue more pressing in parts of the region, with an increased threat/risk of natural disaster exacerbated by climate change. This has a negative impact on quality of life, mainly in urban areas, and can even endanger lives.

24. Urban sprawl has increased and has resulted in the growing consumption of land and pressure on green spaces. The extension of road networks and increasing traffic congestion have further affected the availability of land for other uses and contributed to the deterioration of air quality. There is a need to limit the negative impact of housing on the environment, and enhance the energy efficiency of the housing sector. Numerous programmes have taken initiatives to improve urban environmental conditions and the impact of cities on the global climate. However, urban areas still lag behind.

(e) Governance

25. There has been an increase in the importance of the role of local governments, with a corresponding growth in that of city networks, electronic access to information, and public participation.

26. The region exhibits a wide variety of different governance models. However, urban governance has experienced decentralization. These differences reflect both the local context and history. Successful governance modes and institutional structures often cannot be simply transplanted from one part of the region to another: context is crucial.

27. Many challenges for urban governance remain, such as the effectiveness in limiting urban sprawl, the creation or reinforcement of socially-cohesive and culturally diverse neighbourhoods, the secure management of urban technology, the management of urban functional areas that extend over several administrative jurisdictions, the resistance to change of highly fragmented institutional frameworks, the harmonization of norms, and the role of participatory frameworks and platforms for inhabitants' involvement in urban governance.

28. The private sector plays an important role in the development and transformation of urban areas. In general, an erosion of the public sphere was observed since Habitat II, resulting in more opportunities and responsibilities for the private sector.

29. The growing use of e-Government, e-Governance, e-Participation and e-Inclusion at city level has been driven by the supply of new ICT services. Local authorities' capacity to maximize the benefit of the digital revolution without undermining their democratic mandate is a challenge that remains to be addressed. The progress of e-Governance is variable and, in some countries, there is room for further development.

(f) Outlook and future trends

30. Across the region, the shift to a post-industrial, knowledge economy, and the increasingly important role of services, are changing the structure and character of the economy, introducing demands for enhanced qualifications from the labour market and placing different spatial demands on the cities. The knowledge economy and the digital revolution flourish around centres of scientific and educational excellence, and are placing new demands on the physical structure of the cities.

31. ICTs play a growing role in the development of smart, sustainable cities, with initiatives aimed at sustaining and improving quality of life in urban areas, though this growth presents its own unique set of challenges, such as privacy, security, defence of public interests, etc.

32. Social and spatial inequality within and among the cities in the region has been growing, making high quality urban areas affordable only to the most affluent. The demographic ageing and the recent wave of migration are exacerbating the complexity of the growing inequalities.

33. There is widespread consensus for intergovernmental action on the environment and climate change. In the cities of the region, this will mean an accelerated trend to further curbing pollution and more rapidly de-carbonizing urban development and life, requiring more stringent environmental regulations and high volumes of public and private investment.

34. International standards in housing and sustainable development are driving action towards resilient, connected, spatially- and socially-integrated and compact cities in an equitable partnership with rural areas. There is a trend towards people-centred and integrated planning through urbanism.

35. These aims and processes will continue to require collaboration, consensus and positive action among national and city governments, technical stakeholders, and communities. Addressing these evermore complex social, economic and environmental challenges will require new paradigms and a redoubling of efforts from the governance systems to achieve sustainable urbanization.

- B. The participants of the seventy-eighth session of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management invite national governments and relevant stakeholders, including local and regional authorities, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies, professionals and academia, the private sector, civil society, women and youth, to work together to address the above challenges, in particular by:

(a) *Economic dimension*

36. Promoting innovative and productive cities to increase cities' attractiveness with a focus on innovation, inclusiveness, improvement of youth perspectives, and job creation through entrepreneurial-friendly environments.

37. Promoting the improvement of access to basic services allowing sustainable growth and job creation. The empowerment of women and better gender equality are priorities of the urban development policy.

(b) *Social dimension*

38. Strengthening the use of spatial planning and design of urban extensions, ensuring participation in planning by all key stakeholders and the inhabitants, as planning cities is an important part of civilization.

39. Introducing effective financial systems at the national and municipal levels, ensuring that local governments of cities can implement the plans elaborated and support the equitable and sustainable development of human settlements.

40. Promoting inclusive cities by addressing the multiple aspects of urban poverty and exclusion.

41. Developing and implementing capacity-building programmes for participatory, integrated, sustainable, resilient and affordable human settlement planning for all relevant stakeholders.

(c) *Environmental dimension*

42. Promoting green, compact and resilient cities by increasing urban resource efficiency¹⁰.

(d) *Principles of governance*

43. Promoting national urban policies conducive to balanced urbanization, and their translation to localized urban legislation and regulations; promoting the strategic planning of human settlements; and enacting measures at national and local levels to ensure that policies are appropriate for each scale of governance; thereby guaranteeing the most effective results.

¹⁰ For example, improving the consumption of energy, water and land, reducing waste, improving air quality, and improving cities' resilience to floods, heat waves and natural hazards.

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44. Stressing that approaches will have to be locality-specific, and, to be effective, be as varied as the diversity of the countries, economies, societies and cultures in the region.
 45. Promoting smart and sustainable cities as well as an integrated and holistic approach to planning and managing cities, and facilitating the use of ICT.
 46. Promoting good urban governance by supporting and building capacity at local level of local authorities and other stakeholders such as homeowner associations and housing cooperatives, a key element for the sustainable development of urban areas.
 47. Focusing on capacity-building and institutional support, especially for countries with transition economies, to promote policy implementation.
 48. Creating regional networks of governments, experts and stakeholders; organizing workshops and study trips; creating synergies using existing platforms and involving relevant programmes, agencies, bodies and other stakeholders, to ensure consistency and complementarity, and allow effective collaboration on housing and land-related issues.
- (e) *Means of implementation*
49. Elaborating country-specific policy guidance and recommendations on challenges related to housing, urban development and land management in the region, through regional and thematic studies.
 50. Developing in-depth assessments and flagship reports, including a series of Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management.
 51. Harmonizing methodologies and definitions in the area of housing, urban development and land management, and administration at all levels, supporting development of common terms, language definitions and standards.
 52. Promoting dialogue between governments and relevant stakeholders using existing platforms, to facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of good practices, such as the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), other relevant UN programmes and agencies, the European Commission, the European Union housing focal points, the Intergovernmental Council for Cooperation in Construction of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Housing Europe - the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing, the International Union of Tenants, Housing Cooperatives International; and the Geneva UN Charter Centres for Sustainable Housing and Urban Development.
 53. Regularly monitoring and following up the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, Sustainable Development Goals and other targets, including those in the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE Region 2014-2020, and the UNECE/ITU Smart Sustainable City Indicators; and, for that purpose, strengthening the capacity of national statistical services and improving mechanisms for information exchange.
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Annex II

Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Land Administration for the period 2016-2020

1. The Working Party on Land Administration operates under the auspices of the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. Its members are the national land-administration authorities and related authorities from ECE member States.
2. The overall goals of the Working Party are the promotion and improvement of land administration and land management in the ECE region. The Working Party aims at supporting security of tenure, introducing and improving cadastre and land registry, developing real estate markets, and implementing land and geodata policy. Given the entry into force of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda, the Working Party also aims to promote their implementation and the achievement of relevant Sustainable Development Goals in the region.
3. The activities of the Working Party are based on cooperation and the exchange of experience among all countries of the region. This is done through: seminars and workshops organized in member States; land-administration reviews; participation in the development of country profiles on the housing sector organized by the Committee on Housing and Land Management; the publication of studies and guidelines on specific land-administration and land-management topics; the benchmarking and preparation of inventories of land-administration systems in the ECE region; and the provision of policy advice and expert assistance. In particular, the Working Party deals with:

(a) Land administration

4. General task: Improving the acquisition, registration, storage, maintenance and dissemination of information on real property rights and the geometric and physical characteristics of land.
5. Activities: Providing advice on the documentation of ownership rights, leases and mortgages, land cover, land use and land-use restrictions, and geo-referenced addresses; the transfer of ownership rights; the adjudication of land rights; the resolution of land disputes; cadastral mapping; database activities; real property valuation and mass appraisal; personal data protection; re-use of land-administration public data; pricing of services; cost-recovery requirements; development of professional skills; taxation of land and real properties; monitoring of real estate markets; development of e-services; participation of land-administration authorities in e-government programmes; and other related activities.

(b) Land management

6. General task: Contributing to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of land policy and geo-data policy (including related financial policy issues); and the promotion of sustainable land management programmes and projects.
7. Activities: Providing advice in support of the implementation of geo-spatial data policy; and contributing to the sustainable development of urban and rural areas, with a particular focus on land consolidation, the protection of natural resources and the further strengthening of good governance.

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

9. 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 Programme on Human Settlements (UN-Habitat), other United Nations Regional Commissions, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Union institutions concerned with land management activities (e.g. the INSPIRE Initiative), the European Land Information Service (EULIS), the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), the Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union (PCC), the International Centre of Registration Law (CINDER), the European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information (EUROGI), EuroGeographics, the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), and the European Land Registry Association (ELRA), among others.

10. The Working Party cooperates with international financial and donor organizations that fund programmes and projects related to land administration in countries of the ECE region: e.g. the European Union, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the World Bank.

11. The Working Party encourages partnership among the public and private sectors, and their involvement in managing land resources and capacity-building for sustainable development, supported in particular by the Real Estate Market Advisory Group. It encourages cooperation with educational institutions in order to enhance capacity-building activities.
