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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management

#### Eighty first session

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Item 8(a) of the provisional agenda

#### Cross-sectoral cooperation:

**Review of activities of the Geneva UN Charter Centres  
for Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities**

## **Guidelines for establishing Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Sustainable Smart Cities and modalities of their work**

### **Note by the Bureau of the Committee**

#### *Summary*

This document includes the “Guidelines for establishing Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Sustainable Smart Cities and modalities of work”. The guidelines were developed by the secretariat of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. The document was reviewed by the Committee Bureau at its meeting on 17 July 2020 and is presented for the endorsement of the Committee.

The Committee is invited to endorse the draft Guidelines.

GE.20-10175(E)



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## I. Introduction and objectives of the document

1. Representatives of 56 member States of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) on 16 April 2015 endorsed the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing (E/ECE/1478/Rev.1). The Charter's goal is to support member States as they seek to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all, with due attention to reducing the impact of the housing sector on the environment. The Charter is based on four overarching principles: environmental protection; economic effectiveness; social inclusion and participation; and cultural adequacy.

2. In October 2015, following the endorsement of the Charter, the ECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management agreed on recommendations for the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing (ECE/HBP/184). Based on these recommendations, the Committee developed the "Guidance for the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing" (ECE/HBP/2016/2) and endorsed them in October 2016.

3. The Guidance included the proposal to establish a network of Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities (Centres of Excellence) under the coordination of ECE to support exchange of experience and best practices, and to promote cooperation and knowledge-sharing within the network of Centres of Excellence and ECE member States.

4. Since 2016, five centres were established, with two more in the process of being set up (ECE/HBP/2019/1).

(a) The following centres have been established:

(i) The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable and Resilient Settlements in Tirana, Albania established in cooperation with the Albanian Housing Agency and the Ministry of Urban Development of the Republic of Albania on 13 December 2016, when the Memorandum of Understanding was signed. Following its expiration, a new Memorandum of Understanding is currently under preparation;

(ii) The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Housing in Tallinn, Estonia established on 2 May 2017 and hosted by the Estonian Union of Co-operative Housing Associations (EKYL). Following its expiration, a new Memorandum of Understanding is currently under preparation;

(iii) The Centre of Excellence on Smart Sustainable Cities in Glasgow, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland established on 8 November 2017 and hosted by the Glasgow Urban Laboratory at the Glasgow School of Art with support of the Glasgow City Council;

(iv) The Centre of Excellence on Smart Sustainable Cities in Vienna, Austria established on 4 October 2018 and hosted by the Organization for International Economic Relations (OIER);

(v) The Centre of Excellence on Sustainable Development Goal City Transition established on 23 August 2019 in cooperation with the city of Trondheim, Norway and the Norwegian University of Technology.

(b) The following centres are being established in 2020:

(i) The Centre of Excellence on Smart Sustainable Cities and Sustainable Urban Development in Geneva, Switzerland to be hosted by the University of Geneva;

- (ii) The Toronto Centre of Excellence on Youth Homelessness Prevention in Canada to be hosted by York University in York, Canada.

5. The present document was developed by the secretariat of the Committee with the objective to support more efficiently the work of the Centres of Excellence. It provides a detailed guidance for the mode of work of the Centres and the organization of communication between the Centres, the secretariat and the Committee. The guidance document was developed based on the “Guidance for the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing” (ECE/HBP/2016/2) adopted by the Committee in 2016. The draft was further updated to reflect (i) the experience of the Centres of Excellence from their work since 2016; (ii) the harmonized approach within ECE on Centres of Excellence; recommendations of a study on the performance of the Centres of Excellence, conducted in 2019 by the University of Geneva<sup>1</sup> upon request of the secretariat; and (iv) outcomes of the discussion on Centres of Excellence at the Informal Session of the ECE Executive Committee in May 2020.

6. This document:

- (a) Presents recommendations for the functioning of the Centres of Excellence;
- (b) Provides guidance for the functioning and organization of work of the Centres of Excellence.

7. The document includes annexes and some templates:

- (a) A standard template of a Memorandum of Understanding between ECE and the hosting institution;
- (b) A checklist of the objectives of the Centres of Excellence;
- (c) A template of annual workplan of the Centres of Excellence;
- (d) A template of progress/annual report of the Centres of Excellence;
- (e) A template of best practice example of the annual meeting of the Centres of Excellence.

## **II. Recommendations for the functioning of the Centres of Excellence**

8. A study to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the Centres of Excellence in terms of support to acceleration of the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing was conducted in 2019 in response to the request by the Committee at its eightieth session (ECE/HBP/2019). It included a desk research and interviews with the coordinators of the five existing and one prospective Centres of Excellence as well as with representatives of the ECE secretariat. The study concluded that the Centres of Excellence play a vital role in promoting the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. They act both as “think-tanks” and “act-tanks” in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. At the same time, the lack of financial and human resources for some of the Centres and the different governance structures make it more difficult for the ECE secretariat to coordinate their activities as each

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<sup>1</sup> The secretariat of the ECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management would like to thank Ms Jessica Wang, the author, and Prof. Dr Tina C. Ambos, the study supervisor at the University of Geneva School of Economics and Management, for conducting the study.

should be treated individually. This creates a considerable additional workload for the ECE secretariat to supervise and coordinate the activities of the Centres.\

9. To further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the functioning of the Centres, the study formulated the following recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** Design a system of indicators or a checklist to regularly measure the impact of activities of the Centres of Excellence to support stronger performance of the Centres on the implementation of all four dimensions of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing.

**Recommendation 2:** Create a standard web-based platform for the Centres of Excellence to exchange information on their activities and good practices. The establishment of the platform will improve the efficiency of the functioning of the network of Centres and support raising the capacity of the centres through exchange of ideas, information and good practices.

**Recommendation 3:** Increase partnership with the private sector. Centres are recommended to initiate pilot projects focusing on fostering cooperation with the private sector. The UN Global Compact provides examples of how to organize cooperation with the private sector and these could be used as a template for developing the cooperation.

**Recommendation 4:** Assign a dedicated coordinator at the ECE secretariat to coordinate the network of Centres of Excellence and organize network meetings. Results of the interviews with the Centres' coordinators showed the need to appoint a dedicated coordinator for the network of Centres of Excellence to promote the exchange of good practices among the Centres more efficiently. The network coordinator is recommended to organize regular meetings of the Centres (at least biannually), joint fundraising for the joint activities, and promote and disseminate information on the work of the Centres.

10. The Guidelines reflect on the recommendations above and on the possible approaches to the functioning and organization of work of the Centres of Excellence.

### **III. The “Guidelines for establishing Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities**

#### **A. Definitions and the activities of the Centres of Excellence**

11. According to the “Guidance for the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing”, endorsed by the Committee at its seventy-seventh session in 2016 (ECE/HBP/2016/2), and the ECE Executive Committee information document “Economic Commission for Europe and partnerships: Centres of Excellence” (Executive Committee information document No. 2020/14)<sup>2</sup>, the Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities (Centres of Excellence):

- (a) Are established to support the implementation of the Charter;
- (b) In collaboration with ECE, develop and undertake relevant best practices, research, policy advice, support and/or trainings that increase the capacity and knowledge in

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<sup>2</sup> See: [https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Agenda/2020/EXCOM\\_110\\_3\\_April\\_2020/Item\\_7\\_b\\_ECE\\_EX\\_2020\\_14\\_CoE.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/EXCOM/Agenda/2020/EXCOM_110_3_April_2020/Item_7_b_ECE_EX_2020_14_CoE.pdf)

the area of housing, sustainable smart cities, urban development and/or land management in a country, region and/or city where the Centre of Excellence is located;

(c) Depending on their specialization and available expertise at host institutions, work nationally and/or internationally on topics covered by the Charter;

(d) Are subject to periodic reporting to document their achievements against agreed action plans and submit their forward planning for information, review and/or approval by the designated oversight body in ECE;

(e) Work under the coordination of the secretariat of the Committee which provides guidance for the Centres and contributes to the capacity-building and training of the staff members of the Centres;

(f) Cover costs of their activities, for example, the preparation of relevant documentation, website maintenance, coordination, staff and expert travel, with their own resources or extrabudgetary resources, as appropriate;

(g) Contribute to the network of Centres of Excellence through exchange of best practices, peer-learning and quality assurance, supported by the secretariat of the Committee;

(h) Report to the Committee at its annual sessions. In between sessions, the Centres of Excellence are accountable to the Committee Bureau.

12. The activities of the Centres of Excellence include:

(a) Active dissemination of information on the Charter and its principles through publications, mass media, and national and local events;

(b) Advisory services;

(c) Capacity-building at international, national and local levels (organization of training, implementation of pilot projects, etc.);

(d) Networking, including with cities, regions, homeowner associations and other stakeholders;

(e) Conduct of studies on the implementation of the Charter and best practices on implementation of non-legally binding conventions;

(f) Research on topics which will contribute to the better implementation of the Charter;

(g) Collection and exchange of information on best practice on Charter implementation.

13. Background

(a) The Centre of Excellence must at all times follow and comply with ECE guidelines and requirements;

(b) Each Centre shall be given the name "Centre of Excellence" preceded or followed by any of the following: a phrase that either provides an academic understanding of what the Centre is about or its research area, the name of the institution it is associated with, or the name of the city/country hosting the Centre of Excellence.

## **B. Selection criteria and establishment of the Centres of Excellence**

14. Partners wishing to host an ECE-affiliated Centre of Excellence must meet the qualifying criteria and agree to deliver outputs as set forth in the standard terms of reference established by the relevant oversight body within ECE. The qualifying criteria for the Centres

is the capacity to support the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing nationally, locally and/or internationally.

15. Establishment of the Centres of Excellence:

(a) The establishment of a Centre of Excellence starts with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)<sup>3</sup> between ECE, the host institution and other parties (if any);

(b) The MoU will list the responsibilities of the involved parties for the establishment and operation of the Centre of Excellence;

(c) If the MoU is with a non-governmental organization or private sector entity, a due diligence questionnaire needs to be completed prior to signing the cooperation agreement.

### **C. Organization, governance and finance**

16. Organization:

(a) The Centre of Excellence shall be affiliated with ECE;

(b) The Centre of Excellence shall be attached to the host institution which is not a government agency;

(c) The Centre of Excellence shall have academic and management independence towards the host institution and collaborating institutions.

17. Governance:

(a) The activities of the Centre of Excellence will be undertaken by the host institution and other relevant parties (if any) listed in the MoU;

(b) The day to day operations of the Centre of Excellence are administered by the host institution;

(c) The involvement of third parties by either ECE or the host institution, if not explicitly mentioned in the MoU, is to be mutually agreed upon;

(d) The activities of the Centre of Excellence will be agreed upon with ECE. ECE may be notified of the activities through a work plan, annual report, checklist to measure activities against the Charter, or any means agreed upon by all parties;

(e) The activities of the Centre of Excellence will be coordinated by ECE. A focal point has been designated in this regard at the Committee secretariat who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Centres of Excellence network. The Committee secretariat fundraises for this position;

(f) A web-based platform to exchange information and good practices will be set up by the Committee secretariat for the network of Centres of Excellence;

(g) The Centre of Excellence shall report on its activities at the annual sessions of the ECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management;

(h) The network of Centres of Excellence aims to meet annually to exchange best practices, develop joint activities and explore cooperation with the private sector.

(i) ECE is to be informed when the Centre of Excellence is participating in workshops, conferences, international meetings, etc.;

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<sup>3</sup> A standard MoU template for this purpose is available in Annex I of the present document.

(j) When organizing an activity/event as a Centre, the Centre of Excellence must send the draft agenda of the event to the ECE secretariat at least two weeks prior to the planned activity. Social media posts are to be reviewed by ECE prior to their dissemination.

18. Finance

(a) The Centre of Excellence will be financed by and through the host institution;

(b) Possible infrastructural requirements are the responsibility of the host institution and other involved parties but not the ECE;

(c) The cost of development and production of print and digital material such as the cost of printing brochures, translation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, and development of websites, mobile applications etc. will be covered by the Centre of Excellence;

(d) The host institution of the Centre of Excellence will also provide financial support to ECE to coordinate the activities of the Centres of Excellence, when feasible.

## Annex I

# Memorandum of Understanding between United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and the [NAME OF ORGANIZATION], (referred herein as the “Parties”) have agreed to sign this Memorandum of Understanding (“Memorandum”) as a statement of intent by the Parties to cooperate in the promotion of sustainable housing through the establishment of the Centre of Excellence” (Centre of Excellence)) in [NAME OF COUNTRY] for the implementation of the Geneva United Nations Charter on Sustainable Housing

## I. Objective

1. The objective of this Memorandum is to establish a Centre of Excellence for the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. For the purposes of this Memorandum, the ‘Centre of Excellence’ provides best practices, research, support, and/or training in the area of work around [TOPIC OF CHARTER CENTRE].
2. The Memorandum also provides a framework within which the Parties can develop and undertake collaborative activities and projects to promote the principles of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing through the Centre of Excellence.

## II. Responsibilities of the Parties

3. [NAME OF ORGANIZATION], partner organization hosting the Centre of Excellence, will undertake activities such as:
  - (a) Translation and printing of the Charter in [NATIONAL LANGUAGE]
  - (b) Development and production of print and digital materials on sustainable housing [SPECIALIZED TOPIC OF THE CHARTER CENTRE], including brochures, websites, mobile applications and multi-media;
  - (c) Development of curriculums for training and capacity building on the [SPECIALIZED TOPIC OF THE CHARTER CENTRE];
  - (d) Organization and hosting of international, national, and subnational meetings (symposiums, workshops, training programmes and seminars) to disseminate information about the Charter and UNECE;

- (e) Promotion of the Charter at international, national, and subnational level meetings and through print and social media (i.e. preparation of articles in journals and newspapers, interviews on TV and radio and information dissemination through relevant newsletters etc.);
- (f) Support to research on the potentials for the implementation of the Charter;
- (g) Liaising and cooperation with international, national and local stakeholders working on related topics;
- (h) Fundraising and preparation of project proposals, implementation of projects supporting the activities mentioned in (a) to (g) above;
- (i) Development and implementation of pilot projects to support the implementation of the Charter (advisory services to support preparation of laws and regulations, etc.);
- (j) Provision of financial and in-kind support, when feasible, to the network of Centres of Excellence and UNECE secretariat, which acts as the network coordinator;
- (k) Participation in regular surveys organized by UNECE on the implementation of the Charter.

4. UNECE will:

- (a) Facilitate the work of the Centre of Excellence and the exchange of information, knowledge and experience within the network as well as with relevant international and national organizations in the UNECE region, within existing resources;
- (b) Promote the goals and objectives of the Charter through the Centre of Excellence;
- (c) Cooperate on the topic of the [CHARTER CENTRE] and support the activities of the [SPECIFIC PROGRAMME] according to the priorities established by the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM);
- (d) Coordinate cooperation and exchange of experiences between the Centres of Excellence.

### **III. Protection of intellectual property rights**

5. The Parties recognize the importance of protecting and respecting intellectual property rights. This Memorandum does not grant the right to use materials belonging to or created by either Party.

6. The intellectual property rights for materials or products developed and provided by UNECE shall rest entirely with UNECE as this is in accordance with United Nations copyright rules and regulations.

### **IV. Use of UNECE name and logo**

7. Any use of the UNECE name and logo by the [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] shall be subject to explicit written consent by UNECE.

## **V. Limits to agreement**

8. This Memorandum does not constitute an agreement by either Party to provide support for any specific project or activity. Any sharing of information between the Parties will be subject to their respective policies on the disclosure of information.

9. In no event shall this Agreement or any amendment hereto operate to create financial, administrative or legal obligations on the part of either Party, nor does it prevent the Parties from pursuing the objectives set forth in this Memorandum on their own or with other third parties.

## **VI. Disputes**

10. The Parties commit themselves to settling by good faith negotiation any dispute or controversy arising out of the implementation and/or interpretation of the present Memorandum.

## **VII. Privileges and Immunities**

11. Nothing in this Memorandum is intended to be a waiver, expressly or implied, of the privileges and immunities of UNECE, including its subsidiary organs

## **VIII. Planning of activities**

12. The Parties may present their plans for specific activities to implement this Memorandum at the annual sessions of the Committee on Housing and Land Management.

## **IX. Key points of contact**

13. The key points of contact for implementation of this Memorandum are listed below. The Parties may, by written notice to the other Party, designate additional or different persons as points of contact.

## **X. Timeframe and termination**

14. This Memorandum will continue for three years from the date of the last signature with the possibility of further extension based on mutual written agreement of the Parties. Either Party may, at its sole discretion, terminate this Memorandum at any time by providing written notice to the other Party with a minimum notice period of six (6) months.

## **XI. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation**

15. The Parties recognize the importance of monitoring and evaluating the performance of collaborative activities undertaken pursuant to this Memorandum. The Centre of Excellence shall report annually on its activities to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. Between sessions the

Centre of Excellence should report on its current activities to the Committee Bureau.

16. The Parties also agree to meet as needed to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the collaborative activities undertaken pursuant to this Memorandum, including the extent to which the Parties have achieved their institutional goals and to which the overall results achieved through collaborative actions were greater than the sum of the results each Party would have achieved on its own.

## **XII. Special measures for the protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse**

17. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards. Such conduct is prohibited by the United Nations Regulations and Rules. When entering into this agreement with UNECE, you agree that you accept these standards. Failure on your part to take preventive measures against sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, to investigate allegations thereof, or to take corrective action when sexual exploitation or sexual abuse has occurred are grounds for termination of any agreement with UNECE.

18. In witness whereof, the Parties hereto execute this Memorandum:

For the United Nations Economic Commission  
for Europe, Olga Algayerova,  
Executive Secretary

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Date:

For the [NAME OF  
ORGANIZATION] [NAME]  
[POSITION]

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Date:

## Annex II

### The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing Checklist for the Centres of Excellence

The Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities (Centres of Excellence) support implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. By doing so, their activities contribute to specific key directions of work and measures to promote sustainable housing, as outlined in Chapter 3 of the Charter.

The [NAME OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE] provides best practices, research, support, and/or training in the area of work around [SPECIALIZED TOPIC OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AS MENTIONED IN MOU] with the aim of supporting national and local governments in achieving the following actions of the Charter:

#### Instructions:

The table below lists key measures to promote sustainable housing as included in the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. Please indicate with an 'X' in the column "Active" all those measures to which the Centre of Excellence is contributing through its activities. This information will be used by the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management for reporting purposes.

<i>Key measures to promote sustainable housing</i>	<i>Active (X)</i>
<b>(a) Limit the negative impact of housing on the environment and enhance the energy efficiency of the housing sector by taking measures to:</b>	
(i) Reduce the carbon footprint of the housing sector by reducing energy use throughout the entire life cycle of buildings, which includes housing design; material supply and manufacturing; construction; maintenance; refurbishment; and demolition processes;	
(ii) Decrease the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air and water quality, and waste management;	
(iii) Apply building codes and standards for energy efficiency and the environmental safety of new and existing residential buildings;	
(iv) Increase the proportion of low-energy housing units also as a part of an integrated urban renewal approach;	
(v) Increase the use of low carbon and renewable energy technologies in housing;	
(vi) Retrofit and renovate existing housing stock in an environmentally friendly, energy-efficient, affordable and cost-efficient way; making use of local solutions and knowledge when possible;	
(vii) Put in place strategies to ensure that the design and construction of dwellings apply principles of environmental sustainability, with special regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation;	
(viii) Adopt green housing policies and integrate them into sustainable urban and territorial development policies;	
(ix) Make waste and water management an integral part of sustainable housing strategies and policies;	
(x) Encourage construction of multifamily housing, promote integrated public transportation and facilitate the use of clean vehicles in order to, mainly, counteract urban sprawl and save energy;	
(xi) Provide appropriate technical and financial support to housing stakeholders and, in particular, ensure the feasibility and affordability of energy efficiency measures, including for the most vulnerable parts of the population;	

(xii) Promote and monitor integrated urban development and regeneration which brings workplaces and services into closer spatial relation to housing, while taking into account potential dangers and hazards; and increasing resilience to climate change;	
(xiii) Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for disadvantaged population groups.	
<b>(b) Promote access to housing in the context of sustainable economic development by taking measures to:</b>	
(i) Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services;	
(ii) Promote secure tenure and the availability of housing options, including the neutral treatment of tenure options (such as ownership or renting), in order to encourage the development of adequate supplies of affordable housing;	
(iii) Promote transparent and fair rental markets with a balance of rights and duties between landlords and tenants through adequate legislation and conflict resolution mechanisms in order to facilitate residential and labour mobility;	
(iv) Contribute to well-functioning, efficient, equitable and transparent housing markets and land markets, which respond to different types of housing demand as well as favouring credit access for socially and economically vulnerable population groups, including through alternative forms of funding, such as housing microfinance;	
(v) Develop and review policies and procedures for integrated urban renewal and housing maintenance, including utility systems and the encouragement of green investments in the sector;	
(vi) Encourage effective management of the housing stock and develop mechanisms for affordable housing refurbishment;	
(vii) Promote investment in sustainable housing through private and public investments, public-private partnership, and other means of financing;	
(viii) Develop programmes, where appropriate, to assist those who are in danger of housing-loan default because of social or economic shocks and are threatened with homelessness;	
(ix) Develop frameworks to ensure the rights and duties of all property owners as well as tenants;	
(x) Where possible and appropriate, assist people living in informal and low-income settlements to have access to adequate infrastructure and services;	
(xi) Promote national policies and programmes that encourage, when possible and appropriate, dwellers of informal construction to regularize and upgrade their constructions provided that the geographic location and other factors allow minimum safety requirements to be met;	
(xii) Encourage the use of efficient solutions for the design, construction, refurbishment and maintenance of sustainable housing while respecting the cultural and geographic particularities of member States;	
(xiii) Establish effective, clear and transparent regulations and procedures, as well as appropriate institutions for issuing building permits, with the objective of helping ensure fairness and non-discrimination and fighting corruption in the housing sector;	
(xiv) Promote the use of spatial, cadastral and land registration information and services to create an environment conducive to investment in housing and the security of land and housing tenure;	
(xv) Support cities and human settlements adopting and implementing smart city concepts, integrated policies and plans to support inclusion, including socially mixed communities; resource efficiency; and resilience to climate change and disasters;	
(xvi) Promote integrated spatial planning which supports: the efficient spatial distribution of economic activities; the improvement of technical and social infrastructure; urban regeneration and integrated urban renewal; and affordable housing and which also addresses urban sprawl.	
<b>(c) Promote decent, adequate, healthy, barrier free and safe housing by taking measures to:</b>	
(i) Improve access for all to good quality and healthy housing, reduce homelessness and improve access to barrier-free housing;	
(ii) Develop socially mixed communities and avoid social segregation, gentrification and gated communities;	
(iii) Encourage healthy living through housing design, maintenance and retrofitting as well as through public and green spaces around and within housing areas;	
(iv) Improve the resilience of buildings to natural and human-generated hazards through safety planning, design and construction;	
(v) Develop sustainable housing strategies that improve access to basic utilities and services, including safe drinking water and sanitation;	

(vi)	Promote the use of universal design principles in order to increase access to adequate housing and the ability to live independently for all;	
(vii)	Ensure that housing policy and legislation, and their implementation, are non-discriminatory.	
<b>(d)</b>	<b>Promote the continued application of sustainable housing principles by taking measures to:</b>	
(i)	Gather data on housing, including on homelessness, using common international standards to ensure data comparability between member States; make these data and national statistics publicly available in order to support policy-making, research and economic development; and make use of global and regional data repositories to support the policy-making process;	
(ii)	Encourage investment in research and innovation in all aspects of sustainable housing;	
(iii)	Support good governance at all levels, cooperation between relevant government agencies within countries, effective public participation in decision-making and the rule of law in housing;	
(iv)	Develop capacities for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management;	
(v)	Intensify the regional and international exchange of experience and cooperation in housing, urban planning and land management;	
(vi)	Develop and implement capacity-building programmes on housing, urban planning and land management issues for all stakeholders.	

## Annex III

### The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing Template of annual workplan for the Centres of Excellence

The Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities (further: Centres of Excellence) support implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. The Centres of Excellence engage in a range of activities related to their specialization and available expertise at the host institutions. They work at the national and/or international level and report to the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management at its annual sessions.

To plan and coordinate the work of the network of Centres of Excellence, the Centres commit to submit workplans and reports to the secretariat.

#### I. Annual schedule of reporting and joint meetings plan

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>31 January</b>  | Deadline to share the final workplan for that year (see Workplan template below)   |
| <b>31 May</b>      | Deadline to provide the progress report for that year (see Report template in separate file)                                       |
| <b>October</b>     | Annual meeting back-to-back with the Committee or hosted by one of the Centres (see Annual meeting template in separate file)      |
| <b>10 December</b> | Deadline to provide a draft workplan of work for the next year and final annual report on the work carried out in the present year |

#### II. Workplan template

##### [NAME OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE] Workplan for 20XX

The [NAME OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE] provides best practices, research, support, and/or training in the area of work around [SPECIALIZED TOPIC OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AS MENTIONED IN THE MoU].

Please provide information on activities planned for this year:

<b>1. Thematic focus of activities this year</b>
<i>[Please add thematic focus and a short description of the theme (max. 200 words)]</i>

<b>2. Organization and hosting of national and local meetings (symposiums, workshops, training programmes and seminars) to disseminate information on the Charter</b>							
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Name of event</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Place (city / country)</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Purpose of meeting</b>	<b>Funding source for activity (e.g. by host institution, by third party, etc.)</b>
Activity 1 – related to thematic focus activity (see 1.)							
Activity 2 – related to promoting the Charter to local governments							
Activity 3 – related to promoting the work of the Charter to young people							
Activity 4 – engagement in flagship activities of the network of the Centres of Excellence							
<b>3. Translation and printing of the Charter in the national language [if applicable and in case national language version is not yet available]</b>							
<b>Language(s) to translate into:</b>	<b>By [add date]</b>		<b>Digital version available by [add date]</b>		<b>Printed version available by [add date]</b>		
<b>4. Development and production of print and digital materials on sustainable housing</b>							
<b>(a) Print material, including brochures, etc.</b>							
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Content</b>		<b>Author</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Funding source (e.g. by host institution, by third party)</b>	
1							
2							
<b>(b) Digital material, including website and mobile application, etc.</b>							
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Content</b>		<b>Developer/Author</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Funding source (e.g. by host institution, by third party)</b>	
1							
2							

<b>5. Development of curriculum for training and capacity building on sustainable housing</b>						
<b>Activity no.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Target group</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Funding source (e.g. by host institution, by third party)</b>
1						
2						
<b>6. Communication and outreach (information on publications in national and international media, press releases related to the Centre and references to reports or publications produced under the Centre, social media posts, contribution to secretariat's communication activities, etc.)</b>						
<b>Media inputs [please list 5]</b>	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Planned date</b>	<b>-</b>	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
<b>Social media posts [please list 10]</b>	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Planned date</b>	<b>-</b>	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
<b>Contribution to UNECE planned e-Academy (e.g. video lecture, online training etc.)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Planned date</b>	<b>Funding source (e.g. by host institution, by third party)</b>	
1		<i>[e.g. presentation of the Centre of Excellence and its activities]</i>				
<b>7. Other planned activities that do not fit under any of the above categories [please specify]</b>						
<b>8. Any other comments on funding, communication or printing activities [If there is funding for additional activities that does not fit under the current categories, kindly briefly describe them here]</b>						

## Annex IV

## The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing Template of progress/annual report for the Centres of Excellence

(This template is a living document. The reporting format might be revised to improve measuring results of the Centre of Excellences' activities)

### [NAME OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE] [Progress /Annual] Report for 20XX

[PLEASE NOTE THAT THE REPORT SHOULD NOT BE MORE THAN 3 PAGES]

The [NAME OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE] provides best practices, research, support, and/or training in the area of work around [SPECIALIZED TOPIC OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE AS MENTIONED IN THE MoU].

Please report on activities implemented this year:

1. Thematic focus of activities this year						
<i>[Please briefly describe how this year's thematic focus was reflected in the activities of the Centre of Excellence (max. 200 words)]</i>						
2. Impact of implemented activities this year						
<i>[Please briefly describe how the activities of the Centre of Excellence contributed to advancing capabilities and knowledge transfer and capacity building in the area of housing, urban development and land management in a country, region or city where the Centre of Excellence is located, if applicable. (max. 200 words)]</i>						
3. Organization and hosting of national and local meetings (symposiums, workshops, training programmes and seminars) to disseminate information on the Charter						
Activity	Title of event	Organizer	Place (city / country) and date	Total number of participants (of which female) and type of participants (local officials, experts etc.)	Website link	What is different as a result of this activity?
Activity 1 – related to thematic focus activity (see 1.)						

Activity 2 – related to promoting the Charter to local governments						
Activity 3 – related to promoting the work of the Charter to young people						
Activity 4 – engagement in flagship activities of the network of the Centres of Excellence						
<b>4. Translation and printing of the Charter in the national language</b> <i>[if applicable and in case national language version is not yet available]</i>						
<b>Language(s) translated into:</b>	<b>Digital version available?</b> <i>[yes/no]</i>	<b>Link to digital version</b> <i>[add URL]</i>	<b>Printed version available?</b> <i>[yes/no]</i>	<b>Number of copies distributed and to whom?</b>		
<b>5. Development and production of print and digital materials on sustainable housing</b>						
<b>(a) Print material, including brochures, etc.</b>						
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title and author</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Website link (if available online)</b>	<b>Number of copies distributed and to whom?</b>		
1						
2						
<b>(b) Digital material, including website and mobile application, etc.</b>						
<b>No.</b>	<b>Title and developer/author</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Website link</b>	<b>Number of page visits, No. of downloads</b>		
1						
2						
<b>6. Development of curriculum for training and capacity building on sustainable housing</b>						
<b>Activity no.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Target group</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Curriculum applied?</b> <i>[Please provide details]</i>	
1						
2						

<b>7. Communication and outreach (information on publications in national and international media, press releases related to the Centre and references to reports or publications produced under the Centre, social media posts, contribution to secretariat's communication activities, etc.)</b>				
<b>Media inputs</b>	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Link</b>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
<b>Social media posts</b>	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Link</b>	<b>Reach and impact (please provide 1. number of views, 2. number of shares, 3. number of comments)</b>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
<b>Contribution to UNECE planned e-Academy (e.g. video lecture, online training, etc.)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Link</b>	<b>Reach and impact (please provide: 1. number of views, 2. number of shares, 3. number of comments)</b>
1				
<b>8. Other implemented activities that do not fit under any of the above categories [Please specify]</b>				
<b>9. Suggested focus theme for the next year for</b>				
<b>(i) this Centre of Excellence [Please specify]</b>				
<b>(ii) the network of Centres of Excellence [Please specify]</b>				

<b>10. Funding of the Centre of Excellence</b>
(i) <b>In kind contributions (e.g. staff costs to run the Centre, staff costs to contribute to activities of the ECE secretariat)</b> <i>[Please specify]</i>
(ii) <b>Additional financial contributions (e.g. provide trainings, host events, cover travel expenditures for participants/ECE secretariat to attend events)</b> <i>[Please specify]</i>
(iii) <b>Funds provided to ECE secretariat (e.g. staff costs to coordinate the work of the network of Centres, project implementation, etc.)</b> <i>[Please specify]</i>
<b>11. Any questions or comments to UNECE? What kind of support you need from UNECE?</b>
<i>[Please specify]</i>

## Annex V

### **The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing Template of best practice example for the annual meeting of the Centres of Excellence**

The Geneva UN Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing and Smart Sustainable Cities (Centres of Excellence) support implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. The Centres of Excellence engage in a range of activities related to their specialization and available expertise at the host institutions. They work at national and/or international level and report to the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management at its annual sessions.

To coordinate the work and encourage collaboration between the Centres of Excellence, an annual meeting will take place back-to-back with the Committee session in October. In addition, online meetings will be held throughout the year, as need be.

#### **Annual Meeting**

*For the annual meeting of the network of Centres of Excellence, each Centre is requested to prepare a short paper presenting one (or more) concrete examples of its contributions to advancing capabilities and knowledge transfer and capacity building in the area of housing, urban development and land management in the country, region or city where the Centre of Excellence is located. This paper will be presented at the annual meeting of the network of Centres in October each year. A template for the preparation of this concrete example is available below.*

#### **Title/Name of project, programme, policy or initiative:**

##### **Description**

*[Briefly describe the innovative elements and what makes this project stand out]*

##### **Location**

*[Please name country, city]*

##### **Context**

*[Describe when and why the project started and the specific (local, regional or national) context.]*

##### **Issue tackled**

*[Briefly mention the challenges or issues (housing, social, technical, economical, urban, etc.) solved.]*

##### **Actors and stakeholders**

*[Please list the main actors and stakeholders involved]*

**Results**

*[Briefly describe the outcomes, long term results or wider impact of the project. If possible, include quantifiable results (e.g. number of people, housing units, satisfaction levels, CO2 reduction, etc.)]*

**Actions carried out**

*[Describe the most crucial and innovative activities and the actors involved.]*

**Lessons learnt**

*[If possible, mention the most effective and/or efficient approach so others can learn from the innovative approach.]*

**More information**

*[Link to website]*

**Contact person for the project**

*[First and last name, Organization, Email, Website]*

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