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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

REPORT ON THE SIXTIETH SESSION
(13 to 15 September 1999)

SUMMARY

The Committee discussed the draft ECE strategy for sustainable quality of life in human settlements in the 21st century and agreed to organize a ministerial meeting in conjunction with its next session in September 2000 to adopt it. The ECE Focal Point on land administration in the Balkan region reported on the effects of the conflict there. The Committee agreed that the Working Party on Land Administration should consider a report prepared by the ECE Focal Point at its first session in November 1999 and decide on actions based on a long-term strategy for the subregion. The Committee agreed that the organizational set-up of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network was appropriate for cooperation with the business community and that guidelines on relations with the business community should be developed. The Committee considered and adopted its 1999-2000 programme of work. It confirmed the high priority of the country profile project on the housing sector. The Committee invited the Conference of European Statisticians to organize a joint meeting on housing and building statistics. The Committee reviewed its country-oriented operational activities and invited the secretariat and its Bureau to further promote expert missions on land administration and spatial planning to supplement similar operational activities on country profiles on the housing sector and sectoral case studies.

Introduction

1. The Committee on Human Settlements held its sixtieth session in Geneva from 13 to 15 September 1999. Mr. J. Zetter (United Kingdom) chaired the meeting.

2. Representatives of the following countries participated: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.

3. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) was represented.

4. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended: Institut de recherche sur l'environnement (IREC), International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP), International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISoCaRP), International Union of Tenants (IUT), and World Fire Statistics Centre.

5. Members of the Committee's Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network also attended (for its membership, see annex I).

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The provisional agenda (ECE/HBP/113) was adopted.

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

7. The Committee took note of the Commission's decisions taken at its fifty-fourth session in May 1999 and its recommendations to the Principal Subsidiary Bodies. The Committee welcomed the decision of the Commission to give the Meeting of Officials on Land Administration the status of Working Party to consolidate work on cadastre and land registration while promoting more efficient land markets in the ECE region.

III. THE ECE STRATEGY FOR A SUSTAINABLE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

8. The Committee concluded that the draft strategy (HBP/1999/4), prepared by the secretariat, represented a good basis for the preparation of the final text. The discussion chaired by Mr. Zetter, with the participation of international experts, Mr. A. Faludi, Mr. A. Kowaleswki and Mr. L. Sparks, also indicated that the document could be of interest to Ministers responsible for housing and urban development in the ECE region.

9. The Committee, noting the high quality of the draft:

(a) Agreed to organize a ministerial meeting in September 2000 in conjunction with its sixty-first session to discuss and adopt the strategy;

(b) Invited all delegations to discuss the draft strategy in their countries and submit written comments and proposals for changes to the text to the secretariat by 15 November 1999;

(c) Invited its Bureau, the above-mentioned international experts and the secretariat to redraft the strategy for the ministerial meeting.

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

10. The Committee discussed the report of Mr. J. Zetter on the main decisions taken by the Bureau, and the progress report on the work of the Network (HBP/1999/5), by its Chairman, Mr. H. Pfeiffer. It:

(a) Approved the progress report of its Bureau and the Advisory Network;

(b) Considered the activities of the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network to support the Committee's programme of work to be very useful and in line with the ECE recommendations and the provisions of the Habitat Agenda on involving the business community, NGOs, local authorities in human settlements policy formulation and implementation;

(c) Approved the Advisory Network's proposal to organize a workshop on public/private partnership in Manchester (United Kingdom) on 5-6 November 1999;

(d) Invited the Advisory Network to continue to strengthen its cooperation with the local authorities and NGOs and to draw up a progress report for the Committee's next session.

V. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 1999-2002

11. The Committee agreed:

(a) On its programme of work and the tentative list of meetings as presented in annexes II and III, and requested its Bureau and the secretariat to implement the decisions taken concerning individual programme elements;

(b) To invite its Bureau to start the priority ranking of its programme of work at its next consultation and to present the outcome at the Committee's next session in September 2000 for discussion and adoption.

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

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

- (i) Confirmed that the country profile project on the housing sector had a high priority;
- (ii) Decided to establish a roster of experts and invited all delegations to submit the names of highly qualified housing experts to the secretariat by the end of 1999;
- (iii) Agreed that the Bureau, the secretariat and the Advisory Network should prepare a proposal on how to streamline the preparatory process and procedures and monitor and assess the implementation of recommendations;
- (iv) Invited the secretariat to prepare a questionnaire to be sent to countries under consideration to secure those countries' commitment to the study;
- (v) Also invited the secretariat to facilitate the dissemination of country profiles (e.g. through the Internet);
- (vi) Agreed to hold a workshop on housing reforms in Romania in January 2000, as the first step in the preparation of the country profile study;
- (vii) Expressed its appreciation to the delegation of Slovakia for organizing a presentation of its country profile at an international conference in Bratislava on 21 October 1999;
- (viii) Took note of the requests of the delegations of Albania, Hungary (subject to confirmation), the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation to undertake a country profile study in these countries;

(b) Improvement of urban environmental performance (10.1.2)

- (i) Endorsed the project proposal on sustainable consumption patterns on local transport and land-use planning to be carried out as a joint activity with the Committee on Environmental Policy;
- (ii) Took note of the interest expressed by delegations, in particular those of Denmark, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, and NGOs as ISOCARP and IFHP and invited all other interested delegations to designate experts to the task force. The experts should have extensive experience in local transport and spatial planning. Their names should be sent to the secretariat by 15 November 1999;

(c) Land registration and land markets (10.1.3)

- (i) Took note of the progress report on the activities in land registration and cadastre by the Chairman of the Working Party on Land Administration;
- (ii) Took note of the report by the ECE Focal Point on land administration issues in the Balkan region on the effects of the conflict; and
- (iii) Agreed that the Working Party on Land Administration should consider and decide upon further work, based on a long-term strategy, including the need to coordinate international efforts in the field of land administration in the Balkan region at its first session on 15-16 November 1999;

(d) Urban Renewal and Housing Modernization (10.1.4)

- (i) Endorsed the evaluation report of urban renewal and housing modernization case studies (HBP/1999/9) by the Chairman of the Task Force;
- (ii) Agreed with the proposal of the delegation of the Czech Republic to organize a workshop on urban renewal and housing modernization in Prague in 2000. The evaluation report could serve as discussion paper for the workshop;
- (iii) Agreed to prepare practical guidelines on housing condominiums, and invited the secretariat and the Bureau to consider possibilities for linking this with the follow-up to the seminar on housing condominiums held in Moscow in July 1999;
- (iv) Invited interested delegations to propose experts for the Task Force on the housing condominiums guidelines and the related reference group, by 15 November 1999 as specified in the project proposal;

(e) Development of human settlements statistics (10.1.5)

- (i) Agreed to invite the Conference of European Statisticians to organize a joint meeting with it on the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America;
- (ii) Invited all delegations to indicate what data in the Bulletin were particularly useful for housing policy purposes and what data that they considered to be necessary were missing from it, and to submit this information to the secretariat by the end of 1999;
- (iii) Invited the secretariat and the Bureau to consider possibilities for setting up an ECE housing-policy-related database with

information drawn from national housing and land administration authorities;

(f) Major trends characterizing human settlements development

- (i) Took note of the proposal by the delegation of the United Kingdom on the organization of the Ninth Conference on Urban and Regional Research to be held in the United Kingdom in 2002 (HBP/1999/10);
- (ii) Invited the delegation of the United Kingdom to suggest a topic for the Conference in the light of the discussion held and submit a revised proposal at its next session; and
- (iii) Invited its Bureau to consider what contribution the Committee could make to the Istanbul +5 event;

(g) Operational activities

- (i) Agreed to draw the Commission's attention to the emphasis the Committee had put recently on operational activities providing technical assistance in priority areas related to policy formulation and implementation;
- (ii) Pointed out that it had gained wide experience while responding to a growing demand to hold country-specific workshops and highlighted the fact that a programme of nine workshops had been implemented in 1998-1999. Fact-finding missions (Albania and Kyrgyzstan) and specific country-specific studies (case studies and country profiles) had also been carried out and are expected to be finalized;
- (iii) Stressed that the Trust Fund on Human Settlement played an essential role in its operational activities;
- (iv) Noted with appreciation the specific contributions the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network provided to the Committee's operational activities;
- (v) Agreed to undertake operational activities on land administration in the Balkan region through its Working party on Land Administration, in consultation with the ECE Focal Point and in cooperation with Habitat;
- (vi) Invited the secretariat and the Bureau to promote expert missions on land administration and spatial planning to supplement activities on the country profiles on the housing sector;

(h) Relations with the business community

- (i) Welcomed its two-year practical cooperation with the business community through its Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network;
- (ii) Considered that the organizational set-up of the Advisory Network was effective and appropriate for cooperation with the business community and could serve as an example to other ECE PSB;
- (iii) Invited interested delegations, the Bureau and the Advisory Network to assess national experience on public/private partnership, both national and foreign, and to consider the possibility of organizing a workshop/round-table discussion, including the preparation of ethical principles of cooperation with the business community in human settlements (annex IV).

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

13. The secretariat provided information on the use of the ECE Human Settlements Trust Fund since the previous session of the Committee.

14. The Committee was informed that in recent years the delegation of the Netherlands had contributed some US\$ 170,000 to the Trust Fund on Human Settlements and the delegation of Finland US\$ 10,000. These contributions played an essential role in the implementation of the Committee's programme of work, particularly in the preparation of country profiles on the housing sector. As the Committee was also considering adopting a comprehensive strategy for sustainable quality of life in human settlements in the 21st century, countries that could afford it should consider providing financial support to the Committee so as to enable it to deal effectively with the challenges specified in the strategy. Next year's Ministerial meeting would be an appropriate occasion for ECE countries to pledge and provide contributions to the Trust Fund on Human Settlements.

VII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

15. In accordance with the rotation principle, the following officers were elected or re-elected for the sixty-first session of the Committee (18-20 September 2000): Mr. John Zetter (United Kingdom), Chairperson; Mr. Wolfgang Förster (Austria), Ms. Daniela Grabmüllerová (Czech Republic), Mr. Bert Emmerich (Netherlands), Mr. Andrey Starovoytov (Russian Federation), Ms. Bozena Lipej (Slovenia), and Ms. Ayse Sayin (Turkey), Vice-Chairpersons.

Annex I

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

Annex II

PROGRAMME OF WORK 1999-2002

SUBPROGRAMME 10 - HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

10.1.1 Country profiles on the housing sector

Description: In economies in transition the housing sector has a critical role to play in ensuring the success of economic and social reforms. The process of transition to a market economy has had a profound impact on housing policy implementation and management. The position of tenants has also changed, sometimes dramatically. This project represents a tool for Governments to analyse and assess the economic, social and environmental aspects of their housing policies, and to compare the progress made internationally. It draws on the Committee's work on housing and building statistics. Recommendations for improving policies and practices are an essential part of the programme. It also aims to provide information to potential investors.

Work accomplished: The country profiles on the housing sector of Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia have been published. The international team of experts for the study on the housing sector of Lithuania undertook two missions in February and May 1999. The country profile project was presented at the Workshop on housing privatization in Cracow (Poland) in May 1999 and at an International Conference in Bratislava (Slovakia) in October 1999. The Internet home page on the housing country profiles has been in operation since April 1999.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will continue its activities for the preparation of country profiles on the housing sector. In the autumn, preparations will start for the fifth study in Romania. A fact-finding mission by an international team of experts for the Romanian study is planned for January 2000 in conjunction with the workshop on housing reforms. The Committee and its Bureau will continue to supervise and advise on the substantive work. Possibilities for holding workshops or ad hoc meetings of experts and discussing the results of project implementation and disseminating the experience in ECE countries will be explored. A roster of experts will be established. Cooperation with Habitat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union and the World Bank will be strengthened.

Duration: 1999 - 2000.

10.1.2 Towards sustainable urban performance

Description: Local systems and cities are efficient starting points for promoting sustainable consumption patterns. Numerous initiatives have already been launched in cities and towns to raise public awareness of the environmental impact of individual consumption behaviour, to promote

environmentally sound goods, services and sustainable use of energy, water, raw materials and land by individuals and communities. It is recognized that environmentally sound urban and regional transport coordinated with sustainable land use and planning at the central, regional and local levels may lead to a substantial reduction in the impact on human health, natural resources and the environment, while improving the quality of life and economic performance. Integration of land-use and local transport policies requires integrated thinking and action across all policy areas and at all levels of decision-making. A team of experts visited Kyrgyzstan and provided technical assistance in the implementation of the National Strategy for sustainable human development.

Work accomplished: Five cities have carried out case studies on urban environmental performance: Porvoo (Finland) (ECE/ENHS/NONE/1997/42); Lyons (France) (ECE/ENHS/NONE/1997/43); Riga (Latvia) (ECE/ENHS/NONE/1997/39); Apeldoorn (Netherlands) (ECE/ENHS/NONE/1997/41); Cracow (Poland) (ECE/ENHS/NONE/1997/40). They examined important variables such as population density, land use, infrastructure mobility and lifestyles. Instruments applied to influence personal choice or to guide and encourage environmentally friendly behaviour were looked at, together with the measures applied to improve the quality of the urban environment and cities' environmental performance. In cooperation with the Committee on Environmental Policy, a Workshop on encouraging local initiatives towards sustainable consumption patterns was held in Vienna in February 1998. Its report (HBP/1998/2) sets out a number of follow-up activities, including proposals for integrated local transport and related land-use policies and practice.

Work to be undertaken: It is envisaged that a workshop on sustainable consumption patterns will be organized in spring 2001 jointly with the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy. The workshop is to address practical experience in environmentally sound management of local transport integrated with sustainable land-use planning. Individuals and planners, businesses, NGOs and transport operators are key players and should be at the centre of the approach to promoting sustainable consumption patterns. The workshop should be prepared by a steering group of experts from central and local governments, the private sector, NGOs and the academic community.

Duration: 1999 - 2001.

10.1.3 Land registration and land markets

Description: Proper land registration is crucial for security of tenure and property rights, effective housing policies and the promotion of market-oriented reforms in economies in transition, as well as in the context of European integration. The activities in this area are aimed at providing assistance to countries in transition in reforming cadastre and land registration systems and sharing information and experience of modernizing land administration systems through education and training; research and development; exchange of experience; transfer of technology; and standardization.

Work accomplished: The ECE Land Administration Guidelines have been published (ECE/HBP/96). The ad hoc meeting on financing land administration projects in economies in transition was organized in consultation with the World Bank in Geneva in March 1997. An inventory of national authorities responsible for land administration was prepared and published with the United Kingdom as lead country. Documentation on international land administration projects in countries in transition was prepared and published with the assistance of Austria. In June 1998, a team of experts from Austria, Spain and the United Kingdom visited Albania and prepared a technical assessment of the Albanian land market plan. Several workshops have taken place on land markets: in Budapest (Hungary in December 1998); on modern cadastre in Bonn (Germany in March 1999); on managing and developing effective land registration and cadastre services in London (United Kingdom in September 1999). A statement on the social and economic benefits of good land administration was published with the assistance of the Cadastre of the Netherlands. It was organized in cooperation with the EU, the World Bank, ECE and the Government of Austria. The Commission granted standing character to the Meeting of Officials on Land Administration, which became the Working Party on Land Administration.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Land Administration will promote the practical application of the ECE Land Administration Guidelines in countries in transition, inter alia through different types of operational activities in these countries. A survey of the current structure of landownership and the existing legislation to restrict/limit the sale of property in ECE countries will be prepared. The Working Party on Land Administration would meet in Geneva on 15-16 November 1999. In 2000, workshops are planned in Albania and Spain. The Working Party will cooperate on property rights with the World Bank, EU, the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), Habitat and other international organizations.

Duration: 1999 - 2002.

10.1.4 Urban renewal and housing modernization

Description: The Committee promotes the application of the Housing Policy Guidelines (ECE/HBP/84) and the Strategies for Urban Renewal and Housing Modernization (ECE/HBP/97). Its work on case studies have provided an understanding of how renewal and modernization policies are implemented nationally and locally. The case studies were an opportunity to look in detail at how existing and emerging housing problems can be solved while striving for a better quality of life in a move towards sustainable development. As a result of the privatization process, the proportion of owner-occupied dwellings in multi-family housing has increased considerably. It is therefore important to establish property rights, define mixed ownership forms, and analyse legal conditions of condominiums, their organizational and management frameworks.

Work accomplished: The case studies on Vienna, Bratislava and Budapest are ready, that on Ljubljana is under preparation. The case studies include

conclusions and recommendations. An evaluation report on the four case studies was prepared. A seminar on condominiums took place in Moscow (Russian Federation) on 22-24 July 1999.

Work to be undertaken: An evaluation workshop on urban renewal and housing modernization will be organized in Prague (Czech Republic) in 2000. A task force will be established to prepare practical guidelines on housing condominiums to address the major aspects of public/private sector management in economies in transition. This work will be linked to the follow-up activities to the Moscow seminar. A meeting on public/private partnership in human settlements development will be organized in Manchester (United Kingdom) on 6-7 November 1999.

Duration: 1999 - 2001.

10.1.5 Development of human settlements statistics

Description: The Committee, together with the Conference of European Statisticians, develops and improves international human settlements statistics, and publishes the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America, recommendations for housing censuses, etc.

Work accomplished: The Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America was published in 1998. An Internet home page on human settlements statistics has been in operation since April 1999.

Work to be undertaken: The Committee will prepare the next issue of the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe and North America to be published in 2000. The Committee and its Bureau will consider possibilities for setting up an ECE database of housing indicators. Consultancy may be needed to produce the millennium issue of the Bulletin.

Duration: 1999 - 2001.

10.1.6 Major trends characterizing human settlements development

Description: The development of human settlements encompasses a wide range of changes and trends which are not always compatible with the principles of sustainability. More knowledge of the forces influencing the configuration of urban development and the characteristics of the implementation of urban policies will be provided by studying major trends characterizing human settlements development and presenting national experiences in formulating and implementing policies for a more sustainable development of human settlements.

Work accomplished: The study on Major Trends Characterizing Human Settlements Development (ECE/HBP/108) was published as a result of work carried out by two task forces. The study served as a background paper to the Eighth Conference on Urban and Regional Planning. An abstract of the study was prepared to assist the participants in the preparation of their response

papers for the Conference. The Eighth Conference was held in Madrid from 8 to 11 June 1998. It was preceded by a study tour in the metropolitan area of Madrid. Another study on Human Settlements Trends in Central and Eastern Europe was prepared and published in October 1997 (ECE/HBP/105).

Work to be undertaken: Both above-mentioned publications will be revised every five years in a single volume. A research conference will be organized in the United Kingdom in 2002. The Committee will continue the exchange of experience in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. A ministerial meeting will be organized in September 2000 to consider and approve the ECE strategy for sustainable quality of life in human settlements in the 21st century.

Duration: 1999-2002.

Annex III

TENTATIVE LIST OF MEETINGS*/

15-16 November 1999	Geneva	First session of the Working Party on Land Administration
18 September 2000	Geneva	Ministerial meeting
19-20 September 2000	Geneva	Sixty-first session of the Committee on Human Settlements

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

Annex IV

RELATIONS WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

The involvement of the business community is an integral part of sustainable human settlements development, especially in view of the need to ensure economic, social and environmental sustainability and to divide responsibilities for providing traditional public-sector services between public and private sectors.

In western Europe both these aspects have been extensively developed. In the economies in transition, the business community is only beginning to integrate human development. Yet, successful integration of the business community will be crucial to sustainable human development in these countries. To draw on past and existing cooperation between the public sector and the business community within human settlements, and to further strengthen such cooperation with the Committee, a workshop could be organized on the experience of and possibilities for the business community's future participation in urban development in the ECE region. Participants should come from both the public sector, especially local government, and from the business community (and the NGO community).

The objective of the workshop should be to summarize experience with the involvement of the business community in urban development. Specific examples and "best practices" from western, central and eastern Europe should be presented.

Drawing on the experiences of this workshop, the following results should be produced:

(a) Ethical guidelines on cooperation between the public sector and the business community;

(b) Necessary public-sector framework conditions to secure the effective participation of the business community in urban development;

(c) Practical guidelines for urban local government and the business community to work together to achieve sustainable urban development in the economies in transition.