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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

REPORT ON THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION
(18 and 20 September 2000)

SUMMARY

The Committee discussed the implementation of the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century and the Ministerial Declaration as the basis for its future programme of work to promote the sustainable development of human settlements, foster economic and social prosperity and support democratic governance in the ECE region. The Committee agreed that both the Strategy and the Ministerial Declaration would represent its contribution to the "Istanbul+5" event. The Committee adopted the report of the first session of the Working Party on Land Administration. The Committee also considered and adopted its 2000-2003 programme of work, and set its priorities. The Committee confirmed the high priority of the country profile project on the housing sector and activities related to land registration and land markets, and approved the general outline and topics suggested for the Ninth Conference on Urban and Regional Research. The Committee welcomed the report of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network and expressed its support for the project proposal for a ECE handbook on housing financing.

Introduction

1. The Committee on Human Settlements held its sixty-first session in Geneva on 18 and 20 September 2000. Mr. J. Zetter (United Kingdom) chaired the meeting. A Ministerial Meeting was organized on 19 September. Its report is contained in ECE/HBP/119/Add.1.
2. Representatives of the following countries participated: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.
3. The European Commission and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) were also represented.
4. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended: Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), Institut de recherche sur l'environnement (IREC), International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP), International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISoCaRP), International Union for Private Real Estate (UIPI), International Union of Tenants (IUT), World Associations of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) 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/118) was adopted.

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

7. The Committee took note of the Commission's decisions taken at its fifty-fifth session in May 2000 and its recommendations to the Principal Subsidiary Bodies, particularly in regard to the prioritization of their work programme and to the cross-sectoral approach in its implementation.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION AND THE ECE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ISTANBUL+5 EVENT

8. The Committee discussed the implementation of the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century and the Ministerial Declaration as adopted at the Ministerial Meeting. Particular attention was given to ensuring a collective ECE approach to reporting on the ECE experience at the "Istanbul+5" event.

9. On Monday, 18 September, Habitat (UNCHS) in cooperation with the ECE secretariat organized a forum to provide national delegations and partners from local authorities and civil society with an opportunity to discuss the significance of two global campaigns promoted by Habitat: the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure and the Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance. Mr. J. Zetter chaired the forum assisted by Mrs. S. Lacroux, Coordinator, Land and Tenure Unit of Habitat. Presentations were made by Mr. W. Cobbett, Director, Global Campaign for Secure Tenure, UNCHS, Mr. H. Hoffschulte, Chairman of WACLAC/UNCHS Working Group on the World Charter of Local Self-Government, Mr. B. Carlin, Secretary General of the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), and Ms. B. Lipej, Chairperson of the ECE Working Party on Land Administration. The discussion touched on the need for a clear definition of the principles of secure tenure and its application in the ECE region, on initiatives taken to promote innovative financial mechanisms, and on the role of the campaigns in the context of the Habitat work programme vis-à-vis the overall implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

10. The Committee agreed to:

- (a) Publish the ECE Strategy and Declaration;
- (b) Submit them as the ECE contribution to the "Istanbul+5" event;
- (c) Organize a special ECE event during next year's Istanbul+5 meeting and present the main ECE goals and challenges as reflected in the Strategy during the plenary of the special session of the General Assembly (Istanbul+5);
- (d) Consider the impact of the Strategy and the Ministerial Declaration on its programme of work and on national programmes at its next session in September 2001 and assess the implementation of the Strategy and the Declaration in five years' time.

IV. REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

11. In regard to individual programme elements and methods of work, the Committee:

(a) Country profiles on the housing sector (10.1.1)

- (i) Agreed to introduce the practice of presenting the conclusions and recommendations of the recently completed studies at its annual sessions;
- (ii) Decided to hold discussions on the progress made on the practical implementation of the recommendations in the country concerned, with the aim of monitoring and evaluating their impact. The Committee suggested holding such discussions four years after each study;
- (iii) Welcomed the practice of reviewed countries translating the country profile study into their national languages and distributing it widely among national, regional and local authorities and invited reviewed countries to continue it;
- (iv) Invited its Bureau and the secretariat to start preparing for the next study, on the Republic of Moldova, and discuss the possibilities for meeting the demand for further studies;
- (v) Took note of the requests of the delegations of Albania, Armenia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine for a country profile study to be carried out in their countries;

(b) Improvement of urban environmental performance (10.1.2)

- (i) Endorsed the progress report on urban transport patterns and land-use planning: measures to assist consumer choices (HBP/2000/8) including the activities of the joint steering group. This programme element is carried out jointly with the Committee on Environmental Policy;
- (ii) Took note of the interest expressed by national delegations and NGOs in this project and invited delegations, in particular those from countries in transition, to designate experts to the steering group. Experts should have extensive experience in spatial planning, especially in relation to transport patterns. Their names and contact addresses should be sent to the secretariat by 30 October 2000;
- (iii) Welcomed the offer of the city of Lyons (France) to host a workshop on urban transport and land-use planning in 2001;

(c) Land registration and land markets (10.1.3)

- (i) Endorsed the report of the first session of the Working Party on Land Administration (HBP/WP.7/1999/2);
- (ii) Invited the Working Party on Land Administration to take into consideration the long-term strategy on land administration in the Balkan region as presented orally by Mr. Ratia, ECE Focal Point, if it carried out activities in that subregion;

(d) Housing modernization and management (10.1.4)

- (i) Approved the report of its consultant Mr. G. Gundersen (Norway) on the preparatory work for the ECE guidelines on housing condominiums and invited him, the project reference group and the secretariat to finalize the guidelines for its next session;
- (ii) Took note of the report of the Russian delegation on the follow-up activities to the Moscow Seminar on housing condominiums which were linked to the work on the ECE guidelines on housing condominiums;
- (iii) Took note of the report by the delegation of the Czech Republic on the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop held in Prague (June 2000) and agreed that the topic of urban regeneration should continue to be part of its programme of work;

(e) Development of human settlements statistics (10.1.5)

- (i) Agreed to organize an informal consultation at the beginning of 2001 to coordinate activities on housing statistics undertaken in ECE and the European Union (EU);
- (ii) Took note of the interest of the delegations of Finland and the Netherlands to take part in the consultation and also invited other countries to designate experts and to send their names and addresses to the secretariat by 30 October 2000;

(f) Major trends characterizing human settlements development (10.1.6)

- (i) Approved the general outline and topics suggested by the delegation of the United Kingdom for the Ninth Conference on Urban and Regional Research "Sustainable and Liveable Cities" to be held in 2002 in the United Kingdom;
- (ii) Took note of the willingness of the delegations of Belarus, Denmark, France, Romania, the Russian Federation and ISOCARP to designate experts to the Conference's preparatory working group;
- (iii) Invited the delegation of the United Kingdom to organize in the winter of 2000/2001 a meeting of the working group to prepare an extended outline and structure for the discussion papers for the Conference. The meeting would also discuss the draft programme and organization of the Conference;
- (iv) Took note of the report of the delegation of Kyrgyzstan on the follow-up to the country review on Sustainable Development and Human Settlements (HBP/2000/2).

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

12. The Committee considered the report by its Chairman, Mr. J. Zetter, on the work of the Bureau, and the progress report by Mr. G. Gundersen on the work of the Network, as well as a proposal for a handbook on housing finance. The Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the reports of its Bureau and the Advisory Network, and welcomed the new members of the Advisory Network (see annex III);
- (b) Expressed its support for the project proposal for a ECE handbook on housing financing and invited the Advisory Network to continue preparations for this activity, taking into account the work recently accomplished by the Committee on this issue in order to avoid duplication;
- (c) Invited all delegations to propose to the secretariat by the end of November 2000 topics for the Committee's in-depth discussion at its next session in September 2001.

VI. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2000-2003

13. The Committee agreed on its programme of work, its priorities and the tentative list of meetings as presented in annexes I, II and IV, and requested its Bureau and the secretariat to monitor the implementation of the decisions taken concerning individual programme elements.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

14. The secretariat provided information on the use of the ECE Human Settlements Trust Fund since the previous session of the Committee and encouraged countries to pledge contributions to the Trust Fund.

15. Information was provided on the Web site of the Committee (<http://www.unece.org/env/hs/>).

VIII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

16. In accordance with the rotation principle, the following officers were elected or re-elected for the sixty-second session of the Committee (17-19 September 2001):

Ms. Daniela Grabmüllerová (Czech Republic), Chairperson; Mr. Wolfgang Förster (Austria), Mr. Yiannos Papadopoulos (Cyprus), Mr. Jens Wolters (Denmark), Ms. Elena Szolgayová (Slovakia), Mr. Tom Corcoran (Ireland), Ms. Ileana Budisteanu (Romania) and Mr. Andrey Starovoytov (Russian Federation), Vice-Chairpersons.

17. The Committee expressed its warm thanks to Mr. John Zetter, outgoing Chairman, for his dedication to the work of the ECE Committee on Human Settlements during more than 20 years.

Annex I

PROGRAMME OF WORK 2000-2003

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 and Lithuania have been published. A roster of international experts was established. The international team of experts for the study on the housing sector of Romania undertook two missions in May and July 2000. The country profile project is presented on the 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 and work will start on a sixth study, on the Republic of Moldova. A fact-finding mission by an international team of experts is planned for January 2001. 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 explored. A follow-up programme for the studies will be tested. Cooperation with Habitat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Council of Europe, the European Union and the World Bank will be maintained and strengthened.

Duration: 2000 - 2003.

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: In cooperation with the Committee on Environmental Policy, a workshop on encouraging local initiatives towards sustainable consumption patterns was held in Vienna in February 1998. As a follow-up, a joint steering group on urban transport patterns and land-use planning was established. At its first meeting, held in Lyons (France), the steering group prepared a detailed work programme (HBP/2000/8).

Work to be undertaken: A workshop will be organized in the city of Lyons in 2001 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, guidelines for governments will be prepared for submission to a joint meeting of the Bureaux of both Committees, and then, if agreed, to the Fifth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe".

Duration: 2000 - 2002.

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). Three workshops were held: on modern cadastre (Bonn, Germany, in March 1999); on land registration (London, September 1999); and on public/private sector relationships in the establishment of land registration systems (Tirana, March 2000). A workshop on safety mechanisms in the creation of real property markets was organized in Madrid on 28-29 September 2000.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Land Administration (Web site <http://www.unece.org/env/hs/wpla/>) 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. The delegation of Austria will continue work on the list of international projects on land administration in the ECE region. As a joint activity with UNDP, it is envisaged that in November 2000 a team of international experts will visit Armenia to evaluate its land administration reform. A survey of the current structure of landownership

and the existing legislation to restrict/limit the sale of property in ECE countries, and a study on valuation for taxation purposes will be prepared by the delegation of the Russian Federation. In 2001, workshops are planned in Sweden and Armenia. The second session of the Working Party on Land Administration will take place in Geneva on 19-20 November 2001.

Duration: 2000 - 2003.

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 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: A meeting on public/private partnership in human settlements development was organized in Manchester (United Kingdom) on 6-7 November 1999. A workshop on urban renewal and housing modernization took place in Prague on 14-17 June 2000.

Work to be undertaken: A consultant was designated and a reference group was established to prepare practical guidelines on housing condominiums to address the major aspects in the public/private sectors in economies in transition. The Advisory Network will develop its proposal on for a handbook on housing finance.

Duration: 2000 - 2003.

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 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 for publication in 2002. Meanwhile, annual statistics gathered through the questionnaire will be posted on the Web site. An informal consultation to coordinate activities on housing statistics in ECE and EU will be organized at the beginning of 2001.

Duration: 2000 - 2003.

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 study on Major Trends Characterizing Human Settlements Development (ECE/HBP/108) was published as a result of work carried out by two task forces. The study served as a background paper to the Eighth Conference on Urban and Regional Research. An abstract of the study was prepared to assist the participants in the preparation of their response papers for the Conference. The Eighth Conference was held in Madrid from 8 to 11 June 1998. Another study on Human Settlements Trends in Central and Eastern Europe was prepared and published in October 1997 (ECE/HBP/105). A team of experts visited Kyrgyzstan in July 1999 and prepared a country review "Sustainable Development and Human Settlements - Overview and Recommended Actions" (HBP/2000/2) to assist the Government of Kyrgyzstan in the implementation of its human development strategies.

Work to be undertaken: Both above-mentioned publications will be revised every five years in a single volume. A research conference on sustainable and liveable cities will be organized in the United Kingdom in 2002. A meeting of the working group for the preparation of the conference will be organized in the winter of 2000/2001. The ECE Strategy on a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century will be published. The Committee will continue the exchange of experience in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

Duration: 2000 - 2002.

Annex II

PRIORITIZATION PRO FORMA ECE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Explanatory note:

In recent years, the Committee on Human Settlements has demonstrated its ability to streamline its programme of work (10 programme elements in 1995 and 6 programme elements in 2000), its methods of work (the Committee was the Commission's first Principal Subsidiary Body to introduce a workshop programme and adopt the related guidelines). In response to the Commission's decision, it took initiative, adopted and applied a new form of cooperation with the business community and local governments by establishing an Advisory Network on Housing and Urban Management in 1998. The Committee has prepared the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century. It is envisaged that the Strategy will offer guidance for the Committee to structure and continuously adapt its programme of work for the first 5-10 years of the new millennium.

The Committee's activities are of considerable importance for all ECE countries. It is essential that the experience of democratic societies in sustainable development, real property rights, local governments and democratic values should be introduced in all parts of the ECE region.

SECTION 1: PRIORITIZATION

No.	Programme elements and activities	Priority level (H, M, L)	Regular budget Professional staff
1	Country profiles on the housing sector	H	0.9
2	Improvement of urban environmental performance	H	0.3
3	Land registration and land markets	H	0.6
4	Housing modernization and management	H	0.3
5	Development of human settlements statistics	L	0.1
6	Major trends characterizing human settlements development	M	0.1

SECTION 2: ACTIVITY OPTIONS

A. With the addition of one extra staff member (three instead of two)

The Committee would be in a position to promote more effectively better living conditions in the ECE region, through democratic governance, strong public participation,

security of real property rights, as defined in the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century and the Ministerial Declaration.

It would be possible, inter alia, to:

- (a) Carry out two country profiles of the housing sector per year (instead of only one); or
- (b) Intensify land administration activities and establish a new organizational set-up for cooperation with the World Bank, EU and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on these issues.

B. With the reduction of one staff member (one instead of two)

It would be impractical for the Committee to implement the tasks defined in its mandate and within its competence.

Annex III

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSING AND URBAN MANAGEMENT ADVISORY NETWORK */

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*/ The terms of reference of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network were adopted by the Committee on Human Settlements at its fifty-eighth session in September 1997 (ECE/HBP/104, annex II).

Annex IV

TENTATIVE LIST OF MEETINGS_{*/}

17-19 September 2001	Geneva Sixty-second session of the Committee on Human Settlements
19-20 November 2001	Geneva Second session of the Working Party on Land Administration

_{*/} Bureau meetings, task force meetings and other informal consultations are not listed.