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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

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(Geneva, 16 - 18 September 2002)
(Item 4 of the provisional agenda)

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2002-2005

Introduction

1. The present note provides information to assist the Committee in discussing and establishing its programme of work, the duration of each activity, as well as its methods of work. The Committee's Bureau met twice between the sixty-second and sixty-third sessions of the Committee to review the programme of work and its implementation.
2. The draft programme of work is set out in annex I. Each programme element has a fixed duration. When discussing its programme of work, the Committee should keep in mind that the programme should reflect the real interests of member countries and their willingness to contribute to its implementation in terms of expertise, human and financial resources.
3. At its sixty-second session the Committee agreed to take into account the decisions of the General Assembly at its special session (Istanbul+5) when formulating and implementing its programme of work (ECE/HBP/122, para.12). The draft programme reflects the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly and it is based on the Millennium Declaration, the ECE Ministerial Declaration and the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century.

4. At the Committee's session, the secretariat will report on the Human Settlements Trust Fund's expenditures and balance in 2002. Since the sixty-second session of the Committee, the delegations of the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom have made contributions to the Trust Fund. It is important to stress that without the Trust Fund the Committee would not have been able to carry out its programme of work. However, the Trust Fund needs to be maintained at a level that allows the Committee to fulfil its task. It is, therefore, important that countries should continue to make either general contributions to the Trust Fund or specific contributions to earmarked programme elements.

5. A tentative list of meetings is presented in annex II.

Proposed decisions by the Committee

6. In the light of the discussion, the Committee may wish to:

- (a) Take into account the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;
- (b) Take note of the progress made in the implementation of the programme of work;
- (c) Update and approve its programme of work and tentative list of meetings, as presented in annexes I and II;
- (d) Call upon Governments to make either general contributions to the Human Settlements Trust Fund, or specific contributions to earmarked programme elements.

Annex I

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2002-2005

SUBPROGRAMME 10 - HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

10.1.1 Country profiles on the housing sector

Description: The housing sector has a critical role to play in ensuring the success of economic and social development in the ECE region and the reform process in countries in transition. At the same time, the process of transition to a market economy has had a profound impact on housing policy implementation and management. This project represents a tool for Governments to analyse their housing policies, strategies, institutional and financial frameworks for the housing sector and to compare the progress made internationally. The country profile is a process-oriented exercise. At its core is an analytical study on the housing sector, drafted by independent international experts. It draws on the Committee's work on housing and building statistics. Recommendations for improving policies and practices are an essential part of the programme. It also aims to provide information to potential investors.

Work accomplished: The country profiles on the housing sector of Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, Lithuania, Romania and the Republic of Moldova have been published. The study for Albania is in preparation. A roster of international experts was established and updated. Recently the Committee streamlined the preparatory process and proposed procedures to monitor the implementation of recommendations. The country profile project is presented on the Committee's web site (<http://www.unece.org/env/hs/cph>).

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will continue its activities for the preparation of country profiles on the housing sector. In the autumn of 2002, work will start on a study on the Russian Federation. Possibilities for holding further workshops or ad hoc meetings of experts to discuss the results of project implementation and disseminating the experience in ECE countries will be confirmed. A follow-up programme for the studies undertaken will be tested. Cooperation with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union and the World Bank will be maintained and strengthened.

Duration: 2002 - 2005.

10.1.2 Improvement of urban environmental performance

Description: Local systems and cities are efficient starting points for promoting sustainable consumption patterns. Numerous initiatives have already been launched in cities and towns to raise public awareness of the environmental impact of individual consumption behaviour, to promote environmentally sound goods, services and sustainable use of energy, water, raw materials and land by individuals and communities. It is recognized that environmentally sound

urban and regional transport coordinated with sustainable land use and planning at the central, regional and local levels may lead to a substantial reduction in the impact on human health, natural resources and the environment, while improving the quality of life and economic performance. Integration of land use and local transport policies requires integrated thinking and action across all policy areas and at all levels of decision-making.

Work accomplished: As a follow-up to the workshop on encouraging local initiatives towards sustainable consumption patterns (Vienna, February 1998) a joint steering group on urban transport patterns and land-use planning was established. The steering group prepared a detailed work programme in the course of 2000 (HBP/2000/8) to be developed in view of a workshop scheduled for 2001 but postponed.

Work to be undertaken: It is expected that a workshop will be organized in autumn 2002 or beginning 2003 jointly with the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy. The workshop will address practical experience in the environmentally sound management of urban transport integrated with sustainable land-use planning. Based on the workshop's results, the preparation of guidelines will be considered.

Duration: 2002 - 2004.

10.1.3 Land registration and land markets

Description: Proper land registration is crucial for security of tenure and property rights, effective housing policies and the promotion of market-oriented reforms in economies in transition, as well as in the context of European integration. The activity is aimed at providing assistance to countries in transition in reforming cadastre and land registration systems and sharing information and experience of modernizing land administration systems in the developed market economies through education and training; research and development; exchange of experience; transfer of technology; and standardization.

Work accomplished: The inventory of land administration systems in Europe and North America was published in 1999 and the study on key aspects of land registration and cadastre legislation was prepared and published with the assistance of HM Land Registry (United Kingdom). The study on land mass valuation systems for taxation purposes in Europe was prepared and published with the assistance of the federal Land Cadastre Service of the Russian Federation. Three workshops were held: on EU accession from a land administration perspective (Gävle, Sweden, June 2001), on modern land cadastre (Armenia, October 2001) and on mass valuation systems of land (Russian Federation, June 2002). International land administration experts undertook country reviews: on Armenia and on Georgia.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Land Administration will promote the practical application of the ECE Land Administration Guidelines (ECE/HBP/96) in countries in transition, inter alia, through different types of operational activities in these countries. A land administration review will be carried out in the Russian Federation. The second session of the Working Party took place in November 2001. Three studies, namely a survey of the current

structure of landownership and existing legislation to restrict/limit the sale of property in ECE countries, guidelines on legal and cadastral objects and their identifiers, and guidelines on public access to data, are being prepared. In 2002, a workshop is planned in Austria and in 2003 workshops are planned in the United Kingdom and Greece. The third session of the Working Party on Land Administration will take place in Geneva on 17-18 November 2003. Cooperation with key partners, such as the World Bank, will be further developed and improved.

Duration: 2002 - 2005.

10.1.4 Housing modernization and management

Description: This activity provides an opportunity to look in detail at urban regeneration policies and at the existing and emerging housing problems, especially regarding housing financing, the existing housing stock and its management. As a result of the privatization process in countries in transition, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in multi-family housing has increased considerably. It is therefore important to establish property rights, define mixed ownership forms, and analyse legal conditions of condominiums, their organizational and management frameworks.

Work accomplished: The ECE Guidelines on Housing Condominiums were prepared and are expected to be published for the Committee's sixty-third session (ECE/HBP/123).

Work to be undertaken: The Committee and its Bureau will: (a) study ways to put the Guidelines on Housing Condominiums into practice to address the major aspects in the public/private sectors in economies in transition; (b) start a project based on a proposal prepared by the Advisory Network for guidelines on private housing finance systems for countries in transition. The place and role of private housing finance in comparison to other types of housing finance (State housing finance, social housing, municipal housing) will be identified and the requirements for the introduction of selected models will be focused on.

Duration: 2002 - 2005.

10.1.5 Development of human settlements statistics

Description: The Committee, together with the Conference of European Statisticians, develops and improves international human settlements statistics, and publishes the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America every two years.

Work accomplished: The Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America was published in 2000. The human settlements statistics web site (<http://www.unece.org/env/hs/bulletin/>) has been in operation since 1999.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will prepare the next issue of the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America to be available in electronic format in

2002. The Bureau, with support of the secretariat, will review the data collected in order to streamline them to service priority needs.

Duration: 2001 - 2005.

10.1.6 Major trends characterizing human settlements development

Description: The development of human settlements encompasses a wide range of changes and trends which are not always compatible with the principles of sustainability. More knowledge of the forces influencing the configuration of urban development and the characteristics of the implementation of urban policies will be provided by studying major trends characterizing human settlements development and presenting national experiences in formulating and implementing policies for a more sustainable development of human settlements.

Work accomplished: The Ninth Conference on Urban and Regional Research took place in Leeds (United Kingdom) on 9-12 June 2002. The main topic was sustainable and liveable cities. Three themes were discussed: (i) urban society and economy: towards social equity through effective planning policies and tools - A behavioural perspective; (ii) improving urban performance: urban structure and ecosystems; (iii) governance and urban organization: integrated decision-making.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will start preparations for the next conference once the topic, the date and the venue have been decided. The Committee will continue the exchange of experience in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

Duration: 2002 - 2005.

Annex II

TENTATIVE LIST OF MEETINGS*/

Meetings

15-17 September 2003	Geneva	Sixty-fourth session of the Committee on Human Settlements
17-18 November 2003	Geneva	Third session of the Working Party on Land Administration

*/ Bureau meetings, workshops, task force meetings and other informal consultations are not listed.