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Preparations for the Ministerial Meeting on Housing and Land Management to be held in Geneva on 8 October 2013

This note provides information on the Committee on Housing and Land Management, its previous Ministerial conferences and the preparations for the 2013 Ministerial meeting. It is meant to assist Ministers and their offices in preparing for the meeting.

Background information

The **Committee on Housing and Land Management** is an intergovernmental body representing the 56 UNECE member States.¹ Its main mission is to address the unique housing and land-management challenges of the region through assessing countries' housing systems, developing policy guidance, and providing advisory services and capacity-building activities.²

The **first Ministerial Meeting on Human Settlements** was held in September 2000 to facilitate discussion on the vision and direction of work to improve housing and urban conditions in the UNECE region. At the meeting, the Ministers adopted "ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century".³

In September 2006, Ministers responsible for housing, spatial planning and land administration met for the second time and adopted "Ministerial Declaration on Social and Economic Challenges in Distressed Urban Areas in the UNECE Region".⁴ The Declaration reconfirmed the goals and challenges contained in the ECE Strategy. Ministers decided to convene the next high-level meeting in five years' time in order to assess progress in the implementation of these commitments.⁵

At its **seventy-second session held in October 2011**, the Committee agreed on the need to define policy directions of the UNECE work in the areas of housing and land management and decided to organize a Ministerial Meeting back to back with the seventy-fourth session of the Committee.⁶

1 A list of UNECE member States is available at: http://www.unece.org/oes/member_countries/member_countries.html .

2 More information about the Committee is available on the UNECE website at the following link:
<http://www.unece.org/hlm/welcome.html>.

3 The Strategy is available at: <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2001/ece/hbp/ece.hbp.120.pdf>.

4 The Declaration is available at: <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2006/ece/hbp/ECE.HBP.2006.4.e.pdf>.

5 Report on Ministerial Meeting and Ministerial Declaration on Social and Economic Challenges in Distressed Urban Areas in the UNECE region, available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2006/ece/hbp/ECE_HBP_142_Add.1.e.pdf.

6 Report of seventy-second session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management (ECE/HBP/167) available at:
<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2011/ece.hbp.167.e.pdf>.

Housing and land management events in October 2013

Dates and Venue

At its **seventy-third session held in September 2012**, the Committee decided to hold a Ministerial Meeting in Geneva on 8 October 2013.⁷ It further decided that its seventy-fourth session would be held on 7 and 9 October 2013. Delegates to the Committee will have the opportunity to further contribute to the preparation of the Ministerial Meeting and to the follow-up of the decisions to be taken on 8 October 2013.

The events will be held in room XIX, at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, as follows:

Monday, 7 October – Seventy-fourth session of the Committee

Tuesday, 8 October – Ministerial Meeting

Wednesday, 9 October – Seventy-fourth session of the Committee (continued)

When arranging the dates of your travel, please also take into account the following side events:

Monday, 7 October - Lunch seminar on the occasion of World Habitat Day 2013

13.00, room XIX

Evening cocktail on the occasion of World Habitat Day 2013

18.00, venue to be confirmed

Ministerial dinner on the occasion of World Habitat Day

20.00, venue to be confirmed (reserved for Ministers only)

Tuesday, 8 October - Special Ministerial working lunch

13.00, venue to be confirmed (reserved for Ministers only)

Content and expected outcomes

The event will provide an international platform for a high-level exchange on issues related to sustainable housing and urban development, land administration and management, spatial planning and real-estate-market stability in the region.

Ministerial statements: The Committee requested the secretariat to compile all Ministerial statements in a publication on the Ministerial reviews of the housing and land management situation in the region.⁸ Guidelines for the statements are attached to the invitation letter for the Ministerial Meeting.

Strategy and Targets for sustainable housing and land management in the UNECE region: The Committee agreed to present a draft Strategy and Targets for the period from 2014 to 2020 to the Ministerial Meeting for adoption.⁹ It further agreed on a detailed plan for the further elaboration of the draft document, which would ensure the active involvement of member States and other stakeholders in its preparation.¹⁰

National reports on housing and urban development: The Committee requested the secretariat to collect national reports on the housing and land-management sectors, which would be compiled in a publication.

7 Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its seventy-third session (ECE/HBP/170), available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2012/ece_hbp_170.e.pdf.

8 Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its seventy-third session (ECE/HBP/170), available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2012/ece_hbp_170.e.pdf.

9 Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its seventy-third session (ECE/HBP/170), available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2012/ece_hbp_170.e.pdf.

10 Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its seventy-third session (ECE/HBP/170), available at: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2012/ece_hbp_170.e.pdf.

The national reports will focus mainly on sustainable housing and urban development.¹¹ A detailed template containing an outline and further guidelines on the reports will be sent to the delegates to the Committee and the Permanent Missions of UNECE member States to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Additional information about the preparation for the Ministerial Meeting

The secretariat of the Committee will be glad to provide any further information about the Ministerial Conference and the Committee session. Additional information about the conference and the related events may be received from Ms. Gulnara Roll, Secretary to the Committee on Housing and Land Management (e-mail: gulnara.roll@unece.org; phone: +41 22 917 22 57).

¹¹ The secretariat is already collecting a data from UNECE member States and working on a comprehensive benchmarking study on land management.