



Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Ms. Elena SZOLGAYOVA,
Chair of the Committee on Housing and Land Management;
Director General, DG Housing Policy and Urban Development,
Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development, Slovakia

*Promoting Sustainable Cities
15 April 2015, Geneva*





Challenges in the UNECE Region

- 100 million people in the UNECE region spend more than 40 per cent of their disposable income on housing

National social housing waiting lists:

- England: 1.800.000 (Source: UK Government, 2014)
- France: 1.700.000 (Source: L' Union Sociale pour Habitat, 2014)
- United States of America 5.300.000 (The Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, 2013)





Challenges in the UNECE Region

- For the first time in human history, there are more people living in cities than in rural areas
- Urban dwellers are projected to represent two-thirds of humanity by 2050

Our struggle for global sustainability will be won or lost in cities (Ban Ki-moon)





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Main purpose: to ensure the access to decent, affordable and healthy housing in the ECE region

Scope: to improve the sustainability of housing in the ECE region through effective policies and actions at all levels, supported by international cooperation





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Key principles of sustainable housing:

Environmental:

minimization of environmental impact and
promotion of environmental sustainability





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Key principles of sustainable housing:

Economic:

sustainable and secure housing is one of the key elements in national economies and should be promoted through public and private investments and national policies and programmes





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Key principles of sustainable housing:

Social:

sustainable housing policy should be also promoted through civil involvement, social inclusiveness, public health and transparency.

Usability of homes for all people across generational and gender divides is one of our top priorities.





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Key principles of sustainable housing:

Cultural:

Sustainable housing policy also takes into consideration questions of cultural identity, value and emotional wellbeing of people.





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Key measures include:

- Enhancing environmental protection and energy efficiency
- Supporting positive economic, social and environmental links between urban and rural areas
- Providing universal access to safe and accessible green spaces
- Reducing the number of deaths, displacement and losses caused by disasters





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

Timeline

- The document negotiated by 56 UNECE member States in 2010 – 2015
- UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management agreed on the Charter on 15 October 2014
- EXCOM endorsed the Charter on 14 November 2014





Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing

- Tool to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal on Cities and Human Settlements that the UN General Assembly is expected to adopt in September 2015
- The Charter is the UNECE contribution to the **Habitat III** (The UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, October 2016, Quito, Ecuador)

