



SUMMARY OF THE 74TH SESSION OF THE UNECE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT AND HIGH-LEVEL MINISTERIAL MEETING: 7-9 OCTOBER 2013

The seventy-fourth session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) convened at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, from 7-9 October 2013, with 8 October devoted to a High-Level Ministerial Meeting. More than 240 participants attended the meeting, including representatives from 51 UNECE member states and four observer countries, as well as representatives from non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, academia and the private sector.

On 7 October the CHLM discussed, *inter alia*: the draft Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE region for the period 2014-2020; the work of the CHLM Bureau; and the implementation of the 2012-2013 work programme of the CHLM on sustainable housing, sustainable urban development, land administration and management, and country profiles on housing and land management. The Ministerial Meeting on 8 October adopted the Strategy, and discussed and reviewed progress made and future challenges in housing, land management and urban development in UNECE member states. On 9 October, the CHLM considered the future directions of its work, as well as the outcomes of the Ministerial Meeting.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

In 1947, UNECE set up a Panel on Housing Problems, which later evolved into the Committee on Human Settlements and then, after reform in 2005/2006, into the CHLM. The CHLM is an intergovernmental body of all UNECE member states. It provides a forum for the compilation, dissemination and exchange of information and experience on housing, urban development and land administration policies.

Through workshops, research on urban issues and land administration, as well as analyses of the housing and real estate sector, the CHLM advises member countries on human settlement policies and strategies and encourages their practical implementation. It has annual sessions in which it, among other things, elects a Bureau and Chair who supervise the implementation of the programme of work between the CHLM's sessions. It undertakes activities in the following four areas: country profiles on the housing sector; improvement of urban environmental performance; land registration and land markets; and housing modernization and management.

In 1999, the CHLM established the Working Party on Land Administration, which aims to promote land administration through security of tenure, develop real estate markets in countries in transition and modernize land registration systems in the region's transitional countries.

The CHLM works closely with the European Union (EU), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank, the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), and other UN regional commissions and specialized agencies.

70TH SESSION OF THE CHLM: This session, held from 23-25 September 2009 in Geneva, opened with a one-day seminar on climate-neutral cities which discussed sustainable land management, climate change mitigation, green building and reducing building emissions. During the following two days, the CHLM discussed outcomes of the seminar, building

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and construction safety, and cross-sectoral activities such as energy efficiency and land-use planning around high-risk industrial sites.

71ST SESSION OF THE CHLM: The CHLM held this session from 20-21 September 2010 in Geneva. It agreed to start work on a possible framework convention on affordable, healthy and ecological housing in the UNECE region and established an ad hoc working group for that purpose. The CHLM also reviewed the draft Action Plan for Energy-efficient Housing in the UNECE Region and work in the UNECE region on climate-neutral cities.

72ND SESSION OF THE CHLM: The 72nd session was held from 3-4 October 2011 in Geneva. The CHLM discussed a draft study on climate-neutral cities and approved the preparation of a publication on “Good Practices for Energy-efficient Housing in the ECE Region” in conjunction with UN-HABITAT and the City of Vienna, Austria. The CHLM also agreed to hold a ministerial meeting back-to-back with the 74th CHLM Session to review implementation of the 2006 Ministerial Declaration and consider the future policy directions of UNECE’s work on housing and land management.

73RD SESSION OF THE CHLM: The CHLM held its 73rd session from 24-26 September 2012 in Geneva. The Committee endorsed the working group’s proposal to open formal negotiations on a framework convention on sustainable housing, and recommended to the UNECE Executive Committee to approve the establishment of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to prepare the convention. It considered the Bureau’s “draft strategy and targets for sustainable housing and land management in the ECE region for the period from 2014 to 2020” and asked the UNECE Secretariat to update the document for the 74th CHLM. The CHLM also approved proposals for studies on greening the real estate market and on good practices for energy-efficient housing in the UNECE region.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

The 74th session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) and Ministerial Meeting consisted of the Committee meeting on 7 and 9 October, and the Ministerial Meeting on 8 October. This report summarizes the discussions during 7 and 8 October. IISD Reporting Services did not cover the Committee meeting on 9 October.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING

OPENING OF THE MEETING

Wolfgang Förster, CHLM Chair, opened the 74th session of the CHLM on Monday, 7 October 2013. He welcomed delegates and clarified small changes to the agenda (ECE/HBP/172), including that discussion on real estate markets would be moved to Wednesday’s discussion. The agenda was then adopted as amended.

Sven Alkalaj, UNECE Executive Secretary, acknowledged World Habitat



Wolfgang Förster, CHLM Chair

Day as an opportunity to reflect on the world’s collective responsibility to provide sustainable housing for future generations. He stressed the importance of adopting the draft Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE region for the period 2014-2020 (ECE/HBP/2013/3), noting this will help member states develop appropriate laws, strategies and policies for coordinated action.

Underscoring the “pressing urgency” of adopting and implementing disaster-risk



Margareta Wahlström, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction

reduction strategies, UN Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Margareta Wahlström, encouraged collaboration between the CHLM and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. She highlighted the role of the Hyogo Framework for Action in helping to build resilient communities and reduce economic, human and environmental losses from disasters.

Wahlström suggested several mechanisms to support risk management, including using risk assessments, gathering historical data on disasters, developing multi-hazard risk models and keeping the public informed.

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2012-2013

Sustainable housing and real estate markets: A thematic discussion panel was held on the topic “Energy efficiency in housing” moderated by Elena Szolgayova, Slovakia. Gulnara Roll, CHLM Secretary, reviewed the CHLM’s work on energy efficiency in housing, including the Green Homes publication in 2009, the UNECE Action Plan in 2010, a regional workshop and some national workshops in 2011, preparation of Montenegro’s National Action Plan in 2011, a workshop in Georgia in September 2013, and work on the Case Book of Good Practices for Energy-Efficient Housing (Informal notice 2). She urged countries to nominate experts who can provide advisory services, training, presentations, peer-review and experience exchange to other countries. Sergey Sivayev, Institute for Urban Economics, Russian Federation, outlined the elements of the Case Book.

Marc Lutz, consultant, Ukraine, discussed the practical difficulties of promoting energy efficiency financing for housing associations and condominiums, including barriers to banks in providing residential energy efficiency financing, and other social, institutional and regulatory barriers. He also outlined key elements identified in countries where residential energy efficiency financing works.



Sven Alkalaj, UNECE Executive Secretary



Gulnara Roll, CHLM Secretary

Indicating the cheapest energy is that which is not used, Mark Hopkins, UN Foundation, defined energy efficiency as a “least cost option.” He stressed the role of government in facilitating a commercial market for energy efficiency, including through policies, regulatory changes and incentives. He lauded UNECE’s work in bringing the housing and energy efficiency sectors together.



Mark Hopkins, UN Foundation

David Gigineishvili, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia, outlined Georgia’s progress in developing comprehensive building codes and construction legislation, acknowledging UNECE’s support.



David Gigineishvili, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia

Sustainable urban development: Gulnara Roll introduced proposals for activities on smart cities, indicating that member states expressed strong interest in the issue, but cautioning that implementation may vary depending on availability of resources. She stated that municipalities have also expressed their support and that they could demonstrate this by hosting events and providing travel support to delegates from transitional countries.

In his presentation on the issue, consultant Nikolai Bobylev, St. Petersburg State University, Russian Federation, acknowledged that smart cities are about both smart systems and smart citizens, and discussed how information and communications technology can facilitate energy-efficient lifestyles. He offered the examples of using telecommunications to manage home appliances and using smart systems to manage disaster risks.



Nikolai Bobylev, consultant, St. Petersburg State University, Russian Federation

On Monday afternoon, a thematic discussion was held on the topic “Aging and accessibility in cities,” moderated by Daniela Grabmüllerová, Czech Republic. Pierre-Marie Chapon, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (ICADE), France, discussed his recent study on adapting cities to the needs of an aging society, providing examples from France and Portland, Oregon, US.

Stéphane Birchmeier, City of Geneva, Switzerland, discussed the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities and its efforts to improve social inclusiveness and physical accessibility in cities. He

highlighted Geneva’s efforts through its “Cité Séniors programme” that aims to prevent seniors from becoming socially isolated.

Lise Nielsen, Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs, Denmark, reviewed statistical trends about aging populations in urban and peri-urban settings in the UNECE region, and their implications for multiple policy areas. She urged the Committee to embrace the concept of “universal design,” meaning designing



Stéphane Birchmeier, City of Geneva, Switzerland

buildings and environments so that they are inherently accessible to all age groups.

Vivianne Brunne, UNECE Statistics Division, briefed the Committee on UNECE’s activities on aging, and expressed the hope that it might spark the CHLM’s interest in cooperating with other UNECE bodies working on aging issues.



Moderator Daniela Grabmüllerová, Czech Republic

Grabmüllerová closed the session, highlighting the

cross-cutting issues identified, and noting the potential for developing complementary tools and measures that help people stay in their urban homes as long as possible, get involved in the life of the city and not become socially isolated. She suggested that the CHLM could perhaps work on drafting guidelines for “aging-friendly cities.”

Land administration and management: The Chair of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA), Elshad Khanalibayli, Azerbaijan, discussed the WPLA’s work to modernize land administration systems via improved land registration systems, including electronic registration and information dissemination (ECE/HBP/2013/7).

James O’Boyle, Property Registration Authority, Ireland, presented the results of a 2011 Survey on Benchmarking of Land



WPLA Chair Elshad Khanalibayli, Azerbaijan

Administration Systems in UNECE member states (Informal notice 7), which included questions on land registration processes, access to information, cadastral systems and other aspects of land administration. He noted significant advancements in access to electronic registration systems.

Michael Milligan, WPLA Secretary, reported on a workshop in London, UK in October 2012, entitled “Supporting Global Economic Recovery,” highlighting that the workshop considered how to: rebuild confidence in the lending market; use data to stimulate economic growth; and use technical resources to support lending.

Chryssy Potsiou, Technical Chamber of Greece, reported on a workshop on informal development, property and housing, held in Athens, Greece in December 2012. Erlan Saparbaev, State Registration Service, Kyrgyzstan, reported on a workshop held during the WPLA's 8th session, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in March 2013 titled "Land Administration in Central Asia: Building Systems for 21st Century Challenges" that addressed building cadaster and real estate registration systems, and moving from paper to electronic systems.

Roger Ekman, Lantmäteriet, Sweden, discussed a workshop in Uppsala, Sweden in May 2013 on "Collaborating for secured ownership" which focused on e-governance. He stressed stakeholder cooperation and proactively reaching out to citizens.

Sergi Tymchenko, State Agency for Land Resources, Ukraine, discussed how Ukraine moved to a fully automated cadaster system in 2013.

Discussing the WPLA's activities for the next biennium, Khanalibayli noted plans for four workshops: one from 7-9 May 2014 in Copenhagen, Denmark on property registers and use of the data they collect; one from 22-24 October 2014 in Vienna, Austria, on the organization of land management; and two to be confirmed later.

Country profiles on housing and land management:

Gulnara Roll presented the draft study reviewing the methodology used in preparing country profiles (ECE/HBP/2013/8).



Nataliia Oliinyk, Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Municipal Development, Ukraine

Nataliia Oliinyk, Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Municipal Development, Ukraine, reviewed key recommendations of Ukraine's country profile (Informal notice 10).

Natalia Mihailov, Ministry of Regional Development and Construction, Moldova, reported on the research mission and plans for the development

of Moldova's country profile. Abduvali Komilov, Agency for Construction and Architecture, Tajikistan, discussed progress made in implementing the recommendations in his country's profile (ECE/HBP/163).

Borka Bobovec, Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, Croatia, reported on progress in the preparation of Croatia's profile.



Borka Bobovec, Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, Croatia

Armenia confirmed that it would like a second country profile, noting many changes in the country since the first one was conducted. Chair Förster noted that new country profiles can only be undertaken if the necessary funding resources are available.

REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE BUREAU

Gulnara Roll presented the report of the four Bureau meetings that have been held since the 73rd session of the CHLM, in Geneva on 28 November 2012, 19 February 2013, 21 April 2013 and 22 May 2013 (ECE/HBP/2013/1).

LAUNCH OF THE REPORT "CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES IN HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE ECE REGION"

Doris Andoni, UNECE Secretariat, outlined the report "Challenges and Priorities in Housing and Land Management in the ECE Region" (ECE/HBP/2013/9), which was based on a survey of member states (ECE/HBP/2013/2), and explained its role in shaping the draft Strategy on Sustainable Housing and Land Management 2014-2020.

PRESENTATION OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY 2014-2020

Gulnara Roll presented the final draft Strategy on Sustainable Housing and Land Management 2014-2020 (ECE/HBP/2013/3) and its 15 objectives, underscoring that the Strategy is intended to guide future Committee work and set clear priorities. Delegates agreed to forward the draft Strategy to the Ministerial Meeting for discussion and adoption.

REPORT OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING

OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

On Tuesday, 8 October, Wolfgang Förster welcomed ministerial delegates to the High-Level Ministerial Meeting.



Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary

The agenda of the Ministerial Meeting (ECE/HBP/172) was adopted without amendment.

Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary, urged participants to bear in mind three goals for the Ministerial Meeting: taking stock of progress made in developing

sustainable housing and land management systems; learning about member state needs as they confront current and future challenges; and agreeing on a strategy to meet the identified needs. He also noted the proposal to negotiate a framework convention on sustainable housing and consider how the convention could help address key housing issues in the region.

Chair Förster reviewed the two prior CHLM ministerial meetings in 2000 and 2006 and their outputs. He noted that Ministers' presentations on the major challenges confronting their countries will be compiled in an electronic publication and posted on the CHLM's webpage.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE AND FUTURE CHALLENGES IN HOUSING

This segment was co-chaired by Navarsete Liv Signe, Minister for Local Government and Regional Development, Norway, and Frantisek Palko, Secretary of State, Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development, Slovakia.

Michael Farrugia, Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Malta, said his country is reviewing its planning policies, undergoing an ambitious programme of land

reclamation and construction of decently-built housing, and actively introducing energy efficiency technology.

Signe, speaking as Norway's Minister for Local Government and Regional Development, stressed the importance of developing an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable housing and land sector. She noted recent Norwegian white papers on building and housing policies, the launch of a new strategy targeting vulnerable groups, particularly the



Navarsete Liv Signe, Minister for Local Government and Regional Development, Norway

homeless, and concerns about the challenges presented by climate change and an aging populace. Samvel Tadevosyan, Minister of Urban Development, Armenia, said the main challenges confronting Armenia are the existence of many families needing homes, the unsatisfactory technical conditions of existing housing stock, and problems with the housing fund. He noted progress since the first UNECE country profile in 2004, and urged that a second one be undertaken to help Armenia assess its housing goals and priorities, and emerging challenges. Palko, speaking as the Slovak Secretary of State, identified his country's principal housing challenges as refurbishing housing stock, reducing energy consumption and increasing the involvement of the public sector in order to make housing affordable to those who cannot afford to own a home. He highlighted issues involving the development of the state housing fund.

Milan Miljević, State Secretary, Ministry of Construction and Urbanism, Serbia, said his country fully supports the adoption of the UNECE Strategy. He said Serbia's biggest problem is illegal construction, and noted the country's progress in updating spatial and urban plans, addressing housing affordability and housing for refugees, promoting energy efficiency of buildings, and making cities resilient to climate change and natural disasters.

Daiva Matoniene, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Environment, Lithuania, discussed her country's efforts to promote energy efficiency in housing, through loans with preferential terms and conditions for owners of apartments in multi-apartment buildings who commit to cutting energy consumption by certain percentages.



Michael Farrugia, Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Malta

Ernst Hauri, Director, Federal Office for Housing, Switzerland, expressed his support for the UNECE Strategy as a valuable tool for building policies in the region. Noting that Switzerland was able to weather Europe's economic storm, he emphasized the challenges of meeting the high demand for new housing and making energy efficiency refurbishments in existing housing and other buildings, given the decision by the Federal Council and Parliament to phase out nuclear energy.



Ernst Hauri, Director, Federal Office for Housing, Switzerland

Abuvali Komilov, Director, Agency of Construction and Architecture, Tajikistan, said his country is faced with population growth combined with low housing supply. He highlighted the need for housing for low-income populations, improved credit programmes and low interest rates, while recognizing the lack of adequate health and environmental standards in the building sector.



Abuvali Komilov, Director, Agency of Construction and Architecture, Tajikistan

Marko Čanović, Vice-Minister, Tourism and Environmental Protection, Montenegro, introduced Montenegro's National



Marko Čanović, Vice-Minister, Tourism and Environmental Protection, Montenegro

Housing Strategy, explaining that it aims to establish legal and institutional frameworks harmonized with EU policy. Čanović discussed existing measures to prevent illegal construction, highlighting a national housing project for refugees and displaced persons.

Anatolie Zolotcov, Vice Minister, Regional Development and Construction, Moldova, commended the UNECE for its support of his country's



Anatolie Zolotcov, Vice Minister, Regional Development and Construction, Moldova

national housing survey. He referenced draft legislation on housing being discussion in Moldova's parliament and ongoing efforts to address energy efficiency via energy audits and methodologies on calculating energy cost.

Terence Dunne, Principal Officer, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, Ireland, discussed a new national housing policy which emphasizes choice, fairness and equality. He also

highlighted a national spatial strategy that is currently under review, explaining that it includes attempts to deter urban sprawl.

Jouni Parkkonen, Special Advisor to Minister of Environment, Finland, noted ongoing efforts to address



Yuri Osipov, Advisor to the Minister for Regional Development, Russian Federation

Finland's aging population and special needs groups, including the homeless. He said Helsinki's Metropolitan Policy takes a comprehensive approach to land use, housing and transportation cohesion.

Yuri Osipov, Advisor to the Minister for Regional Development, Russian Federation, highlighted the "unprecedented floods" in eastern Russia earlier this year, noting it had

devastating economic and social consequences, affecting an area of eight million square kilometers, including about 235 villages and cities, and displacing more than 100,000 people. Noting 83% of Russian housing is now privately owned, Osipov said the rapid transition from public to privately-owned housing left many homeowners unaware of changing property responsibilities. He stressed a need to build a rental housing market, learning from other UNECE member states.

Filloreta Kodra, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Albania, highlighted rapid population decline in Albania due to a falling birth rate and migration. She acknowledged the need to improve policies to deter informal settlements while facilitating the legalization of informal housing.

Sylvain Labbe, Chief Executive Officer, Quebec Wood Export Bureau, Canada, stated that an investment in social housing is an economic investment, highlighting cost savings in national health care, security and related social services. Noting that buildings of an insufficient standard are more likely to be affected by disasters, he encouraged a 'double investment' in social housing and disaster relief shelters.

Roderick Van Schreven, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, the Netherlands, acknowledged that while the Dutch housing market emphasizes quality housing and affordability, it suffers from stagnation, with mortgages often higher than a house's value and the construction sector not being able to



Sylvain Labbe, Chief Executive Officer, Quebec Wood Export Bureau, Canada



Roderick Van Schreven, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, the Netherlands

meet the housing demand. Concerning energy efficiency, Van Schreven discussed an energy labeling scheme for housing, ongoing since 2008.

Tania Berg Rafaeli, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN, noted several policies to combat urban sprawl, including policies that: encourage densification and urban infill; support energy retrofitting; and promote adaptation of buildings and infrastructure to climate change.

Borka Bobovec, Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, Croatia, acknowledged current funding challenges in the housing sector. She said Croatia is using subsidies to support citizens that are renting or purchasing homes.

Nataliia Oliinyk, Director for Reformation Strategy and Communal Services Development, Ministry of Regional Development, Construction and Municipal Development, Ukraine, underscored major legal and technical changes in the housing sector, including the modernization of housing and communal services, a focus on energy efficiency and attempts to align regulations with EU policy.

Alena Rakava, Ministry of Architecture and Construction, Belarus, underscored her country's position as an initiator of sustainable development policies in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Acknowledging the influence of UNECE on national surveys and recommendations in the housing sector, she expressed support for adoption of the draft Strategy, stating it will help countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States to establish guidelines and pool resources.

REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE AND FUTURE CHALLENGES IN LAND MANAGEMENT

This segment was co-chaired by Rafig Jalilov, Deputy Chair, State Committee on Property Issues, Azerbaijan, and Marko Čanović, Vice Minister for Tourism and Environmental Protection, Montenegro.

Peter Creuzer, Director, State Survey and Geospatial Information, Germany, discussed his country's technical work on mapping and geospatial referenced data and building web-based cadastral services and atlases, while conforming to the EU's INSPIRE Directive on interoperability of spatial data sets and services. He expressed the priority Germany places on international cooperation, particularly intra-European cooperation.

Miguel de Castro Neto, Secretary of State, Spatial Planning and Nature Conservation, Portugal, voiced support for the draft UNECE Strategy. He stressed the importance of: public-private partnerships to offer social housing; the implementation of spatial planning and land registry systems; preparation of a new urban policy; and work on adapting to climate change, and preventing and minimizing accident risks.

Ed Lester, Chief Executive, Her Majesty's Land Registry of England and Wales, UK, discussed recent changes in the Land Registry and the UK's efforts to turn the registry into a world leader in the digital delivery of land registration services, and in the management and reuse of land and property data.

Erlan Saparbaev, Head, State Registration Service, Kyrgyzstan, stressed his country's work on improving the system of cadaster and registration of immovable property, which has resulted in Kyrgyzstan being ranked 11 among 183 countries in the 'property registration' indicator of the World Bank's 'Doing Business' rating.

David Jandieri, First Deputy Minister of Justice, Georgia, discussed his country's efforts to: reform land administration and management; recognize ownership rights; improve the quality of registry and cadastral data; harmonize spatial data

and infrastructure; provide for interoperability of spatial data sets on a European level; inventory state-owned property; and improve coverage of agricultural lands in the National Agency of Public Registry.

Jalilov, speaking as Deputy Chair of Azerbaijan's State Committee on Property Issues, discussed numerous reforms over the past 10 years and current work with the World Bank to create a single automated cadastral and real estate system. He said Azerbaijan particularly valued cooperation with international bodies, including UNECE.

Roger Ekman, Senior Advisor, Lantmäteriet, Sweden, discussed his country's merger of the land registry with the cadastral agency, and proposals to simplify and unify planning and building permit procedures. He also noted the issue of sustainable use of water resources, saying this is not yet an issue for Sweden but probably will be in the future.



Roger Ekman, Senior Advisor, Lantmäteriet, Sweden

REVIEW OF PROGRESS MADE AND FUTURE CHALLENGES IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

This segment was co-chaired by Rafiq Jalilov and Marko Čanović.

Siim Kiisler, Minister for Regional Affairs, Estonia, presented Estonia's National Spatial Plan, explaining that it takes an integrated approach to transport, energy, green infrastructure, and urban and rural planning, while focusing on an open and participatory spatial planning process. Kiisler expressed support for the draft UNECE Strategy.

Desislava Terzieva, Minister of Regional Development, Bulgaria, highlighted current efforts to improve energy efficiency, notably in residential buildings. Emphasizing Bulgaria's goal to improve energy efficiency by 25% before 2020, Terzieva acknowledged support for energy renovation projects from EU structural funds and the European Regional Development Fund.

Daniel Braun, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Regional Development, Czech Republic, lauded the CHLM's discussions on sustainable housing, stating it was the only pan-European platform for housing concerns. He emphasized public space planning and EU cohesion funds to support this.

Braun further called for support for the participation of delegates from less developed Central and Eastern European countries to promote learning between member states.

Tanja Bogataj, Ministry of Infrastructure and Spatial Planning, Slovenia, stressed the need for new governance models to address emerging challenges, including climate change adaptation and an aging population.

The International Council of Women spoke on the need to ensure gender equity in housing and urban development policies.

In closing observations, Jalilov accentuated the urgency of spatial and land use planning, stressing that "our population is growing, but our land resources are not." Čanović summarized the main issues discussed during the land management and urban development segments as, *inter alia*: the cadastral system; spatial planning; energy efficiency; technical data resources; changes to the property market, including rental systems and percentage of social housing makeup; and recognition and minimization of potential hazards.

ADOPTION OF THE STRATEGY 2014-2020

Gulnara Roll presented the final draft Strategy (ECE/HBP/2013/3), its organization, 15 objectives and four themes of: sustainable housing and real estate markets; sustainable urban development; sustainable land administration and management; and cross-cutting themes. The Ministerial Meeting formally adopted the Strategy.

CLOSING OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING

Chair Förster summarized the Ministerial Meeting's conclusions and recommendations, noting calls for effective housing management, promotion of energy efficiency, addressing the challenges of housing affordability, and dealing with demographic issues, such as aging and migration, that many UNECE countries face. He noted the need to address natural disasters, possibly through common efforts by member states in areas such as emergency planning, risk reduction and "building safer houses in safer places."

Förster underscored the need in many UNECE countries to regenerate declined urban areas and address urban sprawl and informal settlements. He characterized the Strategy as "a big step forward" for the Committee, providing clear priorities for UNECE's work. Förster further noted that the overview of challenges presented by the Ministerial Meeting participants shows the need for visions and guidelines, saying the Committee now stands ready to provide these.

Virginia Cram-Martos, Director, UNECE Trade and Sustainable Land Management Division, congratulated Förster and the Bureau for their work on developing the Strategy, commended the ministers for adopting it, and stressed how helpful it will be to the Secretariat in addressing the needs and priorities of member states in housing, land management and urban development.

The Ministerial Meeting closed at 4:30 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

International Conference on the Future of Cities:

The Government of Japan, the UN Industrial Development Organization, OECD and the City of Kitakyushu, Japan, are jointly hosting this conference, following on from the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), which acknowledged the importance of building sustainable cities. The conference will: discuss sustainable urban planning and the post-2015 development agenda; promote an eco-cities network in Southeast Asia; and hold a Mayor's Forum on sustainable green growth. **date:** 20 October 2013 **location:** Kitakyushu, Japan **email:** greencities@oecd.org **www:** http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page22e_000007.html

Fifth OECD Roundtable of Mayors and Ministers: The Fifth Roundtable is an invitation-only event co-hosted by the City of Marseille and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur



Daniel Braun, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Regional Development, Czech Republic

Regional Council. It will consider how national governments and cities can better work together to foster growth and well-being. Discussions will focus on mobilizing investment in hard and soft infrastructures, fostering innovation and strengthening environmental sustainability, financial resilience and social inclusion. **date:** 4-5 December 2013 **location:** Marseille, France **email:** MarseilleRoundtable@oecd.org **www:** <http://www.oecd.org/urban/roundtable/>

Workshop on Climate Neutral Social Housing:

UNECE, in cooperation with the municipality of Trento, Italy, will hold a workshop exploring the issue of making social housing climate-neutral. **dates:** 3 - 5 February 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Gulnara Roll, Head, Housing and Land Management Unit, UNECE Secretariat **email:** gulnara.roll@unece.org **phone:** +41 22 917 22 57

5th Biennial C40 Mayors Summit: The C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) is hosting this three-day summit to convene mayors from the world's largest cities together with urban and climate change leaders for a series of roundtable discussions and working sessions focused on greenhouse gas measurements and climate adaptation. New York City Mayor and C40 Chair Michael Bloomberg and Johannesburg Mayor Mpho Parks Tau are leading the event. **dates:** 4-6 February 2014 **location:** Johannesburg, South Africa **email:** contact@c40.com **www:** <http://www.c40.org/c40events/johannesburg-to-host-2014-mayors-summit>

World Urban Forum 7 (WUF7): WUF7 will be held on the theme "Urban Equity in Development – Cities for Life," and will feature six thematic open dialogues on political, economic, social, spatial, social inclusion and environmental issues. It will also include a series of roundtables conducted by different peer groups, a World Urban Youth Assembly, a Gender Equality Action Assembly, and a Business Assembly. **dates:** 5-11 April 2014 **location:** Medellín, Colombia **venue:** Plaza Mayor Convention and Exhibition Center **contact:** UN-HABITAT WUF Secretariat **email:** wuf@unhabitat.org **www:** <http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=767>

Forum on Land Information Systems (LIS) for Smart Cities: The Geospatial World Forum and UNECE will convene a two-day Discussion and Dialogue Forum on LIS for Smart Cities within the context of the broader Geospatial World Forum 2013 being held from 5-9 May 2013. The LIS for Smart Cities Forum will explore ways that LIS feeds into creating smart cities and the resultant benefits gained by local authorities. **dates:** 8-9 May 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Gulnara Roll, Head, Housing and Land

Management Unit, UNECE Secretariat **email:** gulnara.roll@unece.org **phone:** +41 22 917 22 57 **www:** <http://www.geospatialworldforum.org/2014/LIS.htm>

5th Global Forum on Urban Resilience and Adaptation ("Resilient Cities 2014"): organized by ICLEI– Local Governments for Sustainability and the World Mayors Council on Climate Change, and co-sponsored by UN-HABITAT, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the UN Development Programme and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, this Forum will focus on: risk data and analysis; adaptation planning and policy; comprehensive adaptation approaches; collaborative and community-based adaptation; resilient infrastructure and city-region support systems; and governance and capacity building. **dates:** 1-3 June 2014 (*tentative*) **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** Alice Balbo, ICLEI World Secretariat **phone:** +49-(0)228-976-299-28 **fax:** +49(0)228-976-299-01 **email:** resilient.cities@iclei.org **www:** <http://resilient-cities.iclei.org/bonn2014/resilient-cities-2014-home/>

75th Session of UNECE CHLM: The CHLM will hold its 75th session to review its work and discuss issues involving housing, land management and urban development, including implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE Region for the Period 2014-2020. **dates:** 6-7 October 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Gulnara Roll, Head, Housing and Land Management Unit, UNECE Secretariat **email:** gulnara.roll@unece.org **phone:** +41 22 917 22 57 **www:** <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/meetings-and-events.html>

GLOSSARY

CHLM	Committee on Housing and Land Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
WPLA	Working Party on Land Administration



Participants of the Ministerial Session