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COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

Sixty-ninth session
Geneva, 22–23 September 2008

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

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Housing and Land Management held its sixty-ninth session on 22 and 23 September 2008 in Geneva. Ms. Doris Andoni (Albania) chaired the meeting.
2. Representatives of the following countries participated: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and United States of America.
3. Representatives of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT headquarters, Nairobi and the UN-HABITAT Warsaw Office) attended the session.
4. The following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended the session: the European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (CECODHAS), the International Union of Tenants (IUT), the International Council of Women (ICW), International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI) and the World Fire Statistics Centre. The following organizations and institutions participated as observers: the HABITAT League of Romania and Fédération Internationale pour l'Habitation,

l'Urbanisme et l'Amenagement du Territoire (FIHUAT). A number of academics and experts also attended the session.

5. Members of the Committee's Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network (HUMAN) also attended, as did members of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM).

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The annotated provisional agenda (ECE/HBP/148) was adopted without amendment.

II. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE BUREAU AND THE REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND URBAN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY NETWORK

7. The Chairperson of the Bureau reported on the Bureau's work and the main decisions taken since the Committee's previous session. The Chairperson of the HUMAN reported on that group's activities since September 2008 which related to the work of the Committee (see annex III).

8. The Committee took note of the work of the Bureau and the Advisory network.

III. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2008–2009

9. As part of its regular mandate, the Committee reviewed the programme of work 2008–2009 (ECE/HBP/2008/1), assessed the progress made and advised on future activities.

A. Country profiles

10. Information was provided on progress achieved in developing the country profiles of Belarus and Kyrgyzstan.

11. The Committee was informed that a draft of the country profile of Kyrgyzstan will be sent to local authorities for review by the end of the year and that the draft country profile of Belarus was being finalized. Attention was drawn to the synergies sought between the country profile and the environmental performance review of Kyrgyzstan, evidenced by a chapter in both reviews (complementing each other) on the issue of land.

12. The delegation of Belarus commented on the draft country profile study (ECE/HBP/150) and informed about plans for its implementation as well as about a launching event.

13. The representative of Georgia agreed to communicate, as soon as is feasible, dates for the launching event of the country profile.

14. The Secretary to Committee on Housing and Land Management informed the Committee about the results and recommendations of the UNECE self-evaluation exercise

regarding the preparation of the country profiles (ECE/HBR/2008/4), and how these results and recommendations had been taken into consideration while undertaking the country profile of Kyrgyzstan.

15. The Chairperson informed the meeting that according to the deliberations of the Bureau, Azerbaijan would be the next country to have a country profile developed.

16. The issue of capitalizing on synergies between the country profiles and the land administration review was considered, after which the Committee:

- (a) Agreed that a “modular approach” should be developed for consideration by the next Bureau, namely that each country could receive, depending on time constraints and the specific topics to be addressed, a more targeted product combining aspects of both the country profile and the land administration review. This innovation would not affect the regular country profile exercise;
- (b) Emphasized that the many advantages of this approach, including cost effectiveness and synergies between the Committee and the Working Party on Land Administration.

B. Improvement of urban environmental performance

17. The Chairperson informed the Committee about the publication of *Spatial planning – key instruments for development and effective governance, with special reference to countries in transition*, which had been launched in Geneva in May 2008 on the occasion of the Bureau meeting. The Chairperson also informed the Committee about discussions at the Bureau meeting on the importance of spatial planning in their countries and its role in containing urban sprawl. It was noted that the Conference of Ministers of the Council of Europe was addressing this issue, which was of interest to several countries in the UNECE region.

18. The delegate of Belarus informed the Committee about the outcome of the workshop on the sustainable development of small and medium-sized cities (Minsk, 25–28 September 2007).

19. The delegate of Romania, echoed by other delegates, referred to the relevance of the problem of urban sprawl to her country and suggested that the issue be addressed by the Committee in the future. The idea of organizing a workshop on the topic of urban sprawl was suggested. The secretariat would explore the possibility of organizing the workshop in 2010 and would identify potential partners. It requested member States to advance suggestions.

C. Land registration and land markets

20. The Chairperson of the Working Party on Land Administration reported on the Working Party's intersessional work (such as bureau meetings, workshops, land administration reviews and other publications under preparation) and on the composition and the workplan of REM as well as the Group's future activities, as discussed and agreed by the Bureau of the Working Party. The current Chairperson of REM announced that the Group is planning to host a workshop on "Real estate market: risks and benefits" in March 2009 in Rome.

D. Housing modernization and management

21. The Secretary to the Committee reported on progress made with respect to the preparatory phase for the implementation of the project on the multi-family housing sector as referred in document ECE/HBP/2008/5. The lack of funding for the implementation of a project on housing management was acknowledged. Synergies between HUMAN and REM would be developed to identify funding opportunities and to include the multi-family housing issue in the programme of the REM workshop in Rome. Other funding opportunities would also be explored. HUMAN would produce a modified proposal for discussion at the next Bureau meeting. Slovakia and Georgia might be considered as the first pilot countries for the project.

22. The delegation of Norway reported on preparations for a workshop on the topic of homelessness, to be held in mid-May 2009.

IV. ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN HOUSING

23. Mr. Paolo Garonna, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), made an introductory speech on the issue of energy efficiency in housing, in which he referred to the importance of this topic to broader goals of political stability, security and conflict prevention in Europe. Mr. Wolfgang Förster (Austria), moderator of the section, gave a presentation on passive house energy and schemes for the use of this technology in his country.

24. A video was shown that referred to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) meeting (Paris, June 2008) featuring high-level panelists including the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, who stressed the relevance of the housing sector to reduce carbon emissions.

25. The moderator then introduced a series of presentations on country case studies, based on the questions contained in a concept note (ECE/HBP/2008/2).

26. Mr. Erkin Boronbaev, Vice-Rector, Kyrgyz State University of Construction, Transportation and Architecture, reported on existing pilot projects regarding energy efficiency in his country, especially in rural areas. He referred to policy recommendations advocating heat protection envelopes in buildings, the use of renewable energies, and the dissemination of

knowledge and training. Mr. Andreas Eckmanns, Head of Research, Buildings, Solar Thermal, Heat Pumps, Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications, Switzerland, briefed participants on Swiss Energy (the Swiss programme for energy efficiency and renewable energies). He referred to strategic goals of the Federal Government, including voluntary and mandatory regulations to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and limit electricity consumption in residential buildings. Mr. Leonid Danilevski, Deputy Director of the research institute NIPTIS, Ministry of Architecture and Construction of Belarus, reported on energy efficiency policy in his country. Since 1993, energy consumption calculations have been used for new buildings, and building stock now includes high-density and high-rise buildings, thus contributing to sustainable energy-saving policies. Ms. Sorch Edwards, Networking and Campaigns Coordinator, CECODHAS, noting opportunities for slashing demand for energy consumption in the residential sector, reported on recent CECODHAS findings and recommendations on climate change, energy prices, fuel poverty and the impact of the European Union's energy-related targets and legislation.. Mr. Nikos Finikakis, Director, Architecture and Renewable Energy Source programme, International Union of Architects, discussed how architects can shape the future built environment with a responsible approach to nature and more use of the energy potentials of the sun, wind, water and earth (as opposed to non-renewable sources); Mr. Christian Kornevall, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, presented a Council project on energy efficiency in buildings. Its findings underlined the unsustainability of consumerist lifestyles in the UNECE region and of the low awareness of the environmental impact of investment decisions on the part of the private sector.

27. Two presentations by the UNECE secretariat followed, addressing issues on the economics of energy efficiency and on cooperation within UNECE. The first examined market failures and cost misperceptions that prevent the adoption of energy efficiency measures among investors in the UNECE region. A second outlined how synergies are being developed between the Energy Efficiency 21 programme of the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division and the Committee's work on energy efficiency in housing and other issues of sustainable energy.

28. Mr. Förster introduced the concept note (ECE/HBP/2008/2). He focused on policy recommendations and proposed works ahead. The discussion that followed demonstrated Committee's interest in addressing this topic.

29. Delegates then discussed policy decisions that could be undertaken to improve energy efficiency in the UNECE region. It was agreed that concrete information is necessary to realize cost-benefit analysis based on experimental buildings. Based on this information, decisions could be taken on such measures as building stock improvements and taxation (for instance, on gasoline consumption). It was also mentioned that grants and subsidies could be combined attending to the specific contexts of each country to support vulnerable sectors.

30. The Committee agreed that, as part of its programme of work, the Committee would address the issue of energy efficiency in housing, analyse relevant data trends, assess the situation in the region and provide policy advice. It also agreed that work would be undertaken in cooperation with other relevant UNECE divisions. To fulfill these goals, the Committee also decided that:

- (a) Two workshops would be held in 2009, in Bulgaria and Austria, to address the issue of energy efficiency in housing with a focus on bridging the gaps between decision makers and practitioners in the sector;
- (b) Interested countries and organizations should be encouraged to identify an expert to assist with the preparation of the workshop programme in consultation with the secretariat and the Government of Bulgaria (organizer of the first event), and to communicate her or his name to the secretariat;
- (c) Requested the secretariat to develop a proposal for its next session based on the outcome of the first workshop on how to further address the issue of energy efficiency in housing.

V. HOUSING AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

31. The Bureau had agreed at its meeting in May to hold a discussion on the relationship between housing and demographic changes in the region, emphasizing the advantages of the linkages and synergies which exist with the Population Unit of UNECE. The Chief of the UNECE Population Unit moderated the session. In her keynote address, Ms. Clara Mulder, Professor of Spatial Demography, University of Amsterdam, emphasized the impact of demographical changes (e.g. ageing and migration flows) on housing demand and supply in the UNECE region. Despite reduced population growth, housing demand persisted due to increases in the population living in single member units. Other housing problems resulted from late parenthood in Southern Europe and its impact on mortgage markets. Ms. Crenguta Iordachescu, Adviser for European Affairs Housing Policy Division, Romania, reported on ageing and migration trends in her country, including policy recommendations to address new demand and immigration. Rehabilitation of housing stock and creating investment incentives were the most urgent problems. Mr. Azer Khanlarov, Deputy Director, Dadashev Institute, State Agency for Safety Control in Construction, Azerbaijan, focused on the lack of infrastructure at the municipal level. The Government was currently acting to improve energy to multi-family buildings and restore water and sanitation networks. A further problem was the still incomplete registration system. Mr. Teodor Iliev, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria, emphasized housing stock quality and the growing disparity between the numbers of dwellings and available housing units in his country. Government intervention was needed to bridge the gap between housing needs and the actual capacity. Mr. Frank Ricaud and Ms. Natalie Bocadoro, Ministry of Housing, France, focused on the impact of increased housing needs due to single household units, and rental housing as an alternative that could facilitate labor mobility. No specific public policy addressing their housing needs is being developed for vulnerable groups such as undocumented immigrants. Finally, the Chairperson of HUMAN reported on the approach in the United Kingdom to addressing the impact of aging populations on housing needs, indicated by, inter alia, increasing longevity and complex family structures. Government measures included the funding of a disabled facility grant programme to assist the vulnerable elderly and the creation of new subsidies schemes to increase energy efficiency.

32. In the discussion that followed, it was mentioned that empty buildings were also part of the problem, and that all new housing projects must be adapted to comply with energy efficiency measures. On the subject of homeownership, participants noted that transition countries will eventually need to converge towards a higher reliance on rental housing as in Western Europe, which could also contribute to reduce the use of subsidies.¹

VI. INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

33. Following the recommendations of the sixty-eighth Committee session and the fifth meeting of the Working Party on Land Administration, a draft study on informal settlements jointly developed by the two bodies was presented. The Committee secretariat introduced the draft of the study on informal settlements, based on an initial draft prepared by a consultant, which emphasized the existing approaches and areas for policy intervention that are the basis for general principles and guidelines. The Secretary to the Committee then briefed the Committee about proposed next steps to be taken in order to make the study useful at the national and local levels. The Bureau had decided to discuss and develop practical recommendations in a workshop to be held immediately following this Committee session, on the morning of 24 September.

34. Delegates commented on the study, and they agreed that follow up activities would be discussed at the workshop. Participants agreed that there was no need for the analytical study to be modified. Guidelines and recommendations would be updated to reflect discussions, and information on relevant case studies in UNECE countries would be considered for further development of the document during a workshop dedicated to this topic the following day. The final study is intended to be submitted to the Bureaux of the Committee and the Working Party for final approval in 2009. A publication would follow.

VII. OUTREACH, COMMUNICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

35. The Secretary to the Committee introduced document ECE/HBP/2008/7 on outreach and communications, and reported on outreach activities initiated in the last six months, which included: press releases, the launching of the newsletter, *Vital Spaces*; the adoption of a new logo for housing and land management activities; and the proposal of a thesis award for graduate students working on housing- and land management-related issues.

36. The Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the new housing and land management logo;
- (b) Welcomed and endorsed the launching of the newsletter, *Vital Spaces*;
- (c) Recommended that the newsletter be published at least on a quarterly basis;

¹ After all the interventions, the moderator informed the Committee that information shared during the in-depth discussion will be reflected in the final version of the paper by Ms. Mulder.

- (d) Suggested that the newsletter be forwarded to local authorities in UNECE member countries as well;
- (e) Supported the idea of establishing a thesis award.

VIII. OUTCOME OF THE THIRD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

37. The Committee was informed about the discussions held and the outcome of the third regional implementation meeting (Geneva, 28–29 January 2008) on the issue of land, which was one of the topics discussed. Information was also provided on the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, 15–16 April 2008).

IX. SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

38. The secretariat presented a short note containing some suggestions for consideration by the Committee related to the following potential items of discussion for its seventieth session (ECE/HBP/2008/8).

- (a) Urban sprawl;
- (b) Consequences of privatization in the region;
- (c) Linkages to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

39. The issue of the seventieth session should mark the importance of the work of the Committee. To this end, the new member countries of the European Union highlighted the relevance of the Committee's work for transition countries, which had helped them to bridge policy approaches in the European Union and the larger UNECE area.

40. The Committee agreed on the elements to be addressed in the future by the Committee (see annex II) and requested the secretariat to prepare a proposal for the consideration of the Bureau on the topics to be addressed in the seventieth anniversary session. The proposal would be circulated via e-mail.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

41. The UNECE secretariat provided information on the UNECE trust fund on human settlements and thanked countries that provided contributions, namely the Netherlands, Norway and the Czech Republic. As the activities of the Committee relied heavily on donations to the trust fund, she invited other countries to provide financial assistance for the work of the Committee as well.

42. Mr. Anthony Paish (World Fire Statistics Centre) provided information on a recent study on the use of free smoke alarms in building in the United Kingdom.

XI. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU

43. The Committee elected the following Bureau for its seventieth session: Ms. Andoni (Albania) as Chairperson, and Mr. Förster (Austria), Mr. Azer Khanlarov (Azerbaijan), Ms. Natia Jokhadze (Georgia), Mr. Peter Creuzer (Germany), Ms. Elena Bejenaru (Republic of Moldova), Mr. Bogdan Suditu (Romania), Ms. Svetlana Ristic (Serbia), Ms. Elena Szolgayova (Slovakia) and Mr. Ernst Hauri (Switzerland) as Vice-Chairpersons.

44. The Chairperson closed the sixty-ninth session. The seventieth session of the Committee is planned to be held from 23 to 25 September 2009 in Geneva.

XII. CLOSING OF THE SESSION

45. The Chairperson summarized the major decisions taken during the session and topics to be included in the report, and closed the meeting.

Annex I**PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2008–2009****SUBPROGRAMME 10: HOUSING, LAND MANAGEMENT AND POPULATION****10.1.1 Country profiles on the housing sector**

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

Work accomplished: To date, country profiles on the housing sectors of Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Romania, Moldova, Albania, Armenia, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro and Georgia have been published. The country profile of Georgia was translated into Georgian by the host country. The country profiles of Belarus, which also includes a chapter on land administration and spatial planning, is being finalized. The fact-finding mission for the development of the country profile on housing and land management of Kyrgyzstan took place in May 2008. The mission was undertaken jointly with the team carrying out the Environmental Performance Review for the country, in order to develop synergies; this was of particular benefit with respect to land management related-matters. As in the case of Belarus, the country profile of Kyrgyzstan contains a chapter on land administration and spatial planning.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will continue its activities to prepare country profiles on the housing sector. In early 2009, launching events are expected to be organized for the country profiles of Georgia and Belarus respectively. The first draft of the country profiles of Kyrgyzstan is being finalized, and will be shared with the host country for review in the fall 2008. The secretariat is preparing the mission for the development of the country profile of Azerbaijan, pending receipt of the relevant information from the ministries involved and from local experts nominated. Cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNIFEM, the European Commission and the World Bank will be maintained and strengthened.

10.1.2 Improvement of urban environmental performance

Description: Cities and towns are efficient starting points for promoting sustainable quality of life. Numerous initiatives have already been launched in cities and towns to raise public awareness of the environmental impact of individual consumption behaviour, as well as to promote environmentally sound goods and services and the sustainable use of energy, water, raw materials and land by individuals and communities. The spatial planning process focuses on a

broad range of issues and factors, including social, economic, environmental, financial and cultural ones. It is important to develop an effective local planning process as an integral part of strategic national and regional development planning.

Work accomplished:

(a) *Spatial planning*: A workshop on the topic “Spatial planning for small and medium-sized towns” was held in October 2007 in Belarus. The study, *Spatial Planning – Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance, with Special Reference to Countries in Transition* was published and posted on the UNECE website. The publication was presented to the Bureau and the press on 9 May 2008.

(b) *Informal settlements*: An analytical study on challenges and policy responses for informal settlements was initiated and the first draft completed and issues on the website. The study identifies the different characteristics of informal settlements in the UNECE region, analyses the root causes of their formation and development and provides an overview of existing policy responses. The study was undertaken jointly by the Committee and the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA).

Work to be undertaken:

(a) *Spatial planning*: Member States identified urban sprawl as an issue that would need further consideration. Opportunities to organize a workshop on the subject in 2010 and possible partners in this endeavor will be explored.

(b) *Informal settlements*: The study will be further developed to include recommendations and guidance to member States on how to address the challenges posed by informal settlements and specific case studies in the UNECE region. It is envisaged that the final version of the study will be published, after the approval of both CHLM and WPLA Bureau, in 2009. The study will be followed by specific outreach and capacity-building activities, including sub-regional workshops.

10.1.3 Land registration and land markets

Description: The Working Party on Land Administration is the subsidiary body of the Committee addressing specifically land administration issues. Proper land registration is crucial for security of tenure and property rights, effective housing policies and the promotion of reforms in economies in transition, as well as in the context of European integration and the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. Activities aim to provide assistance to countries in transition in reforming cadastral and land registration systems and in sharing information and experience regarding the modernization of land administration systems in the more advanced economies through education, training, research and development, exchange of experience, transfer of technology and standardization.

Work accomplished:

(a) *WPLA session*: The fifth session of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) was held on 19 and 20 November 2007.

(b) *Land Administration Reviews*: A mission to prepare the land administration review of Bulgaria took place in October 2007; the draft is currently being finalized. The land

administration review of Kyrgyzstan was developed jointly and included in the country profile (see 10.1.1 above for details).

(c) *Workshops*: Workshops were held on the institutional aspects of land administration (Tbilisi, May 2006); land administration and e-society (Prague, October 2006); informal settlements (Athens, March 2007; jointly organized by the Committee, the Working Party and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)); and sustainable land management (Munich, Germany, May 2007). Workshops also were held in Dublin (“Registering the World”) in September 2007 and in Bergen, Norway, (“Legal Empowerment of the Poor”) in April 2008.

(d) *REM*: The Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM) was established at the WPLA Bureau meeting on 9 April 2008 in Bergen, where member candidates and the programme of work were also endorsed.

(e) *Fees and charges*: The draft study on fees and charges was prepared and considered by the WPLA Bureau.

Work to be undertaken:

(a) *WPLA session*: The sixth session of the WPLA will take place on 18 and 19 June 2009.

(b) *Land Administration Reviews*: The secretariat is preparing the mission to Tajikistan – expected to take place in late October 2008 – to develop the land administration review of that country.

(c) *Workshops*: The next WPLA workshop (“Influence of Land Administration on People and Business”) will take place on 2 and 3 October 2008 in Cavtat, Croatia. Another WPLA workshop is scheduled to be held on 23 and 24 April 2009 in Bulgaria. A self-evaluation exercise will be undertaken for these WPLA workshops.

(d) *REM*: Activities will be developed in cooperation with WPLA. A REM workshop will take place in Rome in spring 2009.

(e) *Fees and charges*: It is expected that the study will be finalized by the end of the year and presented at the WPLA session in June 2009.

(f) *Informal settlements*: The study on informal settlements, carried out jointly by the Committee and the Working Party will be completed in 2009 and related activities initiated (see point 10.1.2 above).

Cooperation with key partners such as the World Bank, the Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union, EuroGeographics and FIG will continue to be developed.

10.1.4 Housing modernization and management

Description: The main goal of this activity is to identify and provide tools for tackling problems related to housing stock and its management. Housing systems are an important factor with regard to safeguarding social cohesion in the UNECE countries and to respond to environmental challenges. The activity focuses in particular on urban renewal and housing refurbishment policies and on existing and emerging housing problems, especially those connected with housing financing and energy efficiency. As a result of privatization in countries in transition, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in multifamily housing is the major form of tenure. It is therefore important to establish property rights, define mixed ownership and establish a legal and institutional framework for operating housing condominiums. This programme element also focuses on the basic mechanisms for social housing development and for the enhancement of building performance.

Work accomplished:

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

(b) *Multi-family housing management:* The preparatory phase of the project on the management of multifamily housing started as scheduled. The preparatory phase of the project on management of the multi-family housing stock included the analysis of data provided by four countries in the region and based on a questionnaire.

(c) *Energy efficiency in housing:* Work on this issue focuses on addressing the political, institutional, financial, technological and institutional gaps in the UNECE region. A concept note and in depth-discussion have highlighted the main challenges, and are the basis for future work in this area.

Work to be undertaken:

(a) *Studies and workshops:* A workshop on “Homelessness” is planned to be held on 18 and 19 May 2009 in Norway.

(b) *Multi-family housing:* Further work will be undertaken on the issue of multifamily housing. In particular, HUMAN will identify possible partners and funds to carry on the project and present an updated report to the Bureau accordingly. The project envisages the development of a specific case study (Slovakia) and recommendations for the sector.

(c) *Energy efficiency in housing:* Two workshops on energy efficiency in housing will be held in Bulgaria (in the first half of 2009) and in Austria (at the end of 2009). The first workshop will identify opportunities and constraints in the sector, with a view to bridging the gaps between decision making and practice. Subsequent follow up activities will be discussed by the next session of the Committee.

Annex II

ELEMENTS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE COMMITTEE IN THE UPCOMING PROGRAMMES OF WORK²

Keeping as a reference the goals of the *ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century*, the UNECE ministerial discussions on housing and land management and emerging issues of interest to member States, as well as current activities of the programme of work to be continued after the current biennium, the Committee on Housing and Land Management will address the issues listed below. In doing so, it is important to highlight the unique role the Committee plays in bridging EU and UNECE housing and land management related policies in the region:

(a) *Housing policies and strategies: the country profiles.* The country profiles on the housing sector should be continued: (i) to assist countries develop appropriate housing strategies and plans at the national level; (ii) to advise countries on legislative, institutional, planning and financial issues; and (iii) to develop related policy tools. Synergies with the land administration reviews should be sought, whenever feasible. This would support the achievement of all the goals of the Strategy, in particular its goal number 4, on the promotion of the policy and market reforms in the housing and urban sector;

(b) *Urban performance: urban sprawl.* As a follow up to the study on spatial planning, to start with the issue of urban sprawl should be addressed. As recent country profiles have shown, low-density development of city outskirts is becoming a very costly and unsustainable development pattern for many cities in EECCA and SEE countries. Since this phenomenon of low-density development of city outskirts is also being experienced in western countries, albeit in different ways, it would be important for the Committee to review the issue in depth to identify patterns and solutions to the related problems. This issue is also linked to energy efficiency in urban areas, as low densities engender the use and development of unsustainable transport systems and increase heating costs, financing and urban management, along with generally extended urban infrastructures and services; in environmental terms, they create larger ecological footprints of larger urban areas. This would support the achievement of goal 2 of the Strategy, on the improvement of urban performance.

(c) *Housing modernization and management: housing performance.* The Committee has already initiated work on energy efficiency in housing, and is undertaking work on multifamily housing. The Committee's activities are focused on identifying ways to improve housing performance and its overall efficiency. It is suggested that the Committee continue to address housing performance, including lowering energy consumption and identifying appropriate policies, as well as technologies and materials, and sound design to limit the environmental impact of housing. This should focus in particular on realities where refurbishment is a priority, and should be linked to strategies for multifamily building management and retrofitting. This would support the achievement of goal 2 of the Strategy.

(d) *Governance: public participation processes.* One of the emerging problems in the realities addressed by the Committee is the lack of clarity with regard to the responsibilities of different stakeholders. For instance, often the private sector does not find an

² The programme of work for 2010–2011, to be discussed at the seventieth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management in September 2009, will be based on these elements.

enabling environment allowing the deployment of appropriate market tools; in other instances, government relies heavily on the market dynamics, losing responsibilities that should remain public. The distribution of housing and land management responsibilities between the local and central levels is also an issue, as is the role of the civil society and its participation. As part of its work on governance, the Committee could initially address processes for public participation in housing and land management decision-making. This would be in support of goal 1 of the Strategy, on the promotion of governance systems that respond to the needs of local communities. The Committee should also explore the issue of the provision of community servicing for the housing (based on the existing HABITAT guidelines on the same topic).

(e) *Neighbourhood regeneration: social cohesion and security.* Deprived neighbourhoods, urban ghettos and social discrimination are an increasing reality and an urgent matter to address for the whole UNECE region. The integration of socially disadvantaged and minorities and the related housing problems are high on the agenda of many countries, and directly relate to security and development issues. The Committee could address this issue and undertake an in-depth review of distressed neighbourhoods throughout the region. This would support the achievement of goal 3 of the Strategy, on the facilitation of social cohesion and security.

(f) *The effects of privatization.* Massive processes of privatization of the housing stock have characterized the housing policies and practices of most of the transition countries during the last two decades. Privatization rates in many EECCA and SEE countries have reached 90-95% of the housing stock, hindering the diversity of housing solutions and opportunities and taking place outside of any urban development or housing strategy. The Committee could address this issue by assessing the effects of privatization in the region and the impact that the withdrawal of the State from the provision of housing and related services has on the population and their ability to access housing facilities and come up with alternative policy solutions that facilitate access to housing.

(f) *Land registration and land markets: the role of the real estate market.* As part of the WPLA programme of work, the real estate market aspect could further analyzed and tackled, in particular through the input of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group. Work on the use of market tools could be developed by REM, in cooperation with the WPLA and CHLM, to encompass housing matters as well. This would support the achievement of goal 5 of the Strategy, on the improvement of land and real estate markets.
