www.unece.org/index.php?id=33593

According to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, worldwide, disasters are more prevalent and have more devastating effects than ever before. This trend is expected to continue as a result of climate change, rapid urbanization and population growth. Compared to post-conflict preparation, there are few guidelines available to address issues related to the right to adequate housing in the wake of disasters.

In order to highlight the critical importance to recovery of post-disaster housing UNECE is hosting an exhibition of temporary disaster relief housing from 10 September 2013 to 10 October 2013. The exhibited houses have been provided by Canada and Estonia and showcase some of the most recent developments in low-cost, quick-build, short-term housing for those displaced by disasters.

The exhibit was opened on 10 September by Ms. Elissa Golberg of Canada, Mr. Jüri Seilenthal of Estonia, permanent representatives to the United Nations in Geneva; as well as Mr Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr Sven Alkalaj, Executive Secretary of the UNECE, and Mr. Szilard Fricska, Senior Humanitarian Coordinator for UN-Habitat in Geneva.

During the opening, Mr. Tokayev noted that "*The human and economic toll of disasters calls for urgent action. The loss of a home compounds the trauma of individuals affected and prolongs the process of recovery for the entire community. As we see here, the United Nations family is working closely with all partners to confront the range of technical, financial, legal and environmental aspects of recovery, including housing and land. This is both a strategic choice and a moral obligation to save lives and alleviate human suffering*".

Mr. Alkalaj said: "*This exhibition is meant to draw attention to the importance of reliable, safe and low-cost housing for people who have been forced from their homes by natural or man-made disasters. The UNECE works hard to make sure our homes will be more secure, safe, energy efficient, resilient and comfortable in the future. Our intergovernmental Committee on Housing and Land Management serves as a forum for the exchange of best practices and provides a platform for policy formulation and implementation in housing, spatial planning and land management. At the Ministerial Meeting on 8 October 2013, ministers from throughout the UNECE region will set policy and discuss how they can work together to address housing and land management challenges*".

This exhibit marks the beginning of a number of important activities for the UNECE's Housing and Land Management programme, including World Habitat Day (7 October), the 74th session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management (7 and 9 October) and the Ministerial Meeting for

Housing and Land Management (8 October).

For more information, please visit http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=33525

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Watch the photo gallery on Facebook

Note to editors

UNITED NATIONS. 2011. Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living. Geneva and New York: United Nations Publishing (A/66/270), p.4.

For more information, please visit: http://www.ifrc.org/docs/IDRL/N1144601.pdf