

**UNECE Ministerial Meeting on Urban Development, Housing and Land
Management and the 82nd session of the Committee on Urban Development,
Housing and Land Management**

**Statement by State Secretary Katarína Bruncková on behalf of the Slovak
Republic**

Madam Chair,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to be present at this Ministerial Meeting and I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing, and Land Management for organizing this very important event. This is an excellent opportunity for all relevant stakeholders to sit together and to exchange opinions and experiences, focusing on issues and challenges associated with the affordable and adequate housing in our region, countries and cities.

To ensure affordable, adequate, healthy and resilient housing for all citizens is a big challenge in most of countries worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a strong reminder of the pressing housing challenges that persist. The pandemic converted our homes into our offices and the classrooms of our children. By doing this the crisis has highlighted the importance of housing policies for well-being of our inhabitants and our economy.

In this context we are aware of the importance of the comprehensive and long term national housing strategy. That is why in the past decades, Slovakia has actively developed its housing policy. The aim of the state housing policy and its measures has been to gradually increase the overall standard of housing, making the housing available to the population and enabling each household to obtain adequate housing. Our top and long-term priorities have been the support of affordable rental housing and refurbishment of existing housing stock. Slovakia is a nation of homeowners and the rental market exists only in small extent. Based on that we introduced legislative framework and economic measures to support the construction of public rental housing and affordable rental housing. Slovakia has also made impressive progress towards improving housing quality and energy efficiency, almost 70% of housing stock is renovated. From our experience these objectives can only be achieved if all parties involved work closely together. Especially, for the success of housing policy it is crucial to empower cities, towns and villages as active actors of the policy implementation.

Currently we are preparing a new strategic document in the area of housing that will define our national housing policy priorities up to 2030. This document is elaborated in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, The New Urban Agenda and also implements the principles of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing.

Slovakia has made significant progress in improving its housing sector, but many challenges persist. It is crucial, now more than ever, to put in place the reforms that

will improve well-being of our citizens and ensure for them the access to quality, sustainable, affordable and healthy housing.

We therefore welcome the work of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management on promoting affordable and sustainable housing, particularly the newest report “#Housing2030: Effective policies for affordable housing in the UNECE region. Slovakia supports the endorsement of the “Place and Life in the UNECE – A Regional Action Plan 2021” and encourages the Committee to continue its valuable work in the future.

Many thanks for your kind attention.