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**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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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 Committee on Housing and Land Management of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Ms. Elena Szolgayová (Slovakia), is pleased to submit her report to the ninety-sixth meeting of EXCOM on 30 January 2018.

### **I. Introduction**

2. The Committee, which was established in 1947, is the only open intergovernmental platform to deal with urban development, housing and land administration in the UNECE region. The region covered by the Committee is home to 1.3 billion people, 17% of the total global population, contributing to more than 40% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP).

3. While cities are powerful engines of economic development, the rapid growth of cities and urban population resulted in enormous challenges. Ageing as well as drastic increase in the international migration flows in the UNECE region brought changes in demand and more pressure on infrastructure and social services. Moreover, increased urban expansion has drastically reduced the land available for other uses. Climate change and natural disasters have caused vast economic and social losses and increased the need for cities to be resilient. With the expansion of the knowledge economy and automation, cities are being reshaped to respond to new needs in education, training and employment. All these factors in the context of the post-financial crisis amplify the challenges related to 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 smart investment choices.

4. Under the umbrella of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, member States exchange experiences and best practices in order to address these complex challenges in their respective countries.

5. The work of the Committee contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, and the achievement of the housing, urban and land-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – in particular Goal 11. Due to its cross-cutting nature, the work of the Committee contributes to Goals 1 (No poverty), 3 (Good health and wellbeing), 5 (Gender equality), 7 (Affordable and clean energy), 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), 12 (Responsible consumption and production), and 13 (Climate action), 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the goals). Due consideration is also given by the Committee to the integration of climate change mitigation measures into national policies, strategies and planning in the area of housing, urban development and land management.

6. This report outlines the main achievements of the Committee in implementing its Programme of Work in the period between October 2016 and the present time. More information is contained in the report of the seventy-eighth Committee session, which was held on 8–10 November 2017 in Geneva (document ECE/HBP/190).

## II. Achievements over the past fifteen months

### *Sustainable housing and real estate markets*

#### **Adoption of the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development**

7. The Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development<sup>1</sup> was adopted by Ministers and Heads of Delegations at the Ministerial Segment of the seventy-eighth session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on 9 November 2017. The meeting brought together high-level representatives from forty-four member States of the UNECE region. The Ministerial Declaration reiterates the importance for governments at all levels and relevant stakeholders in the UNECE region to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and other relevant global and regional commitments. By adopting the Declaration, high-level representatives of the member States reaffirmed their commitment to promote the implementation of the above-mentioned agreements and principles through synergies, intergovernmental and cross-sectoral cooperation.

#### **Implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing**

8. The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing (E/ECE/1478/Rev.1), a non-legally binding document that aims to support member States as they seek to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all, was endorsed by the UNECE on 14 April 2015.<sup>2</sup> The Committee at its seventy-seventh session in 2016 adopted guidelines for the implementation of the Charter, including terms of reference for the establishment of Geneva UN Charter Centres (ECE/HBP/2016/2).<sup>3</sup>

9. Based on these guidelines, Geneva UN Charter Centres were established in Albania, Estonia and the United Kingdom in 2016 and 2017 in cooperation with relevant authorities and key stakeholders (please see a summary of the activities of the centres in the Annex). The Centres report on their activities to the Committee at its annual session and seek guidance on their work from the Committee Bureau during the intersessional period, as needed. The Centres support the Committee in the implementation of the Charter through active dissemination of information on the Charter and its principles (e.g. publications, media outreach, and national and local events); by organising capacity building and networking activities, providing advisory services to stakeholders, regional and local authorities, and by conducting relevant studies. Activities of the Centres are coordinated with the secretariat.

#### **Affordable and social housing**

10. As a follow up to the study, “Social Housing in the UNECE Region: Models, Trends and Challenges” (ECE/HBP/182), which examined current trends, challenges and social housing models in the region, a study on housing migrants was prepared with the support of the City of Vienna and the Swiss Federal Office for Housing

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<sup>1</sup>

[http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2017/ECE\\_HBP\\_2017\\_1\\_ENG\\_cover.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2017/ECE_HBP_2017_1_ENG_cover.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Report of sixty-sixth session E/2015/37-E/ECE/1472 at [www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/2015/G1516824\\_E.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/commission/2015/G1516824_E.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Available at [www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2016/ECE\\_HBP\\_2016\\_2.en.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2016/ECE_HBP_2016_2.en.pdf)

(ECE/HBP/2017/Inf.2 rev.1). The ‘Housing for Migrants Study’ examined the current challenges and practices in housing migrants in the UNECE region and formulated recommendations. The study underlined the importance of the engagement of beneficiaries in housing projects and of the host communities in the process of migrant integration. The study will be published in 2018.

### **Energy efficiency in buildings**

11. Thanks to contributions received from Denmark and the Russian Federation to the project “Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings in the ECE Region”, the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings of the Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Committee on Sustainable Energy (through its Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency) started its work. The first Joint Task Force meeting was held in Geneva on 30 and 31 October 2017. Work started also on the mapping of energy efficiency standards in buildings in the UNECE region; a report on the study will be prepared in 2018. The framework guidelines for energy efficiency standards in buildings (ECE/HBP/2017/3) were developed by the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and adopted by both Committees (ECE/HBP/190). They provide a framework for the activities of the Joint Task Force and for training and capacity building in this area.

### **Work of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group**

12. The Real Estate Market Advisory Group continued work in its seven subgroups which are dealing with different topics according to the Real Estate Market Advisory Group’s Programme of Work (ECE/HBP/2016/3)<sup>4</sup>, namely:

- subgroup 1 on energy efficiency in buildings and implementation of housing policies in Eastern Europe;
- subgroup 2 on the dissemination of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and support to its Centres of Excellence;
- subgroup 3 on land markets and land administration;
- subgroup 4 on sustainable urban development and smart cities financing;
- subgroup 5 on affordable and social housing;
- subgroup 6 on registration, property valuation and cooperation with the Working Party on Land Administration; and
- subgroup 7 on housing finance.

13. The Real Estate Market Advisory Group worked on the update of its publication, “Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets”, taking into account the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, and other relevant policy documents. The Advisory Group provided input to the questions of the survey on Speed of Registration and Online Access issued by the Working Party on Land Administration.

14. During the reporting period, the Real Estate Market Advisory Group organized the following conferences and events:

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2016/ECE\\_HBP\\_2016\\_3.en.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2016/ECE_HBP_2016_3.en.pdf)

- the seminar “Long Term Sustainable Value: approaches for valuation of properties for lending purposes” (13 October 2016, Bonn, Germany);
- the conference on Housing Finance – Market and Structures (14 November 2016, Berlin);
- the Smart Sustainable Cities Financing forum (7–8 November 2016, Ruggell, Liechtenstein);
- in cooperation with the Working Party on Land Administration, the Workshop "State and market: Cadastres and Property Right Registers" (24–25 November 2016, Madrid, Spain);
- the International Workshop “Housing estates what’s next” (12 October 2017, Prague), back-to-back with the European Urban Forum; and
- the Education Seminar on the integration of energy and new information sources in the classroom (1–2 December 2017, Alicante, Spain).

### *Sustainable urban development*

#### **Implementation of the New Urban Agenda**

15. The Committee actively participated in the discussions on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda which was adopted by the the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in October 2016. The secretariat organized and/or attended the following meetings to support the creation and consolidation of platforms towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and develop roadmaps and follow up mechanisms for different stakeholder groups:

- Post-Habitat III Cross-Cutting Expert Group Meeting on Action Framework for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (5–7 April 2017, New York).
- Habitat III UN Task Team Expert Group meeting (12–16 June 2017, New York).
- High-Level Meeting on the New Urban Agenda and UN-Habitat Trusteeship Council Chamber (4-6 September 2017, New York).
- The Urban Breakfast (2 October 2017, Geneva), jointly organized by UNECE and UN-Habitat, on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the SDGs in the UNECE region.
- Presentation and photo exhibition "Geneva: The Habitats Within", Palais des Nations (2 October 2017, Geneva).
- “The European Urban Forum: International conference on perspectives of urban development in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe” (13 October, 2017 in Prague), organised by the Ministry of Regional Development of Czech Republic.

16. Special emphasis was placed on priorities for the UNECE region, areas for synergies and cooperation, as well as the strategic role of cities and municipalities in urban and housing development. Cooperation was established with the EU Partnership on Housing on the Urban Agenda for the EU<sup>5</sup>. The secretariat attended meetings of the EU Partnership on Housing (Amsterdam, 13-14 June 2017 and Glasgow, 21-22 September) and a joint event was held on 10 November 2017 back to back with the 78th

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<sup>5</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/housing>

session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management. Existing partnerships and alliances were strengthened and new ones developed in pursuit of the activities of the Committee.

### **Smart sustainable cities**

17. In the framework of the “United for Smart Sustainable Cities” (U4SSC) initiative, the secretariat, together with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the other 14 UN bodies involved in the U4SSC initiative, finalized the Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities in June 2017. These will be tested in 50 cities around the world. The indicators are fully aligned with the SDGs, as recommended by the Committee (ECE/HBP/2016/4), and support the implementation of the Agenda 2030 at the local level.

18. During its first year of activity, the U4SSC with the active participation of UNECE, elaborated the following studies which were published as online publications at the U4SSC website:

- Connecting cities and communities with the SDGs;
- Implementing SDG11 by connecting sustainability policies and urban planning practices through ICTs;
- Enhancing innovation and participation in smart sustainable cities: case studies.

19. In the framework of the U4SSC, several events were organized:

- Smart Sustainable Cities Financing forum Liechtenstein (7–8 November 2016, Ruggell, Liechtenstein);
- 7<sup>th</sup> Green Standards Week, and Second Meeting of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities initiative (5 April 2017, Manizales, Colombia);
- Towards Smart Sustainable Cities – Integrated Approaches (14 June 2017, Astana, Kazakhstan), within the Ministerial Conference and 8<sup>th</sup> Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.

20. The UNECE also finalised the smart sustainable city profile for the town of Goris in Armenia. Results of the study and policy recommendations were presented at the launch event in Yerevan on 11 September 2017. An advisory Mission to Voznesensk, Ukraine, was held in December 2017 to prepare a smart sustainable city profile for the city of Voznesensk. The city profile is expected to be completed in 2018.

### ***Sustainable land administration and management***

#### **Working Party on Land Administration session and other events**

21. The Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) held its tenth session<sup>6</sup> in March 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. It was preceded by the Third Meeting of International Organizations/Agencies working in land administration and management.

22. During the reporting period the WPLA, together with key partners, organized a number of workshops and knowledge sharing events, namely:

- workshop "State and market: Cadastres and Property Right Registers" (24–25 November 2016, Madrid);

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44622>

- special event “Discovery Day 2016: Spatial Data Infrastructure in support of good land governance” (28 November 2016, Rome), jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC);
- joint WPLA/CLKREN workshop “Land Administration and Land Management in the Information Age” with the Cadastre and Land Registry Knowledge Exchange Network (21 April 2017, Lausanne, Switzerland), in collaboration with the EuroGeographics-Cadastre and Land Registry Knowledge Exchange Network and the Swiss Federal Office of Topography (swisstopo);
- Third International Conference on Eurasian Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI): “From National to Regional Cooperation” (29–30 June 2017, Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan), in cooperation with the World Bank and the State registration service of Kyrgyzstan;
- workshop on “Data Driven Economy in Central and Eastern Europe: Challenges and Perspectives” (5 September 2017, Strasbourg, France) as part of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe (INSPIRE) Conference, in cooperation with FAO and JRC;
- “Discovery Day 2017: Technology’s contribution to improve tenure governance and deal with the world’s most pressing issues towards achieving the SDGs” (5 October 2017, Rome) in cooperation with FAO and JRC;
- Common Vision Conference: “Tradition meets Innovation” (5–6 October 2017, Vienna) jointly with the Council of European Geodetic Surveyors (CLGE), the European Land Registry Association (ELRA), EuroGeographics, International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), European Land Information Service, Permanent Committee on Cadastre in the European Union.

23. The WPLA is part of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management Expert Group on Land Administration and Management and participated in the Expert Group Meeting on 14–15 March 2017 in Delft, The Netherlands, where the preliminary results on the National Tenure Atlas were presented.

#### **Studies on selected topics in land management**

24. The WPLA continued activities on the preparation of technical guidelines on informal settlements in the UNECE region, which will be finalised in 2018.

25. A follow-up to the study, “Land Registration and Cadastre: One or Two Agencies?”, prepared by the WPLA in 2015, analysed what forms of integration can be referred to as ‘mergers’ and how these forms affect organisational effectiveness. Outcomes of the study are available in the report “Status of the research on mergers of cadastres and land registries” (ECE/HBP/WP.7/2017/4) which was presented at the tenth Working Party session.

26. In 2017, the WPLA issued a revised survey, “Speed of Registration and Online Access” as part of its Benchmarking Survey Series that builds upon the 2014 “Survey on Land Administration Systems in the ECE Region” (ECE/HBP/180). Preliminary results of the follow-up study are available in document ECE/HBP/WP.7/2017/5.

#### **Work of the Bureau of the Working Party**

27. The WPLA implemented its activities with the support of its Task Groups:
- (a) Group for Outreach and Promotion

- (b) Group for Benchmarking of land administration systems
- (c) Group for cooperation between the Working Party and the Real Estate Market Advisory Board
- (d) Group on Land Consolidation
- (e) Group on Informal Settlements
- (f) Group on future scenarios for land administration
- (g) Group on Fraud in land administration

### ***Country profiles on housing and land management***

28. The Country Profile on Housing and Land Management of Armenia was completed and launched in September 2017. The draft of the Country Profile of Kazakhstan was prepared and its policy recommendations were endorsed by the Committee at its seventy-eighth session. The Country Profile Kazakhstan is expected to be launched in May 2018 in Astana. The first fact finding mission was organised for the preparation of the Country Profile on Housing, Urban Development and Land Administration of Belarus in December 2017.

29. The Committee secretariat, jointly with the governments of Armenia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan, worked on the development of National Action Plans to implement the recommendations of the country profiles.

30. A policy paper describing the approach to the development of the National Action Plans was prepared with the support of the UNDA project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing and urban development in countries with economies in transition”.

31. The guidelines for the preparation of country profiles approved by the Committee in December 2015 (ECE/HBP/2015/6) were updated following recommendations of an external evaluation of the country profiles programme in 2016. The updated guidelines ensure that the Country Profiles focus their analysis on progress in aligning the SDGs at national level. The revised guidelines (ECE/HBP/2017/5) were endorsed by the Committee’s seventy-eighth session.

## **III. Major activities planned for 2018 and beyond**

32. 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. Due to its cross-cutting nature, it will also contribute to the achievement of Goals 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17. Due consideration will be given to the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into national policies, strategies and planning in the area of 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 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.

33. The Committee will continue to cooperate with its partner organisations outside of the UNECE; and it will also strengthen cooperation and synergies, 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.

34. The following activities are expected to be implemented:

### ***Sustainable housing and real estate markets***

35. To promote sustainable housing and real estate markets, the Committee will continue its activities on housing affordability with a focus on housing finance and management, adaptation of the housing stock to demographic changes, support governments in improving energy efficiency in buildings, facilitating the maintenance, management and refurbishment of existing housing stock and developing real estate markets.

### **Aligning Committee activities with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda**

36. The Committee will follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE region for the period 2014–2020.

37. A guidance document on aligning Committee activities with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Charter and other relevant documents is expected to be prepared; and regional and subregional consultations to be organised during 2018–2019. A policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development (UNDA 10th tranche project, UN-Habitat) will be formulated.

38. Training sessions and side events will be organised jointly with UN-Habitat at the World Urban Forum on 7–13 February 2018 in Kuala-Lumpur, Malaysia. Roundtables on SDG 11 will be held as part of the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (Geneva, 1–2 March 2018); and a side event on SDG 11 at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2018 is expected to be organised (New York, July 2018).

### **Implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing through the activities of Charter Centres**

39. The Committee will continue working to promote the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing through the organization of advisory services, capacity-building and dissemination activities, and the network of Geneva UN Charter Centres. The Centres will continue supporting the Committee in the dissemination of information on the Charter, and conduct studies and organize capacity-building activities at national and regional levels to exchange experiences and best practices. In addition to the already established centres in Albania and Estonia and the UK, discussions are ongoing to establish Geneva UN Charter Centres in Armenia, Belarus and other countries. An integrated capacity building programme will be developed jointly by the Centres; and a regional training portal featuring best practices on sustainable housing and urban development and containing e-learning materials will be established.

### **Planned activities on affordable and decent housing**

40. A study on housing migrants will be finalised and published in spring 2018. Studies on housing finance and on management of multiapartment buildings will be initiated. A regional workshop on affordable and social housing will be organised (12-13 April 2018, Vienna, Austria). A panel on housing affordability as part of the Conference

of the European Real Estate Society will be organised by the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (27–30 June 2018, Reading, UK). A subregional workshop on affordable housing for Central Asia is planned to be organised in November 2018 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Advisory services and capacity building activities on affordable housing will be implemented jointly with UN-Habitat, Housing Europe and other UNECE partners.

#### **Planned activities on energy efficiency in buildings**

41. The Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings will continue its work on the mapping of energy efficiency standards in buildings in the UNECE region. In addition, the following activities will be carried out:

- Establishment of an online database of experts on energy efficiency in buildings;
- Mapping of existing technologies to enhance energy efficiency in buildings, gap analysis and recommendations for their use in the region;
- Organization of three meetings of the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency in Buildings in Armenia in April, in Geneva in October and in Kiev in November 2018; and
- Development of a Compendium of best practices for existing standards and technologies on energy efficiency in buildings.

#### **Planned activities for the Real Estate Market Advisory Group**

42. The Real Estate Market Advisory Group will contribute to the Joint Task Force in the implementation of the project “Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings in the ECE Region”; and to the “United Smart Cities” project and its related initiative “United for Smart Sustainable Cities”, in particular by revising the initiative’s study “Guidelines on Tools and Mechanisms to Finance Smart Sustainable Cities Projects”. Further, it will finalize the update of its publication “Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets” and contribute to the WPLA benchmarking series surveys. The Advisory Group will also update the UNECE guidelines on management of multiapartment buildings.

43. The Advisory Group will organize a special panel on housing affordability as part of the European Real Estate Society (ERES) Conference (27–30 June 2018, Reading, UK) and a workshop in Greece, in cooperation with the WPLA in September 2018.

#### ***Sustainable urban development***

44. The secretariat will support the Committee in promoting an integrated approach to 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 addressing the challenges of informal settlements. The activities on urban planning will also support the implementation of the UNECE smart sustainable city indicators and the preparation of smart sustainable city profiles.

#### **Planned activities on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda**

45. After the adoption of the New Urban Agenda at the Habitat III Conference in October 2016, the Committee is working on its implementation in the UNECE region. Activities will include, among others, capacity-building activities and advisory services.

The 9<sup>th</sup> session of the World Urban Forum<sup>7</sup> on 7–13 February 2018 in Kuala Lumpur will be the next opportunity to review progress on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

### **Planned activities on Smart Sustainable Cities**

46. The Committee secretariat will continue its work on the smart sustainable cities project, addressing housing, infrastructure and quality of life issues in cities. Work on the testing of the key performance indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities and the preparation of smart sustainable city profiles will also continue, in particular the preparation of the smart sustainable city profile of Voznesensk, Ukraine, which will be finalised in 2018. The Third Meeting of the U4SSC initiative as well as other events will be organized jointly with the ITU and other partners on 25-26 April 2018 in Malaga, Spain. The UNECE will work on two main U4SSC deliverables: Guidelines on tools and mechanisms for financing smart sustainable cities projects and Guidelines for circular cities.

### ***Land administration and management***

47. To assist member States to improve 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.

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

- Land consolidation (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, June 2018),
- Real estate markets (Greece, September 2018) in cooperation with the REM,
- Key registers for SDGs (Norway, May 2019).

48. Further, the Working Party will conduct a study on land consolidation and compile best practices. It will organize the next benchmarking in land administration studies on the costs for registration/transfer of real estate and registration of mortgages for the UNECE region, and work on an update of the Land Administration Systems Survey. Technical Guidelines on the formalization of informal real estate and informal markets in the UNECE region will be finalised in 2018.

49. The UNECE will also continue cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organisation, UN-Habitat and the World Bank on the development of Technical Guidelines on the formalization of informal real estate and informal markets in the UNECE region.

### ***Country profiles on housing and land management***

50. The Country Profiles on housing and land management of Belarus will be prepared in 2018. A research mission and a training workshop will be organised in Belarus from 30 May to 10 June 2018. The Country Profile Kazakhstan will be launched in May 2018. Future country profiles will focus in particular on the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the New Urban Agenda and other international commitments. Follow up

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<sup>7</sup> <http://wuf9.org/>

to the country profiles will also 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.

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

51. The mandate of the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings, as a body of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency, was renewed by the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-sixth session (26–28 September 2017) for the years 2018-2019 (ECE/ENERGY/113 para 51 and 52) The Committee at its 78<sup>th</sup> session decided to continue the Committee's participation in the work of the Joint Task Force for the period 2018-2019 in accordance with its terms of reference as contained in ECE/ENERGY/2017/5-ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2017/7. The Executive Committee approved the renewal of mandate and adoption of the work plan 2018-2019 of the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency, at its ninety-fifth session on 11 December 2017 (ECE/EX/2017/L.12).

#### **V. Follow-up of the 2015 session of the UNECE**

52. The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing was endorsed by the UNECE at its session on 16 April 2015 (E/ECE/1478/Rev.1). Three Geneva UN Charter Centres were established during 2016–2017 in Albania, Estonia and United Kingdom as referred to in paragraphs 8 and 9 following up on the endorsement of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing by the UNECE in 2015. The Centres are working to develop an integrated capacity building programme on sustainable housing and urban development and establish a regional training portal.

#### **VI. Intersectoral activities: new activities and progress in existing ones**

##### *Sustainable housing and real estate markets*

53. The Committee has engaged in regular cooperation with the Committee on Sustainable Energy on energy efficiency in buildings and both Committees co-lead the activities of the Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings. The Forests, Land and Housing Division conducts regional workshops related to energy efficiency in buildings in collaboration with the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division as part of the annual International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development. The Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development was held on 11-14 June 2017 in the framework of the EXPO 2017 "Future Energy" in Astana, Kazakhstan, where the workshop "Towards Smart Sustainable Cities – Integrated Approaches" was held. The secretariat also participated in the panel on "Energy Efficiency in Buildings: Framework Guidelines" organized by the Sustainable Energy Division.

54. Cooperation with the UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) on green building will continue. A workshop on wooden buildings will be organised with COFFI at its 76<sup>th</sup> session in Canada in November 2018.

##### *Sustainable urban development*

55. A seminar on "Land-Use Planning and Industrial Safety" will be held in Brussels, Belgium, on 16 and 17 May 2018, organized jointly with the UNECE Industrial Accidents

Convention, in cooperation with the host country and the European Investment Bank. Another workshop on “Water and Cities” will be organised in 2019 jointly with the secretariat of the UNECE Water Convention Protocol on Water and Health.

56. The secretariat cooperated with the Transport, Health and Environment Pan European Programme (THE PEP) in the context of the preparations of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Ostrava, Czech Republic, 13 to 15 June 2017). The cooperation with THE PEP will continue in view of the relevance of the Committee's activities on sustainable urban development for the implementation of THE PEP priority goal 5.

### *Country profiles on housing and land management*

57. The secretariat cooperates with the UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews (EPR) team, by participating in the review of the EPR draft chapters on housing and environment. The two teams also exchange relevant country information.

## **VII. Cooperation with other organizations**

58. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the housing sector, urban development and land management, the Committee is engaged in intersectoral cooperation with other organizations, and builds upon synergies with its partners.

### **A. Sustainable housing and real estate markets**

59. The Committee on Housing and Land Management cooperates regularly with UN-Habitat, the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, the EU, Eurocities, and many other pan-European networks of organizations and cities, on issues related to affordable and healthy housing. These activities included:

- presentation at “The State of Housing in the EU 2017” launch event at the EU Committee of the Regions (Brussels, 17 October 2017)
- the study “Housing migrants in the UNECE region: Challenges and Practices” together with the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights finalized in 2017; and
- the cities roundtable on “Investment in greenfield and brownfield land for affordable housing” (Geneva, 10 November 2017) jointly organized with Eurocities.

60. Cooperation with other international organizations, such as the International Organization for Standardization, on energy efficiency in buildings, will be carried out through the work of the UNECE Joint Task Force on Energy-Efficiency Standards in Buildings throughout 2018.

### **B. Sustainable urban development**

61. The Committee is working together with its partner United Nations agencies on different aspects of urban planning and management. Active cooperation with UN-Habitat is continuing on the implementation of the “International Urban and Territorial Planning Guidelines”, which are used as a guiding material also for the country profiles on housing and land management and capacity building workshops.

62. Coordination with other United Nations Regional Commissions was established for participation in Habitat III, and discussions continue on relevant housing and urban development issues. Coordination with the United Nations system working in the UNECE region for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda has been also established. A joint side event by the Regional Commissions will be organised at the 9th World Urban Forum (Kuala Lumpur, 7-13 February 2018).

63. At the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP23), which took place on 6-17 November 2017 in Bonn, Germany, the Committee was involved in the organisation of two events with the United Nations system: “Energy policy tradeoffs within the broader sustainable development challenge” and “Sustainable Urban Development as a Catalyst of Climate Action”.

64. The Committee continues cooperation with OECD, UN-Habitat and other organisations involved in the interagency National Urban Policy Programme through its ongoing technical cooperation activities. Preparations will start in January 2018 for a regional workshop covering issues such as national policies for adaptation to climate change, disaster preparedness and response, wastewater management, recycling and reuse, in cooperation with the secretariat of the UNECE Protocol on Water and Health under the UNECE Water Convention. The workshop will be held in 2019.

65. Implementation of the United Smart Cities project<sup>8</sup> will continue to involve international partners and the country offices of UNDP. The recently published Smart Sustainable City profile for Goris, Armenia was carried out in cooperation with UNDP Armenia and the one for Vosnesensk, Ukraine is currently being developed with UNDP Ukraine.

66. The U4SSC initiative, where UNECE and ITU jointly provide the secretariat, has an Advisory Board composed of 14 other United Nations agencies, programmes, funds and secretariats<sup>9</sup>, which review and advise on the outputs. The initiative is still open for other UN bodies to join. UNECE will share the secretariat with UNIDO for the delivering of the “Guidelines for circular cities” output in 2018.

### **C. Country profiles on housing and land management**

66. Under the Memorandum of Understanding on Land Administration and Management with the FAO, the Working Party 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, the EU INSPIRE Initiative, the European Land Information Service, EuroGeographics, and others. The WPLA organizes annual meetings of international organizations and agencies, which serve as a neutral platform

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.unece.org/housing/smartcities.html>

<sup>9</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UN-Women, the United Nations Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), UN-Habitat, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI), the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations University-Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and World Trade Organization (WTO)

to discuss how to best work together to improve land management and land administration in the UNECE region.

67. The Working Party will present on its work at the First Arab Land Conference organised by the World Bank, the Global Land Tool Network, UN-Habitat, the Arab League and the Arab Union of Surveyors (Dubai, 26-28 February 2018) and at the World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty (Washington, D.C., 19-23 March 2018). A joint Conference of WPLA, FAO and LANDNET on “Best practices on land consolidation legislation” will be held in Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on 19 – 21 June 2018.

#### **D. Country profiles on housing and land management**

68. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the results of the country profiles, the Committee established cooperation with UN-Habitat and UNDP offices in countries where the profiles are being developed. The Committee also established cooperation with the OECD for the preparation of urban planning chapters of country profiles.

### **VIII. Technical cooperation activities**

69. In 2017 the secretariat completed the implementation of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing and urban development in countries with economies in transition”. This is a joint project with UN-Habitat. The UNECE and UN Habitat assisted Armenia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan in the development of National Action Plans for Sustainable Housing and Urban Development.

70. A draft National Action Plan was prepared for every country-project beneficiary. Its development assisted the Government in formulating a comprehensive and coherent housing policy, which will allow the consolidation of multiple ad hoc activities on housing policy, which were previously implemented without any coordination. It will also promote cooperation between different key stakeholders in the housing sector at different levels (national and local), as well as synergies between diverse activities and projects on housing and urban development. The National Action Plan launch events took place in Serbia (31 January-2 February, 2017), Moldova (27-28 April, 2017), Tajikistan (24 May 2017) and Georgia (11 September 2017). The governments have already started the implementation of the Action Plans.

71. To further discuss the realization of the project, two additional events were organized in 2017: a regional meeting of the coordinators in Geneva on 9 March parallel to the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Working Party on Land Administration and a side event “Towards strengthening capacities in national urban policy making in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region countries” in Paris on 16 May 2017, during the Second International Conference on National Urban Policy, co-organized with the OECD and UN-Habitat. The side event supported countries of the CIS region in developing and implementing policies for sustainable housing and urban development against the background of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. It also facilitated inter-regional cooperation and transfer of knowledge. The session focused on the aims, first outcomes, lessons learnt and follow-up to the project.

72. To conclude the project, a regional meeting of project coordinators and consultants was organized in Moldova in October 2017. The meeting shared best practices and lessons learned on the preparation and follow-up of National Action Plans and presented

the draft policy paper with best practices and guidelines. The project final conference was held on 10 November in Geneva, back to back with the Committee's seventy-eighth session. An independent evaluation of the project has started and will be finalised by end of January 2018.

73. Guidelines for the preparation and implementation of the National Action Plans and a policy paper with best practices were developed in cooperation with UN-Habitat. They were discussed at the regional meeting in Chisinau and presented at the final project conference.

74. The secretariat continued implementation of the UNDA 10th tranche project "Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition" in collaboration with UN-Habitat. Its aim is to strengthen national capacities for the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in four selected countries: Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. The project is being implemented during 2016-2019. Advisory missions were organized in Albania, Georgia, and Ukraine in 2017.

75. Expected outputs in 2018 include: advisory missions and national validation workshops in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine; a policy paper with the methodology for data collection relevant to the 2030 Agenda and New Urban Agenda; and country specific guidelines and training materials.

76. 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. Work has started on the Technical Guidelines on formalization of informal real estate and informal markets; and will be finalised in spring 2018.

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## **Annex: Activities of Geneva UN Charter Centres on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development**

1. The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing (E/ECE/1478/Rev.1), a non-legally binding document that aims to support member States as they seek to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all, was endorsed by the UNECE on 14 April 2015. Three Geneva UN Charter Centres were established during 2016-2017 in Albania, Estonia and United Kingdom in cooperation with authorities and stakeholders to support the implementation of the Charter in the respective countries and in the UNECE region. This document provides a summary report on the activities of the three centres.

### **A. Albania**

2. The Geneva UN Charter Centre in Albania was established in 2016 in cooperation with the Ministry of Urban Development of Albania. A focus of the Centre is on promoting implementation of sustainable housing policies in Albania. The Centre supports the ministry in training local authorities and stakeholders in housing policies and organising consultations on the implementation of existing and development of new laws and regulations on housing and urban development.

3. The following activities in 2016-2017 were implemented: The Charter was translated into Albanian language, posted on the UNECE website and disseminated to 61 Albanian municipalities, the National Housing Agency, the National Agency on Social Housing, the UNDP Office in Tirana and other stakeholders. Information on the Geneva UN Charter was also shared through the Ministry of Urban Development website. The Centre promoted the Geneva UN Charter through TV interviews, an Urban Breakfast event (11 April 2017) and an International Regional Conference “Leaving No One Behind” (7 April 2017).

4. The Centre contributed to the preparation of a concept paper for a new law on social housing which was coordinated by the Ministry in cooperation with UNDP Albania and the Council of Europe and to the organisation of an international workshop “Creation of a roadmap for an integrated social services for housing” on 3–5 July in Tirana.

5. The Centre also developed a training curricular on social housing which was used during a national workshop on “Challenges of the Social Housing” (3 March 2017) and a series of national roundtables which were organized to promote the implementation of National Strategy on Social Housing.

### **B. Estonia**

6. The Geneva UN Charter Centre in Estonia was established in 2016 in Estonia in cooperation with the Estonian Union of Co-operative Housing Associations (EKYL). EKYL is specialized in the development and organisation of training programs for housing management for local housing management associations in Estonia, as well as organising trainings for housing associations in countries with economies in transition, such as Georgia, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and others.

7. In 2016-2017, the Centre worked to promote the Geneva UN Charter through its cooperation network with national state organisations, including the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Environment, and its local housing associations and stakeholders.

8. The Charter has been translated into Estonian and is expected to be published electronically. Information on the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing is disseminated through EKYL's website. EKYL is a member of the Board of the Housing Europe and disseminates information on the Charter through the Housing Europe network.

9. An online training tool was developed and made available on the EKYL's website; the training tool is at the moment only in Estonian language and will be translated into Russian. To complement the online training information, a handbook also was published in hardcopy.

10. Information on the Charter was also disseminated through the Centre's conferences: the 19th Annual Conference Apartment Association in Estonia (4 October 2016), the 15th Annual Conference of Apartment Association in South-Estonia (25 March 2017), the Annual Conference of Apartment Associations in Saaremaa region (29 March 2017) and the Annual Conference of Apartment Associations in West-Estonia (4 March 2017), the 9th Baltic Housing Conference (14 September 2017 ) and the 20th Annual Conference of Apartment Associations (4 October 2017).

11. Information on the Charter was also promoted through press releases and postings on Facebook, Twitter and articles in the EKYL Magazine "Elamu" (Home).

### **C. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Glasgow)**

12. The Geneva UN Charter Centre in Glasgow, Scotland, UK, was established at the Glasgow Urban Laboratory at Glasgow School of Art in close cooperation with the city of Glasgow, national and local authorities, NGOs and academia. A memorandum of understanding with the UNECE was signed in November 2017. Currently, a feasibility study is being conducted to assess specific needs for activities of the Centre; partnerships are being developed. The centre is focusing its activities on the implementation of both the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the New Urban Agenda in the UK and especially in Scotland and in city of Glasgow. The centre is also developing international cooperation in research and capacity building on sustainable urban development. Key topics for research and capacity building include: the contemporary and future city, investigation of comparative urbanism through integrated planning, designing from context in landscape, town, neighbourhood and city; and landscape art, design and ecology.