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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

**REPORT ON THE SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION
(20-22 September 2004)**

- The Committee will contribute a paper on challenges and policy options for human settlements in the ECE region to the regional preparatory meeting for the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.
- At its next session, the Committee and its Working Party on Land Administration will assess the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century. This in-depth discussion will be organized in the context of the preparations for the third session of the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, Canada, in June 2006.
- The Committee adopted its programme of work for 2005-2006, and confirmed the high priority of the country profile programme for the housing sector. It also welcomed the outline of the study on trends and progress in housing reforms in South-East Europe.
- The Committee noted the effectiveness of the activities of the Working Party on Land Administration, in particular its programme of land administration reviews, as well as the studies on real estate units and identifiers, and public/private partnership in land administration.
- The Committee will strengthen the linkage between the country profile programme and the land administration reviews whenever the two take place in the same country.
- It will strengthen its activities in the area of urban and regional planning and undertake a study on spatial planning at the local level in cooperation with the Council of Europe, with which also cooperate to organize the 10th Conference on Urban and Regional Research in Slovakia in 2006.

- The Committee will continue its activities for the practical application of the UNECE Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing and the forthcoming Guidelines on Social Housing.
- It stressed the need to cooperate with the Conference of European Statisticians in preparation of the new round of recommendations for housing censuses.

Introduction

1. The Committee on Human Settlements held its sixty-fifth session in Geneva from 20 to 22 September 2004. Mrs. E. Szolgayova (Slovakia) chaired the meeting.
2. Representatives of the following countries participated: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and United States of America.
3. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the Council of Europe and Development Bank were represented.
4. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended: Centro Italiano di Collaborazione per lo Sviluppo Edilizio delle Nazioni Emergenti (CICSENE); International Council of Women (ICW); International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP); International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI); International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP); International Union of Tenants (IUT); and World Fire Statistics Centre.
5. Members of the Committee's Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network also attended.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The provisional agenda (ECE/HBP/133) was adopted.

II. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE OF RELEVANCE TO THE COMMITTEE

7. The secretariat informed the Committee of the decisions taken by the Commission at its fifty-ninth session, held from 24 to 26 February 2004, which had a bearing on the Committee's work, as well as the discussions on the UNECE reform and the work of the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work (HBP/2004/1).
8. The Committee:
 - (a) Took note of the Commission's decisions;
 - (b) Invited its Bureau to consider ways and means to increase the participation of national delegations from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

III. DISCUSSION ON THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE OUTCOME OF THE 12th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9. The secretariat and the Chairperson informed the Committee of the outcome of the first Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development (Geneva, 15-16 January 2004), which had assessed the situation with respect to water, sanitation, human settlements, and related cross-sectoral issues in the region, and reported thereon to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session (ECE/AC.25/2004/2 and 3).

10. The Committee discussed a draft paper on challenges and policy options for human settlements in the UNECE region. It agreed to contribute it to the regional preparatory meeting for the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in April 2005. It further discussed how national delegations could enhance the regional dimension of sustainable human settlements policies at that session.

11. The Committee agreed:

(a) That the draft paper on challenges and policy options for human settlements in the UNECE region should first be submitted to the Economic Commission for Europe at its 60th session;

(b) That the paper should stress the role of local authorities, the importance of spatial planning, the regional disparities in human settlements and the influence of human settlements policies on social cohesion;

(c) To invite all delegations to submit to the secretariat their comments on the draft paper by the end of September 2004.

IV. JOINT IN-DEPTH DISCUSSION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNERS (ISOCARP)

12. The 40th Congress of ISOCARP on the “Management of Urban Regions” was held in Geneva on 18-20 September 2004. The Committee’s joint discussion with ISOCARP aimed at establishing a common understanding of spatial planning systems, while fostering a partnership between policy makers and urban planners for the management of urban areas. The discussion was also intended to provide input for preparation of the UNECE guidelines on spatial planning at the local level.

13. Mr. J. Zetter was elected to chair the discussion. In his introductory statement he stressed the fact that spatial planning as an inclusive activity required equivalent governmental and non-governmental contributions.

14. Mr. C. Lambert (ISOCARP) presented the discussion paper on how to improve urban planning and policies to ensure a better future for cities (HBP/2004/4). In particular, he addressed community planning and public participation. Mr. V. Fouchier (ISOCARP) made a

presentation on challenges and trends in spatial planning (e.g. cities as engines of the economy; ageing of the population, integration of housing and planning policies, governance of urban areas).

15. The role of planners and their relationship with policy makers were also discussed. Ms. M. Bajic, Secretary-General of ISOCARP, made a presentation on the changes and new requirements in the planning profession. In regard to the spatial planning process, Mr. A. Kowalewski (Poland) reported on the weakness of the public sector, civil society and local government in Central and Eastern Europe, and the need to strengthen the planning system and the role of planners. Ms. U. Hoyer (ISOCARP) reported on the need for a permanent urban management process.

16. The Committee agreed to strengthen urban and regional planning activities in its programme of work, and to cooperate with relevant international governmental and non-governmental organizations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Council of Europe, ISOCARP, etc.) on these issues.

V. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE STRATEGY FOR A SUSTAINABLE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

17. The national delegations made presentations on their needs and problems in human settlements development in the framework of the UNECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century and the Committee's programme of work.

18. Following the recommendation of the Commission to pay special attention to the countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, the Committee considered the relevance of its long-term goals to the specific needs of these countries as well as new developments and challenges. The following challenges facing these countries were mentioned: the general weakness of the banking sector to support housing finance; the lack of human settlements development programmes, governmental policies and new legislation on spatial planning; outdated master plans; an increase in refugees and humanitarian problems; corruption in the land and real estate sector; growing disparities representing a real threat to security; and a lack of training and education in the planning professions.

19. The Committee also discussed the possibility of organizing a high-level meeting to review the implementation of the Strategy and the topic for next year's in-depth discussion. It was suggested that the topic should be politically attractive and embrace the whole spectrum of the Committee's activities: housing, planning and land administration; the discussion could be linked to the third session of the World Urban Forum to be held in Canada in 2006.

20. The Committee agreed:

(a) That a high-level meeting could be organized in 2006-2007 to review the Strategy and its goals;

(b) To start an assessment of the implementation of the Strategy with particular focus on strategic issues and practical implementation of the Committee's policy recommendations;

(c) To invite its Bureau in cooperation with the Bureau of the Working Party on Land Administration to organize an in-depth (round-table) discussion at the next session in the context of regional preparations for the third session of the World Urban Forum;

(d) To assist representatives from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to participate in the Committee's next session.

VI. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2005-2006

21. The Committee discussed the work accomplished and future activities, based on the draft programme of work (HBP/2004/5).

A. Country profiles on the housing sector

22. The secretariat reported on the publication of the studies on Armenia (ECE/HBP/132) and the Russian Federation (ECE/HBP/131), the ongoing study on Serbia and Montenegro as well as activities to follow up the country profiles. The secretariat also informed the Committee of the preparations for the study on trends and progress in housing reforms in South-East Europe, which was undertaken jointly with the Council of Europe and its Development Bank.

23. The delegation of Armenia reported on the steps taken to implement the country profile and informed the Committee of its intention to organize a follow-up workshop in Erevan in spring 2005. The delegation of the Russian Federation reported on the main challenges in relation to the implementation of the recommendations of the country profile and stressed the necessity of follow-up. A proposal to organize a number of workshops and pilot projects in different regions of the Russian Federation, especially on the management and maintenance of the multi-unit housing stock, was put forward. A representative of Serbia and Montenegro informed the Committee about the preparations for its country profile.

24. The delegation of Albania reported on the follow-up workshop to its country profile, held in Tirana in February 2004, to disseminate the findings and recommendations of the study among national and local authorities, and other stakeholders. The workshop had also discussed and agreed on the priorities and steps to be taken to implement specific programmes on social housing and housing finance. The delegation of the Republic of Moldova informed the Committee about a planned follow-up activity in autumn 2005, which would assess the progress made since conducting the country profile and to identify priorities for further implementation.

25. The representatives of the Council of Europe and its Development Bank reported on progress in the study on trends and progress in housing reforms in South-East Europe. The representative of the Council of Europe mentioned in particular the upcoming housing network meetings, which would provide the countries of South-East Europe with an opportunity for reviewing and discussing the draft study.

26. In the ensuing discussion the Committee welcomed the new conceptual approach which had been used for the study on the Russian Federation. It also expressed its satisfaction with the increased number of follow-up activities within the country profile programme and emphasized the importance of such activities in the implementation phase.

27. The Committee acknowledged the willingness of the delegations of Azerbaijan, Belarus, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine to carry out a country profile on the housing sector. The Committee also noted the interest of the delegation of Hungary to carry out a country profile (subject to confirmation).

28. The Committee agreed to:

(a) Further strengthen the follow-up activities within the country profile programme. The Committee also strongly supported the follow-up activities planned in Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation;

(b) Continue to apply the new conceptual approach that had been used for the country profile on the Russian Federation, and to adapt it to future country profiles, where appropriate;

(c) Invite countries that were interested in having a country profile on the housing sector carried out to submit official requests to the secretariat.

B. Land registration and land markets

29. Mr. B. Kjellson (Sweden), Chairperson of the Working Party on Land Administration, reported on the progress made since the previous session of the Committee and presented the report of its third session (HBP/2004/6). The Committee was informed of the results of the land administration review of Lithuania. A follow-up workshop was organized in Lithuania on 23-25 September 2004. A workshop on organizational sustainability and capacity-building had been held in Edinburgh (United Kingdom) on 1-3 October 2003 (HBP/WP.7/2003/5) and a workshop on title registration systems and real property markets in Eerevan on 6-7 May 2004 (HBP/WP.7/2005/3).

30. Information was provided on the finalized and the ongoing land administration studies, in particular on the Guidelines on Real Estate Units and Identifiers, on the new version of the UNECE Land Administration Guidelines, and on the study on public/private partnerships in land administration.

31. Mr. A. Overchuk (Russian Federation), Vice-Chair of the Working Party, reported on the results of the land administration review of the Russian Federation and the launching of the review in Moscow in February 2004.

32. The Committee took note of the progress made by the Working Party on Land Administration and invited the Bureau of the Committee and the Bureau of the Working Party to consider possibilities for combining activities on the country profiles and land administration reviews when they were undertaken in the same country.

C. Improvement of spatial planning and urban environmental performance

33. The secretariat informed the Committee of the results of the workshop on sustainable and healthy urban transport and planning, which had taken place in Cyprus in November 2003 (ECE/AC.21/2004/4). The workshop discussed good practices and lessons learned on integrating environment and health considerations into urban transport and land-use planning through case studies.

34. Mr. J. Zetter introduced the discussion on the preparation of a study on spatial planning at the local level.

35. The delegation of Portugal suggested that the study on spatial planning should not be called “guidelines” since the Council of Europe had recently prepared and adopted guidelines on spatial planning, and it was also suggested that cooperation on this activity should be established with the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT).

36. Following the offer of the delegation of Poland, a workshop would be organized in Poland in the first half of 2005 to consider, inter alia, the results of the questionnaire prepared by the delegation of Poland and the extended outline of the study on spatial planning at the local level.

37. The secretariat informed the Committee about the proposal of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents to consider jointly issues related to land-use planning, for example when drawing up the guidelines and as part of the planned workshop.

38. The Committee agreed:

(a) To invite all delegations to distribute the questionnaire on spatial planning at the local level among relevant authorities in their countries for submission of replies by 15 October 2004;

(b) That the study should be drafted by a consultant in consultation with a reference group of international experts, who would assist the consultant, and under the general supervision of the Committee’s Bureau; the work should take into account the glossary on spatial planning and the guidelines prepared by the Council of Europe;

(c) To invite interested delegations to nominate experts to the reference group and send their names and contact addresses to the secretariat before 15 October 2004;

(d) To invite its Bureau to consider at its first meeting on 7 February 2005:

(i) The organization and timetable for the preparation of the study on spatial planning at the local level, including the experts team on the study;

(ii) The draft programme of the workshop to be held in Poland and the analysis of the questionnaire to be prepared by the delegation of Poland;

(iii) Possible options for cooperation with the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

D. Major trends characterizing human settlements development

39. The 9th ECE Conference on Urban and Regional Research “Sustainable and Liveable Cities” (Leeds, June 2002) had stressed the need to create a common vision to help overcome the increasing fragmentation among actors in civil society, the market and the public. In the discussions held within the Bureau and the Advisory Network, it had been stressed that the next UNECE Conference on Urban and Regional Research would be a good opportunity to facilitate a dialogue between policy makers and researchers to establish links between research, decision-making and practical implementation.

40. The delegation of Slovakia presented to the Committee a proposal for the Conference on Urban and Regional Research. It was suggested that the 10th Conference should be organized in consultation with the Council of Europe's European Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning. Its tentative title could be "networks of policy makers, researchers and government managers towards sustainable cities and regions." The focus should be on the local level with links to regional and national levels, new planning concepts and cooperation among all stakeholders.

41. The Committee agreed:

- (a) To invite the delegation of Slovakia and the UNECE secretariat to agree with the Council of Europe to organize the Conference in 2006 jointly;
- (b) That it should prepare and approve the detailed programme of the Conference (with the venue, sub-themes, rapporteurs) at its session in September 2005;
- (c) To invite interested delegations to designate rapporteurs to the Conference, preferably by 15 November 2004, so that the first meeting of rapporteurs, the UNECE secretariat, representatives of the Council of Europe and the host authorities could be held in the first half of 2005.

E. Housing modernization and management

42. Mr. A. Starovoytov (Advisory Network) informed the Committee on the results of the second workshop on housing condominiums (Moscow, 23-25 November 2003) (HBP/2004/3). The Committee was also informed that the delegation of the Russian Federation had translated and published the UNECE Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing for Countries in Transition (ECE/HBP/123) in Russian.

43. Mr. W. Förster (Austria), Chair of the task force on social housing, informed the Committee about the progress in the preparation of the guidelines on social housing. An advanced draft of the guidelines, prepared by a task force of international experts, had been posted on the Committee's web site. The draft would be presented at the upcoming workshop on social housing, hosted by the city of Vienna on 28-30 November 2004. The workshop would provide a platform for experts from the UNECE region to discuss and provide feedback on the draft guidelines. All delegations were invited to contribute to the workshop by submitting practical examples. Several delegations stated that the guidelines would be a good basis for the Committee's future work on social housing.

44. The study on housing finance systems for countries in transition had been prepared by a consultant under the supervision of the project steering group. Mr. P. Gurtner, who chaired the group, reported on the study. The study had been finalized and would be posted on the UNECE web site by the end of November 2004. He also highlighted the lessons learnt from the cooperation with the private sector, which had actively participated in the preparation of the study.

45. The Committee agreed to:

- (a) Further facilitate the promotion and the practical application of the Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing;

- (b) Invite all delegations to provide input (case studies and practical examples) to the second workshop on social housing;
- (c) Invite all delegations to comment on the draft study on housing finance (posted on the web site of the Committee);
- (d) Invite it's Bureau to consider the comments received and endorse the draft study for publication under a new name: Housing Finance Systems for Countries in Transition: Principles and Examples;
- (e) Invite it's Bureau and the secretariat to discuss at the next meeting of the Bureau how to streamline the preparation of similar studies.

F. Development of human settlements statistics

46. The secretariat informed the Committee on a consultation on housing statistics to be organized in cooperation with the UNECE Statistical Division in 2005 to coordinate international work on housing statistics and to improve the Bulletin in order to meet the needs of the UNECE member States.
47. The delegations suggested that the work on statistics should aim for international comparability, while sharing statistical information and taking into account the work of other international organizations gathering statistics in the UNECE region (EUROSTAT, OECD, Habitat). The need to cooperate with the Conference of European Statisticians was stressed, in particular on the programme of current housing statistics and on the new round of UNECE recommendations on housing censuses.
48. A representative of the World Fire Statistics Centre reported on national fire costs.
49. The Committee agreed to invite the UNECE secretariat and the Bureau to prepare the agenda for the next joint meeting on statistics.

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

50. The Chairperson of the Bureau reported on its work and its main decisions since the Committee's previous session.
51. Ms. S. Bamford, a member of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network, reported on its work. She highlighted the following issues: cooperation of the Committee with other organizations; efficiency of the country profile programme; the contribution of experts to the final results; and increased input to the implementation of the Committee's strategy.
52. The Committee approved the work of the Bureau and the report of the Advisory Network. Until the next session of the Committee in September 2005 the Advisory Network would be composed of: Ms. Stephanie Bamford; Ms. Tara Balfe Clifford; Mr. Michael Doyle; Mr. Gert Gundersen, Chairman; Mr. Claus Hachmann; Mr. Herbert Pfeiffer; and Mr. Andrey Starovoytov.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2005-2006

53. The Committee adopted its programme of work for 2005-2006, taking into account the discussions and the decisions reached under each programme element (annex I). It also agreed on the note on the directions for the UNECE programme budget for 2006-2007 prepared by the secretariat for submission to the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on the programme of work (annex II).

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

54. The secretariat provided information on the UNECE Trust Fund on Human Settlements.

55. The sixty-sixth session of the Committee will be held in Geneva from 19 to 21 September 2005.

X. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

56. The Committee elected its new Bureau as follows: Mr. Hubert van Eyk (Netherlands), Chairperson; Ms. Doris Andoni (Albania); Ms. Elena Bejenaru (Republic of Moldova); Mr. Marek Zawislak (Poland); Ms. Maria Jose Festas (Portugal); Ms. Elena Szolgayova (Slovakia); Mr. Bengt Kjellson (Sweden); Ms. Elena Szolgayova (Slovakia) and Mr. Ernst Hauri (Switzerland).

57. The first meeting of the Bureau is scheduled for 7 February 2005.

Annex I

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2005-2006

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 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 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 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, the Republic of Moldova, Albania and Armenia have been published.

The study for the Russian Federation (started in April 2003) was finalized and that for Serbia and Montenegro (started in May 2004) is being prepared. The concept of the country profiles has been revised so as to strengthen the focus on thematic areas which are of particular concern for the country under review. Follow-up activities related to the implementation of the recommendations in the country profiles were organized in Romania in October 2002 and in Albania in 2004. The workshop in Albania was organized to evaluate the developments in the housing sector since the preparation of the country profile in 2002.

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. The following countries have stated or restated their interest in having a country profile carried out: Belarus, Ukraine, Hungary, Azerbaijan and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The next study will be undertaken in Azerbaijan in coordination with the land administration review.

Further workshops or ad hoc meetings of experts will be held to discuss the results of policy implementation as a follow-up to the studies' recommendations and to provide additional expertise in specific areas where needed.

The Ministry of Urban Development of Armenia is planning to organize a workshop in early spring 2005.

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.

The Committee will also undertake a study on trends and progress in housing reforms in South-Eastern Europe in cooperation with the Council of Europe, its Development Bank and the International Finance Corporation, following the outcome of the High-level Conference on Housing Reforms in South-Eastern Europe, jointly organized by the Council of Europe Development Bank and the World Bank in Paris on 23-24 April 2003.

10.1.2 Improvement of urban environmental performance

Description: Local systems and cities are efficient starting points for promoting sustainable human settlements development. 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. Modern local planning focuses on a broad range of issues and factors: social, economic, environmental, financial, etc. It is important to develop effective local planning as an integral part of strategic national and regional planning.

Work accomplished: As a follow-up to the workshop on encouraging local initiatives towards sustainable consumption patterns (Vienna, February 1998), the Committee on Human Settlements and the UNECE/World Health Organization (WHO) Steering Committee on Transport, Health and Environment jointly organized a workshop on environmentally sound and healthy urban transport integrated with sustainable land-use planning, hosted by the Department of Town Planning and Housing of the Ministry of the Interior in Cyprus (November 2003). The main objective was to review and discuss good practices and lessons learned on integrating environment and health considerations into transport and land-use planning through case studies. The Committee held a joint in-depth discussion with the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) on the contribution of strategic planning to improving housing and urban planning policies and considered the modalities for the preparation of a UNECE study on spatial planning at the local level.

Work to be undertaken: The delegation of Poland will organize a workshop in the first half of 2005 to discuss practical experience in the functioning of spatial planning systems, bottlenecks and effective solutions and methods. Case studies, to be presented in a common format, and lessons learned will be reviewed during the workshop. The workshop will also consider the extended outline for the UNECE study on spatial planning at the local level. A consultant will start the work on this study with the assistance of a reference group. The work will be done in consultation with the Council of Europe.

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 study on land mass valuation systems for taxation purposes in Europe and the survey on restrictions on ownership, leasing and transfer of real property in the UNECE countries were prepared and published in 2002 with the assistance of the Federal Land Cadastre Service of the Russian Federation. The Guidelines on real estate units and identifiers were prepared and are ready for publication.

Two workshops were held: on organizational sustainability and capacity-building in Edinburgh (United Kingdom) in October 2003, and on title registration systems and real property market in Erevan in May 2004.

An international team of experts undertook a land administration review on the Russian Federation (2003). In February 2004 a follow-up event was organized in Moscow. In March 2004 a land administration review was carried out in Lithuania. A workshop on real property administration in developing an information society was held in Lithuania on 24-25 September 2004. The workshop also considered the implementation of recommendations made in the land administration review on Lithuania.

Work to be undertaken: A task force and a steering group will continue work on updating the UNECE Land Administration Guidelines (ECE/HBP/96). Guidelines on public access to data, and a report on public/private partnership are being prepared. The delegation of the United Kingdom will update the land administration inventory. In 2005 a land administration review is planned in Azerbaijan in coordination with the country profile on the housing sector.

Workshops are planned in Hungary (spring 2005), Finland (31 August – 3 September 2005), Georgia (spring 2006) and the Czech Republic (autumn 2006).

The fourth session of the Working Party on Land Administration will take place in Geneva on 21-22 November 2005. Cooperation with key partners, such as the World Bank, the Central European Land Knowledge Center, the Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union and EuroGeographics, will be further developed.

10.1.4 Housing modernization and management

Description: This activity mainly aims at identifying and providing tools to face problems related to the existing housing stock and its management. It also provides an opportunity to look at urban renewal policies and at the existing and emerging housing problems, especially regarding housing financing. As a result of privatization 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, and establish a legal and institutional framework for operating housing condominiums. This programme element also focuses on the basic mechanisms for social housing development.

Work accomplished: The UNECE Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing were published in 2003 (ECE/HBP/123). A second workshop on housing condominiums was held in Moscow in November 2003. The Guidelines have been translated into Russian and Serbian. A workshop on social housing was held in Prague in May 2003 as a first step in the preparation of UNECE guidelines on social housing. A first consolidated draft was produced by a task force established by the Committee. It has met three times since October 2003. In 2003-2004 a project steering group worked on a draft study on housing finance systems for countries in transition.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee and its Bureau will continue to promote the practical application of the Guidelines on Condominium Ownership of Housing and ensure their wide dissemination in countries in transition. The study on housing finance systems for countries in transition will be approved by the Committee's Bureau for publication. The draft guidelines on social housing will be further discussed at the second workshop on social housing in Vienna on 28-30 November 2004. It is envisaged that the Committee will adopt the final draft in 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 Statistics for Europe and North America every two years.

Work accomplished: The Committee prepared a new edition of the Bulletin of Housing Statistics for Europe and North America and posted it on the Web in 2003. The human settlements statistics web site is accessible at: <http://www.unece.org/env/hs/bulletin/>.

Work to be undertaken: A steering group set up by the Bureaux of the Committee and of the Conference of European Statisticians will organize a consultation on how to further coordinate the collection of housing statistics with other international organizations. It will also identify areas of interests to policy makers where statistics are not available, but could be collected in the future. Work will start on a new round of UNECE recommendations on housing censuses.

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. Preparatory work for the 10th Conference on Urban and Regional Research was initiated by the delegation of Slovakia.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will continue the exchange of experience in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Declaration, and will consider the priorities of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in the context of its programme activities. At its 66th session, the Committee will hold an in-depth discussion in the context of the preparations for the third session of the World Urban Forum and the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for a sustainable quality of life in human settlements in the 21st century. The 10th Conference on Urban and Regional Research will be organized in Slovakia in 2006 in cooperation and consultation with the Council of Europe.

Annex II

INPUT FOR THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON THE PROGRAMME OF WORK TO
FACILITATE ITS REVIEW OF THE DRAFT UNECE PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR
2006-2007 (DIRECTIONS FOR THE UN PROGRAMME BUDGET, 2006-2007 BIENNIUM)

As 2004 is the year for drafting the United Nations programme budget proposal for the 2006-2007 biennium, the Committee, at its 65th session, was invited to discuss the following issues in relation to the next biennium: any possible changes in work directions; new priorities to be taken up; activities to be cancelled or discontinued; new activities to be introduced; and any streamlining in terms of documentation, publications, number and length of meetings, etc.

Possible changes in the work directions of the Committee on Human Settlements

At its annual session in September 2004, the Committee on Human Settlements conducted a preliminary reassessment of its strategic directions and evaluated how its core activities (country profiles programme on the housing sector for countries with economies in transition, land administration reviews, policy on social housing, condominium management and urban planning) contribute to sustainable human settlements policies.

Member States concluded that the Committee's overall strategic directions as described in the Committee's *Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements for the 21st Century*, adopted at the UNECE ministerial meeting on human settlements in 2000, were still valid. At the same time, they agreed that the Committee's work would benefit from a shift in emphasis within the overall strategic directions in order to better account for the new developments in human settlements since the beginning of the century. This view was also highlighted at the first regional implementation meeting to follow up the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in January 2004.

New priorities to be taken up

Given the validity of the Committee's overall strategic directions vis à vis the current challenges in human settlements, member States did not recommend taking up new priorities. However, within the existing priorities the Committee should strengthen its focus on:

- The concerns of the Committee's member States from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) as well as South-East Europe;
- The implementation of the Committee's policy in member countries, in particular through providing assistance in the implementation of the recommendations set out in the country profiles on the housing sector as well as the policy guidelines developed by the Committee;
- The regional contribution to (i) the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance launched by UN Habitat, and (ii) the follow-up to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, including the millennium development goals;
- Further incorporating the concerns of the poor and socially disadvantaged in the Committee's work;

- Promoting an integrated approach to achieving sustainable human settlements through the application of different instruments available within land administration, urban planning and housing.

Activities to be cancelled or discontinued and new activities to be introduced

The Committee did not recommend the introduction of any new programme elements or the discontinuation of the existing ones. However, given the Committee's new focus, member States recommended that emphasis should be put on the human settlements concerns of EECCA and South-East Europe, in particular in the framework of the country profiles programme, the land administration reviews and in light of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

In this context the Committee expressed its appreciation for the preparations that had been started for a study on trends and progress in housing reforms in South-East Europe in the framework of the country profiles programme. The Committee recommended that a similar subregional activity should be initiated for the EECCA countries. The Committee further recommended that the links between the activities under the country profiles programme and the land administration reviews should be strengthened in order to promote an integrated approach to the human settlements challenges within a country and the region.

Streamlining in terms of documentation, publications, number and length of meetings

Given the already very limited number of documentation, publications and meetings, the Committee did not see any further possibilities for streamlining.