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COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Sixty-second session

Geneva, 17-19 September 2001

(Item 2 of the provisional agenda)

Working Party on Land Administration

Second session

Geneva, 19-20 November 2001

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION OF
THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (ECE)

Note by the secretariat

1. The fifty-sixth session of the Commission took place from 8 to 11 May 2001. The full proceedings can be found in document E/2001/37- E/ECE/1387.
2. To strengthen overall policy coherence and communication in ECE, the Commission suggested establishing a steering group made up of its Bureau, the Chairpersons of its Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSB) and the Executive Secretary. This steering group would meet in the context of the Commission's annual sessions to discuss and articulate the overall policy and strategic direction of the Commission's work. Interested member States could participate in the steering group.

3. The Commission endorsed the decisions and recommendations adopted at the High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health on 4 May 2001 and invited PSBs to take them into account. It stressed the need to give new impetus to the work on the follow-up to the Vienna and London Conferences by identifying a number of priorities which, among the areas covered by the Programme of Joint Action and the London Charter, corresponded to the key challenges for sustainable transport, environment and health in the ECE region.
4. The importance of the role of ECE in promoting regional cooperation on intersectoral issues, given its areas of competence, which are at the heart of key intersectoral issues, as well as its specialized intergovernmental bodies involved in these issues, was underlined.
5. The Commission invited its PSBs to develop further intersectoral linkages in various areas, including in the development of land registration systems and the promotion of real estate markets; in trade, timber and environment, to promote the trade of timber and timber products while ensuring a sustainable management of forests; in energy, transport and environment, in particular in environmental performance reviews and ECE environmental conventions as they pertain to the energy and transport sectors; and in the consolidation of existing ECE databases in a multisectoral framework.
6. Moreover, the Commission requested its PSBs to examine the most efficient, flexible and cost-effective ways to address intersectoral issues such as those mentioned above. These may include: joint meetings of PSBs or their bureaux; creation of a joint group of experts or task force under their auspices; delegation of one member of a PSB to a meeting of another PSB; specific projects jointly implemented and monitored; and the establishment of a web page to facilitate the sharing of information on developments in intersectoral cooperation.
7. The Commission further requested its PSBs to review annually the ongoing intersectoral cooperation and to consider potential new issues for such cooperation. These should be brought to the attention of other PSBs. The Commission would then decide whether to pursue them. The Commission stressed that regular programme review and evaluation, and the timely dissemination of the evaluation results to member States, were critical to maintaining the effectiveness of ECE.
8. The Commission encouraged its PSBs to find new ways to secure the means for implementing intersectoral activities, including setting aside regular resources and seeking extrabudgetary funding for these activities.
9. The Principal Subsidiary Bodies were also invited to reflect on how they could integrate the concerns and objectives of the Millennium Declaration (E/ECE/1386) into their programmes of work and contribute to its implementation.
10. Finally, the Commission underlined the priorities of Central Asia and the South Caucasus and encouraged the Executive Secretary to strengthen assistance to these countries. This could be done through regional and subregional cooperation, and together with other international

institutions and organizations, in particular through special programmes and projects for the South Caucasus and Central Asia. Appropriate resources should be made available to this effect.

11. The Committee is invited to consider the above issues and decide on how to reflect them in its programme of work.