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Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to deliver this speech and represent Poland at the UNECE Ministerial Meeting on the 82nd Session of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management.

The urgent need for affordable housing is something that all our countries have in common. Prices of houses grows all over our region. But there are many ways to solve this problem. Therefore we truly appreciate your in-depth studies and especially the #Housing2030 which set a broader perspective for housing challenges and show a different ideas and solutions to address the problems.

I am here, in behalf of Secretary of State in the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, to talk about the housing governance and regulations as well as about the Poland’s progress on the field of housing since the last Ministerial Meeting in 2017. Actually there is a lot to say – thanks to The National Housing Program, which were adopted in 2016 we made a significant step forward in improving the housing situation in Poland. Of course, there is still much to be done. We make an progress in achieving targets set in the National Housing Program and the matters of affordable, accessible and resilient housing became an important strategic issue on the central and the local level of the government. The affordable housing has also started to be treated as a development tool for municipalities, not just a burden on local budgets.

We have set three goals: 1. To increase the accessibility of housing for people whose income makes the purchase of house impossible; 2. To assure the access to social housing for most vulnerable groups; 3. To improve the technical performance of existing housing stock.

For each of these goals we have a several legislative and financial tools. As it was said here and on the pre-meeting workshops, there is no “one fits for all” solution for all kinds of housing problems. And it is a valid truth not only on the international level but also inside one country. The key role in adjusting solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges of each city and municipality we need customized local housing policies consisted of the selected legal tools.

These new tools which are regulated on the central government level are:

1. Increased financial support for municipalities to create new social flats (this include construction of new buildings and renovations of existing buildings).

2. Increased financial support for municipalities for construction of new buildings with rental apartments for middle-income people.
3. Investments in the apartments for rent with the option of coming to ownership.
4. The instrument called "Flat for land" which sets rules of facilities for developers in access to land in return for handing over apartments from their investments to municipal housing stock.
5. Rent subsidies for people renting apartments on the market – this instrument is gradually tested and adjusted to actual needs of families.
6. Incorporation of the legal basis for social renting agencies model.
7. The modification of the Thermomodernization and Renovation Program, which will have, inter alia, a chance to contribute to quick improvement of the energy efficiency of municipal housing stock.

Further new legislative instruments are connected with facilitating the investment process especially for single-family houses and guarantees for own contribution to the mortgage for those people who are decided for home-ownership and benefits for young families with children. There is also a work-in-progress on regulations connected with accessibility of public spaces and residential buildings for people with disabilities.

The main challenges facing Poland in the coming years are primarily related to demographic problems - in Poland we observe a growing share of older people who are struggling with reduced ability to live independently and a low birth rate, one of the causes of which is poor access to stable rent or property for young families. We are also aware of the challenges posed by climate change and extreme weather conditions and the resulting threats to the stability of the economy. That is why we are working to make housing a safe vehicle in which all citizens can safely pass through potential shocks and crises.