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Meeting with the Chair of the Committee on Housing and Land Management

Report by the Chair

Report from the Chairperson of the Committee on Housing and Land Management

1. The Chair of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management (the Committee), Ms. Elena Szolgayová (Slovakia), is pleased to submit her report to the one hundred-second meeting of the Executive Committee (EXCOM) on 14 December 2018.

2. This report outlines the main achievements of Committee in implementing its Programme of Work in the period between January 2018 - December. More information is available in the report of the seventy-ninth Committee session, which was held on 4–5 October 2018 in Geneva (ECE/HBP/194).

I. Introduction

3. By 2050, almost two third (66%) of the world's population will live in urban areas. The rapid growth of cities and of the urban population results in enormous challenges in the UNECE Region. Ageing and a drastic increase in international migration flows in the UNECE region brought altering demands and more pressure on infrastructure housing and social services. Increased urban expansion has severely reduced the land available for other uses. Climate change and natural disasters have caused vast economic and social losses. Additionally, with the expansion of the knowledge economy and automation, cities are being reshaped to new forms that affect education, training and employment. All these factors in the context of the post-financial crisis amplify the challenges of the limited access to affordable, adequate and healthy housing and basic infrastructure for all. Building cities that are smart, inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable – requires intensive international policy coordination and investment choices.

4. Under the umbrella of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, member States exchange experiences and best practices to address these complex challenges in their respective countries. The Committee is very active in facilitating exchange of the experiences and developing innovative approaches to establishing systems of effective registration of land and property, promoting e-governance, addressing social exclusion due to unaffordable housing for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people, building resilient, energy-efficient and climate neutral cities, making homes affordable and adequate through effective housing management and innovative financing strategies.

II. Achievements over the past year

1. Aligning Committee's activities with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other international agreements

5. In 2018, the Committee worked to promote an integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of all relevant commitments at the global, national, regional, sub-regional and local levels, as required for meeting the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and others. A number of high level meetings were held with partners and stakeholders to discuss related proposals which resulted

in the development of the Guidance document (ECE/HBP/2018/2) with recommendations for the alignment of the Committee's activities with Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other key agreements within its existing mandate.

6. Further, a policy paper and the guidelines for data collection for evidence-based housing and urban development policies (ECE/HBP/2018/Inf.2) were prepared, supported by the ECE-UN-Habitat UNDA 10th tranche project "Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition".

7. To support the implementation of the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development, the Committee started developing a regional observatory for review of the implementation of urban related SDGs. This activity encompasses the development of training materials, including e-learning, on housing and urban development for national and local governments to support their efforts to implement international commitments and promote sustainable urban development.

8. In 2018, the Charter Centres of Excellence on Sustainable Housing in Glasgow, UK and Tallinn, Estonia continued supporting the Committee in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other agreements through active dissemination of information on the Charter and its principles (publications, media outreach, and national and local events), organising capacity-building and networking activities, providing advisory services to stakeholders, regional and local authorities, and by conducting relevant studies.

9. The Glasgow centre launched the publication "Living in the Social City: Adapt – Renew – Replace?"¹, which examines issues related to the provision of affordable housing through refurbishment of older outdated housing stock. The UN Charter centre in Tallinn and the Housing Europe Federation jointly organized a workshop on housing systems in countries with economies in transition (Tallinn, 6 June 2018).

10. In 2018, the Geneva UN Charter Center on smart sustainable cities was established in Vienna.

2. Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management

11. The Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management is a flagship product of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. The Country Profiles is an important tool to analyse countries' housing and land management policies, strategies, institutional and financial frameworks, review the progress of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to compare the progress made internationally. Since 1997, twenty country profiles have been developed.

12. The Country Profile on the Housing Sector of Kazakhstan (ECE/HBP/191) was completed in 2018. Further, a Country Profile on Housing and Land Management of Belarus was prepared (ECE/HBP/2018/4), that will be published in 2019.

13. At its seventy-ninth session, the Committee endorsed the Bureau's proposal to update the title of the programme 'Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management' to 'Country Profiles on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management' in order to reflect the importance of addressing urban development issues within the Country Profiles.

¹Living in the Social City: Adapt – Renew – Replace? Wilson, J. Turner, J & Chau, J, with Evans, B.M. (editor), Glasgow Urban Laboratory, ISBN 978 1 9996221 0 7, 2018.

3. Affordable and social housing

14. The Guidelines on the Management and Ownership of Condominium Housing were developed by the Committee's Real Estate Market Advisory Group (ECE/HBP/2018/ Inf.3). Based on the Guidelines, an international training programme on the management of condominium housing is being developed.

15. A study on housing for migrants was prepared with the support of the City of Vienna and the Swiss Federal Office for Housing. The study examines the current challenges and practices in housing migrants in the UNECE region and formulates recommendations to better accommodate migrants.

16. An international Conference "Promoting access to affordable and decent housing through the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing" was organised in cooperation with City of Vienna (Vienna, 12-13 April 2018). The conference adopted the Vienna's Message "Quality Living for All: on Access to Adequate, Affordable and Decent Housing". A panel on housing affordability as part of the Conference of the European Real Estate Society was organised by the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (27–30 June 2018, Reading, UK).

17. To support the implementation of policy recommendations of the UNECE Country Profile on the Housing Sector of Kazakhstan, several workshops were held, namely

- a subregional workshop on affordable housing for Central Asia, organised jointly with Housing Initiative for Eastern Europe² and UNDP Kazakhstan (Almaty, September 2018)
- National workshops on housing policies (Astana, April 2018 and September 2018)

18. World Habitat Day 2018 was the occasion to raise awareness on the importance of ensuring that vulnerable populations, especially the homeless, are adequately housed. The celebrations consisted of a photo exhibition that emphasised the importance of alleviating homelessness through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and highlighted the intersection of the SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements). A high-level panel event explored innovative solutions to homelessness, e.g. through 3D-printed housing, policy and social housing schemes

19. In November 2018, the National Real Estate Association of Bulgaria in cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of Bulgaria, the UNECE Real Estate Market Advisory Group, the Working Party on Land Administration and UN-Habitat organized a conference "My home, my city, my business". The conference addressed aligning national and international strategies and programmes for housing policies and land management with the international commitments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda.

4. Fire safety standards in buildings

20. Following the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy in London in 2017, a group of private and not-for-profit organisations responsible for research, development, publicity, and the implementation of International Fire Safety Standards for the construction and real estate sectors established a coalition, the aim of which is to promote the creation, maintenance, and use of high quality international standards. In July 2018, the International Fire Safety Standards (IFSS) Coalition organised its official 'launch' event at Palais des Nations under the umbrella of the Committee on Housing and Land Management.

² www.iwoev.org

21. At its seventy-ninth session, the Committee on Housing and Land Management invited the Real Estate Market Advisory Board to include the IFSS Coalition activities in its work plan for 2019-2020. Further, the Bureau was invited to assess the feasibility of adopting the above-mentioned standards as UNECE standards. The Coalition is expected to develop new, high level international standards, which aim to provide greater clarity and global consistency in the application of fire safety in building projects at a state, national, regional or international level.

5. Energy-efficiency in buildings

22. Through generous contributions from Denmark and the Russian Federation for the “Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings in the ECE Region” and “Enhancing national capacities for development and implementation of the energy-efficiency standards in buildings in the ECE Region” projects, the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings (JTF) of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management and the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy (through its Group of Experts on Energy-Efficiency) continued its crucial work. In 2018, the group undertook a mapping of energy-efficiency standards in buildings in the UNECE region, in English and Russian. The JTF is currently working on a compendium of best practices to enhance energy-efficiency standards and technologies in buildings, a study on mapping of existing technology to support energy-efficiency in buildings, and on the creation of a database of energy-efficiency experts.

23. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation (BSEC) has provided funding for the project “Promoting the application of high-performance energy-efficiency standards in buildings in BSEC member States and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)”. With this support, the Joint Task Force developed a training programme and organized a seminar for policy makers and building sector professionals in application of high-performance building standards, in St-Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 5–7 September 2018.

6. Work of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM)

24. Since the seventy-eighth session of the Committee, the REM worked on three main studies, in accordance with its Programme of Work (ECE/HBP/2016/3). Two of these studies, the “ECE Policy Framework on Real Estate Markets” (updated version of the 2013 publication) and the ‘Guidelines on Condominium Management’, have been finalised and the publication is set for 2019. Work will continue in 2019 on the preparation of the “Guidelines on tools and mechanisms to finance smart sustainable cities projects”. This study is being developed within the framework of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities initiative. The Group has started to work on the study “Sharing economy and its effects on the real estate sector”.

25. A training event on “The management of multi-apartment high rise housing stock: localizing the SDG11 and the NUA through housing strategies in countries undergoing economic transition”, 11 February 2018, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, within the World Urban Forum 9.

7. Smart sustainable cities

26. Within the framework of the “United for Smart Sustainable Cities” (U4SSC) initiative, the secretariat is collaborating with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and 15 other UN bodies. During its third meeting, held in Malaga, Spain, on 26 April 2018, the updated Terms of Reference, along with the action plan for 2018-2019 for the U4SSC initiative were approved.

27. Currently, the U4SSC initiative is developing the following studies:
- Guidelines on tools and mechanisms to finance smart sustainable cities projects (secretariat support provided by UNECE and is also part of the programme of work of REM);
 - Guidelines for circular cities (secretariat support provided by UNECE and UNIDO);
 - City Science Application Framework (secretariat support provided by ITU);
 - The impact of Sensing technologies and IoT in Cities (secretariat support provided by UN-Habitat); and
 - Blockchain for cities (secretariat provided by UN University and ITU).
28. The UNECE finalised the smart sustainable city profile for the city of Voznesensk in Ukraine. Results of the study and policy recommendations will be launched in Kiev in January 2019. The secretariat is also working to develop the Guidelines for developing the City Action Plan along with the preparation of the City Action Plan for Goris, Armenia.
29. The UNECE, together with the Organization for International Economic Relations (OiER) , launched the first United Smart Cities Lab in Vienna in April 2018 and organised a series of events at the global Smart City EXPO in Barcelona (12-15 November 2018).
30. The UNECE, together with UN-Habitat and other partners, are supporting the creation of a smart city district in Astana, Kazakhstan. The partners, jointly with Astana Innovations, elaborated proposals for the application of the People-centred Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) for the development of Astana.
31. The Ministry of Regional Development of the Czech Republic, in cooperation with UNECE and the Faculty of Architecture of Technical University in Prague, organised an international conference “European Smart and Sharing Cities” in Prague on 22-23 November 2018. This conference addressed how digital technologies and platforms have an influence on cities in the UNECE region.

8. Land administration and management

32. During the reporting period, the WPLA focused on strengthening national capacities for land registration, addressing informal development and supporting land consolidation, which are prerequisites for guaranteeing security of tenure and ownership; and for promoting sustainable economic development through effective land and property taxation.
33. To this end, the following workshops and conferences were held:
- Joint Workshop of WPLA, FAO and LANDNET on best practices on land consolidation legislation, Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (19-21 June 2018);
 - Joint Conference of WPLA, The International Federation of Surveyors and the Technical Chamber of Greece on Economy, Society and Climate Change - Current Trends and Solutions for the Built Environment, Construction Industry and Real Estate”, Athens, Greece (7 – 9 November 2018), and In collaboration with the National Real Estate Association of Bulgaria in cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of Bulgaria, UNECE and UN-Habitat as part of the conference “My home, my city, my business” the WPLA co-organized The Cadastre - Sustainable basis for Property Registration and Investments session on 15 November 2018, in Sofia, Bulgaria. Bringing together cadastre and registry experts to exchange knowledge and share experiences.

34. A review of the land administration and real estate markets in Belarus was developed by experts from the Netherlands and the Russian Federation. The land administration review will be published as a chapter in the Country Profile on Housing and Land Management for Belarus.

35. The WPLA continued its preparation of the technical guidelines entitled “Informal Development: Guidelines for formalization of informal constructions in the UNECE region in 2018”, which will be finalised in early 2019.

36. Outcomes of the research on the Future Scenarios in land administration were presented at a roundtable held in Stockholm, Sweden, on 15 June 2018, and at the WPLA workshop in Athens, Greece, on 7-9 November 2018.

37. A study on the cost for registration and transfer of real estate and registration of mortgages in the UNECE countries, benchmarking study was carried out in 2018 and will be published in 2019.

38. A study on the Challenges of Fraud to Land Administration Institutions, first published in July 2011, is being updated for publication in 2019.

III. Major activities planned for 2019 and beyond

39. The Committee will continue to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the housing, urban and land-related Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and its targets: (11.1.) Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services; (11.3) Enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries; (11.6) Reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management; (11.7) Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces. Due to its cross-cutting nature, it will also contribute to the achievement of other goals, particularly to Goals 3, 6, 7, 9, 13, 15 and 17. Due consideration will be given to the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into national policies, strategies and planning in housing, urban development and land management. Further, this work will promote the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development, the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, and the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE region for the Period 2014-2020.

40. The following activities are expected to be implemented:

1. Review of and follow-up to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other relevant agreements

(1) Aligning Committee activities with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the New Urban Agenda

41. To support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Ministerial Declaration on Housing and Urban Development, the Committee will establish the regional observatory

on urban related SDGs (please find more information in the ECE/HBP/2018/1). It will assist in developing capacities of national and local governments to achieve the SDGs, especially SDG 11 on cities and human settlements. The regional observatory will include a web portal containing information on the state of housing and urban development at national and local level in countries of the UNECE region based on the analysis conducted within Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management and other UNECE studies; a set of training materials, including e-learning; relevant reports and publications with best practices. Regular regional, subregional and national thematic meetings and training workshops will be conducted with active participation of key stakeholders and academia.

42. As decided by the Committee at its seventy-ninth session, a guidance document on aligning Committee activities with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development will be finalised and published. A policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development (UNDA Tenth tranche project, UN-Habitat) will be finalised and presented to the Committee's eightieth session for adoption. Regional and subregional workshops will be organised in 2019 to present the developed guidance documents and discuss their implementation and national and local levels.

43. A series of international conferences and training workshops will be organised to discuss the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing in the UNECE region, including in Milano, Italy; Tbilisi, Georgia; Tirana, Albania; and Glasgow, the United Kingdom.

44. To assist member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Committee will conduct a survey exploring the needs and priorities of member states for capacity-building activities (ECE/HBP/2018/3). Based on the survey results, the secretariat will elaborate a three-year action plan for capacity-building activities.

45. The Committee will continue to promote the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing through the organization of advisory services, capacity-building and dissemination activities, and through the network of Geneva UN Charter Centres. In addition to the already established centres in Albania, Austria, Estonia and the United Kingdom, Charter Centres will be established in other countries, as requested by member States.

2. Sustainable housing and real estate markets

46. To promote sustainable housing and real estate markets, the Committee will focus on housing finance and management, government support for the improvement of energy-efficiency in buildings, facilitating the maintenance, management and refurbishment of existing housing stock and developing real estate markets and sharing economy in the context of the real estate sector.

(1) Affordable and decent housing

47. Based on the recommendations of a study conducted in 2017-2018 by the Committee secretariat on opportunities for cooperation on capacity-building on affordable housing with partner organisations (ECE/HBP/2018/3), the Committee will develop a three-year action plan for capacity-building activities under the Committee's programme of work and will start its implementation. It will include activities on sustainable housing, smart sustainable cities, energy-efficiency in buildings (including management of multiapartment and high-performance buildings), sustainable urban development, governance in land tenure and other.

48. Following the Committee's decision at the seventy-ninth session, the secretariat will conduct a survey and prepare a policy brief on homelessness in association with Housing Europe, FEANTSA (European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless) and other stakeholders. The topic of homelessness is a multidimensional issue that intersects with Sustainable Development Goals: 1-No Poverty, 3-Good Health, and 11-Sustainable Cities. Further, this policy paper will reflect the ethos of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing as it supports member States to ensure the access to decent, affordable and healthy housing in the UNECE region.

49. Further, the Committee and its Real Estate Market Advisory Group will develop a study on housing finance which will reflect a discussion and conclusions of the roundtable held at the Committee's seventy-ninth Committee session on "Providing access to decent, affordable, adequate and healthy housing for all". The roundtable addressed issues of securing future funding and finance for public infrastructure, access to affordable and adequate housing; and the role of the state and private sectors and their interplay in housing financing and how various sources of finance can meet different needs.

50. Finally, the UNECE Housing for Migrants Study will be published, as requested by the Committee at its seventy-eighth session (ECE/HBP/190). The study examines the current challenges in housing migrants in the UNECE region and highlights the various challenges related to the provision of adequate and affordable housing to migrants.

(2) Energy-efficiency and fire safety in buildings

51. The Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings will continue its work with a focus on capacity-building and training to promote energy-efficiency in buildings, including through the improved management of multiapartment buildings.

52. Following the decision of the Committee at its seventy-ninth session to assess the feasibility of adopting the International Fire Safety Standards (IFSS) Coalition high-level standard as a UNECE standard, the Committee secretariat will prepare a proposal to the discussion of the Committee at its eightieth session.

(3) Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM)

53. The REM will continue to contribute to the work of the Committee on energy-efficiency, smart sustainable cities, housing finance and sharing economy. The REM will also contribute to the work of the Fire Safety Standards in Buildings. Furthermore, it will contribute to the WPLA benchmarking series surveys. The Advisory Group will also work on two key studies on the topic of sharing economy and housing finance.

54. The Advisory Group will organize several meetings as per its programme of work. In 2019, the REM will organize events on the Policy Framework in New York, in Italy on smart sustainable cities and on the Condominium Management together with the European Mortgage Federation in Brussels.

3. Sustainable urban development

55. The secretariat will support the Committee in promoting an integrated approach to the planning of cities and human settlements. The focus will be on activities relevant to spatial planning towards compact, efficient and inclusive cities, low-carbon and disaster resilient urban development and in addressing the challenges of informal settlements.

56. The Committee secretariat will support the application of innovative financing approaches for sustainable housing and urban planning by developing smart sustainable districts in Astana, Kazakhstan; and Grodno, Belarus. Smart city profile will be finalised for the city of Voznesensk, Ukraine as well as the “Guidelines for circular cities” and the “Guidelines on tools and mechanisms to finance smart sustainable cities”.

57. The Committee will contribute to the discussion at the Day of Cities which is organised by the UNECE on 8 April 2019 and the sixty-eighth Commission Session, which will take place on 9 and 10 April 2019 under the overall theme of “Smart Sustainable Cities: Drivers for Sustainable Development”.

58. Following the conclusions of the Committee’s seventy-ninth session’s roundtable on “Integrated urban planning and development” which stressed the need of promoting a strategic approach to addressing key challenges going beyond sectoral approaches to implement urban policies as well as the importance of using data across sectors for informed decision- and policy-making and for the effective evaluation of infrastructure projects, the Committee will develop training materials to highlight the above mentioned strategic approach and will organise training workshops to support building capacity-building of national and local governments, as requested by member States.

4. Land administration and management

59. To assist member States in improving land administration and land management, the Committee activities will promote security of tenure and improvement of cadastres and land registries, including institutional arrangements for land administration. This cluster will address land registration, e-governance, land tenure, spatial information and cadastres. An emphasis will be placed on issues of innovation and capacity-building in land administration.

60. The WPLA will organize workshops on the following topics:

- Key registers for the implementation of the SDGs, Finland, November 2019
- Jointly with Surveyor General of State Lands, Natural Resources Canada (Sector Lands and Minerals) and WPLA “How to assure rights of indigenous peoples and minorities” in Canada in early 2020.

61. Further, the Working Party will finalize the study on benchmarking in land administration studies on the costs for registration/transfer of real estate and registration of mortgages for the UNECE region in 2019. The update on the Fraud in Land Administration Systems will also be finalised in 2019. The technical guidelines - Informal Development: formalization of informal constructions will be finalised and presented at the 11th Session of the Working Party 2019. Research on the Future Scenarios in land administration will continue, the next roundtable will be held in Amsterdam on 18 December 2018.

5. Country profiles on housing and land management

62. The Country Profile Belarus will be launched in May 2019. Follow up to recently concluded country profiles will include monitoring of, and support to, the implementation of the country profiles’ recommendations, including through the preparation of national action plans on sustainable housing and urban development and model projects.

63. A follow-up will be organised to the requests by Governments of Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan to prepare their Country Profiles on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. Start of work on the profiles is a matter of availability of funding.

64. The Government of Cyprus also requested to conduct a thematic study on housing policies.

IV. Any proposed change to the subsidiary structure of the Committee

65. To better reflect the nature of the Committee's mandate and in line with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other key international agreements, at its seventy-ninth session, the Committee endorsed the Bureau's proposal to rename the Committee to the 'Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management'. The Committee recommended that the name change proposal be forwarded to the UNECE Executive Committee for consideration by the 68th session of the Commission.

V. Intersectoral cooperation

66. The Committee continued to cooperate, especially on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with UNECE subprogrammes: (1) Environment, (2) Transport, (3) Statistics, (4) Economic Cooperation and Integration, (5) Sustainable Energy, and (7) Forestry and Timber. This cooperation is organised through the four high-impact areas where multiple SDGs converge (SDG "nexus clusters"): (a) Sustainable use of natural resources; (b) Sustainable and smart cities; (c) Sustainable mobility and smart connectivity; (d) Measuring and monitoring SDGs (methodology). The Nexus area "Smart and sustainable cities" SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities is one of the identified core SDGs for UNECE. Many UNECE subprogrammes are contributing to the implementation of targets under this SDG. The high-impact area "Smart and sustainable cities" allows to group existing UNECE activities under a common umbrella. This will provide a new narrative to integrate and communicate our work, while reaching out to new constituencies. It will also facilitate strengthening existing partnerships and developing new ones. The Committee is also cooperating with the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division in the context of the activities of the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings.

67. A seminar on "Land-Use Planning and Industrial Safety", held in Mechelen, Belgium, on 16 and 17 May 2018, was organized jointly with the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention, in cooperation with the host country and the European Investment Bank.

68. The secretariat cooperated with the Environment Division and reviewed the chapters on housing and environment of recent Environmental Performance Reviews. It also contributed to the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Ostrava, Czech Republic, 13-15 June 2017).

VI. Technical Cooperation activities

69. The United Nations Development Account (UNDA) Tenth tranche project "Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition" has been carried out in collaboration with UN-Habitat. Under this project, advisory missions and national validation workshops were organised in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. A policy paper with the methodology for data collection relevant to the 2030 Agenda and New Urban Agenda was also drafted. A group of international experts have proposed recommendations to the draft legislation on the provision of housing and rental housing in Ukraine. The recommendations were presented during the mission to Kiev in April 2018; accompanying the mission a roundtable to discuss the best international practices and the housing challenges in Ukraine was also organized. The project activities

will be finalised in 2019; the final project workshop will be held on 4 October 2019 in Geneva, back to back with the Committee's eightieth session.

70. Under the Regional Programme of Technical Cooperation, a city level assessment to prepare a smart sustainable city profile for Voznesensk, Ukraine, using the U4SSC Key Performance Indicators, was conducted. Capacity-building workshops on affordable housing were organised in Almaty and Astana, Kazakhstan; Grodno, Belarus; and Kiev, Ukraine. Work has commenced on the Technical Guidelines on formalization of informal constructions and will be finalised and presented at the 11th Session of the Working Party 2019.

71. The UNDA Eleventh tranche project "Strengthening evidence-based and participatory housing policies and strategies" is being carried out in collaboration with UN-Habitat. The project includes cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development of Bulgaria on the review of the draft National Housing Strategy and other documents. A joint workshop on housing and land administration was held on 15-16 November 2018.

VII. Cooperation with other international organizations

72. The Committee strengthened coordination and cooperation with United Nations system organisations working in the UNECE region on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDG11 and other urban related SDGs. Joint planning of activities was developed with UN-Habitat, the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, OECD, Housing Europe Federation, the World Economic Forum, Union of Cities and Local Governments, and many other pan-European networks of organizations as well as cities, on issues related to affordable and healthy housing and its planned studies on housing finance.

73. A coordination event 'In focus: SDG 11' was held by the UNECE with the participation of its partners, which consisted of a roundtable discussions of different UN agencies and stakeholder organisations who presented information on their activities related to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and other urban-related SDGs and discussed cooperation for the future. Following the event, the Committee secretariat developed a joint plan of projects and other activities for 2019-2020.

74. The cooperation was deepened with ITU and other UN entities and stakeholders who are members of the global initiative U4SSC. The UNECE, the ITU and UNDP worked together to organise a series of events to support national and local governments in implementing KPIs for smart sustainable cities. The Organization for International Economic Relations (OIER) and the UNECE worked together within the programme United Smart Cities. An online platform for cities and private sector organisations was developed at www.unitedsmartcities.org; work is ongoing to develop a webportal for online evaluation of the cities against the Key Performance Indicators on Smart Sustainable cities.

75. In cooperation with ECE/FAO Committee for Forest and Forest Products, the Committee organised also continues its cooperation with ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section. A high-level panel event "The Sky is the Limit" high-level panel event was jointly organised with the ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section and the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit, together with the FAO Liaison Office in Geneva as part of the International Day of Forests on 31 March 2018, to showcase innovative approaches to integrate green spaces into cities via urban farming, vertical forests, wood construction and architecture.

76. The UNECE is working together with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UN-Habitat to prepare a report on cities in the Asia-Pacific region, titled the Future of Asia and Pacific Cities 2019 Report. The report

includes the Central Asian countries. The UNECE hosted a Sub-regional meeting for Central Asia on the 5 October 2018 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

77. Under the Memorandum of Understanding on Land Administration and Management with the FAO, the Working Party on Land Administration is collaborating under a bi-annual cooperation plan with FAO, as well as with the World Bank and the European Commission Joint Research Centre. The Working Party regularly cooperates on the organization of joint events and studies with other international organizations involved in land administration in the region, including UN-Habitat, the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), the EU INSPIRE Initiative, the Council of European Geodetic Surveyors (CLGE), Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union (PCC), EuroGeographics, and others. In 2018, the WPLA organised jointly with the FAO and LANDNET a joint workshop in Skopje, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (19-21 June 2018). The workshop focused on “Best practices on land consolidation legislation” the workshop presented and discussed the preliminary results of the joint research project on land consolidation that currently is being carried out by FAO, Technical University of Munich and WPLA.

78. The WPLA is actively contributing to the work of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (UNGGIM). In collaboration with the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (EG-LAM), the Working Party took part in the side event “Strategic Partnership for Sustainable Development in Land Administration” on 30 July 2018 in New York; the UNGGIM and EG LAM 8th session of UN-GGIM on 1-2 August 2018 in New York; and the International Seminar on Land Administration - UNGGIM in September & November 2018 in Deqing, Zhejiang Province, China.
