



### SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE UNECE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT: 8-9 OCTOBER 2014

The 75<sup>th</sup> 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 8-9 October 2014. More than 160 participants attended the meeting, including representatives from 41 UNECE Member States and one observer country, as well as representatives from non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, academia and the private sector.

The 75<sup>th</sup> session of the CHLM agreed on the text of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, which will be forwarded to the biennial meeting of the full UN Economic Commission for Europe in April 2015 for final adoption. The CHLM also discussed, *inter alia*: implementation of the 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 2014-2015 work programme of the CHLM regarding sustainable housing, sustainable urban development, land administration and management, and country profiles on housing and land management.

#### 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 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: providing country profiles on the housing sector; improving 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 with economies in transition and modernize land registration systems in the region's transitional countries.

The CHLM works closely with the European Union (EU), the Organization for Economic Cooperation 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.

**70<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CHLM:** This session, held from 23-25 September 2009 in Geneva, opened with a one-day seminar on climate-neutral cities. Participants discussed sustainable land management, climate change mitigation, green building and the reduction of emissions from buildings. During the following two days, the CHLM discussed outcomes of the seminar, building and construction safety, and cross-sectoral activities such as energy efficiency and land-use planning around high-risk industrial sites.

**71<sup>ST</sup> SESSION OF THE CHLM:** The CHLM held this session from 20-21 September 2010 in Geneva. It agreed to start work on a UNECE policy framework convention on sustainable housing 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.

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**72<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE CHLM:** The 72<sup>nd</sup> 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 74<sup>th</sup> CHLM Session to review implementation of the 2006 Ministerial Declaration and future policy directions of UNECE work in the areas of housing and land management.

**73<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE CHLM:** The CHLM held its 73<sup>rd</sup> session from 24-26 September 2012 in Geneva. The Committee endorsed a working group proposal to open formal negotiations on a framework convention on sustainable housing, and recommended to the UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) 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 74<sup>th</sup> 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.

**74<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CHLM:** The CHLM held its 74<sup>th</sup> session from 7-9 October 2013 in Geneva, devoting 8 October to a High-Level Ministerial Meeting. The CHLM discussed the draft Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE region for the period 2014-2020, reviewed the implementation of the 2012-2013 work programme, and approved the 2014-2015 work programme. The Ministerial Meeting adopted the Strategy, and discussed and reviewed progress made and future challenges in housing, land management and urban development in UNECE member states.

**NEGOTIATIONS ON A CHARTER ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING:** At its 66<sup>th</sup> meeting in February 2014, the EXCOM encouraged the CHLM to investigate and discuss the possibility of developing a Charter on Sustainable Housing for the ECE Region instead of a framework convention. The CHLM elaborated a first draft of the Charter at an informal meeting on 7 May 2014. The draft was further developed through an e-mail consultation with member States, discussed at the CHLM Bureau meeting on 18 July 2014 and examined at an informal negotiating pre-session of the Committee on 7 October 2014.

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING

The 75<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) met from 8-9 October 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland.

### OPENING OF THE MEETING

Elena Szolgayová, CHLM Chair, opened the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the CHLM on Wednesday, 8 October 2014. She welcomed delegates, highlighting a record participation of 160 delegates from 42 countries. She introduced the agenda (ECE/HBP/178), which was adopted without amendment.

Christian Friis Bach, UNECE Executive Secretary, noted that the demand for social housing greatly exceeds its supply in the ECE region. Underscoring that the building sector accounts for one third of final energy consumption in the region and that the ECE region is responsible for 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions, he stressed the importance of the CHLM’s work to improve energy efficiency in this sector. He encouraged the Committee to approve the draft Charter on Sustainable Housing as the UNECE’s contribution to the upcoming Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and to the

proposed sustainable development goal on cities and human settlements. He also called for following up the Charter with the development of standards that facilitate its implementation.

### RESULTS OF THE REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE’S WORK BY THE ECE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

On Thursday afternoon CHLM Vice Chair David Giginishvili, Georgia, reported that the UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) in March 2014 had adopted the Committee’s 2014-2015 programme of work (ECE/EX/2014/L.2), and had extended the mandate and terms of reference (ToR) of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) until 31 December 2015 (ECE/EX/2014/L.3) and the mandate and ToR of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM) until 31 December 2014 (ECE/EX/2014/L.4).

### WORK OF THE CHLM BUREAU

On Thursday afternoon Vice Chair Giginishvili reported on the Bureau’s work and the main decisions taken since the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee in 2013 (ECE/HBP/2014/1). The Committee took note of the information.

### DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT CHARTER ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

On Wednesday morning, Chair Szolgayová outlined the process that led to the draft Charter, from CHLM approval in 2010 to work on a framework convention on sustainable housing, to the decision by the EXCOM in February 2014 to pursue a nonbinding charter instead. She explained that detailed negotiations were held in an informal session in May 2014, followed by weeks of electronic consultations and work by the CHLM Bureau in July. Another informal session was held on 7 October, just before the Committee session. She stressed the importance of the CHLM approving the Charter, so that it can go to the EXCOM for approval, with a view to placing it before the biennial meeting of the full Commission in April 2015. If the Commission approves it, she said, the Charter would become the formal UNECE contribution to Habitat III. She proposed reviewing the draft Charter (ECE/HBP/2014/2), as amended on 7 October (CRP1), section-by-section rather than paragraph-by-paragraph, focusing more on clarity and appropriateness of concepts and principles rather than perfect phrasing.

No delegation raised objections or concerns regarding chapter one on challenges to sustainable housing. Discussion of chapter two on goal, scope and principles focused principally on the economic principles for the Charter. Chair Szolgayová recalled informal discussions on the bidirectional relationship between a healthy housing sector and a thriving economy in general. She presented three proposals for a title for this pillar of the Charter and the principles associated with it: economic viability, economic suitability, and economic effectiveness and/or efficacy. Serbia pointed to the importance of stability in housing policies and financing. Azerbaijan and Albania, supported by the Czech Republic and others, preferred a simple reference to economic effectiveness as the most inclusive term. The Committee endorsed the latter proposal.

Azerbaijan inquired about a new insertion in the economic principles subsection calling for “increased” investments in sustainable housing. The Chair explained that the Committee felt that, even in countries with consistent investment programmes for affordable housing, post-crisis effects on housing markets have made increased investments desirable.

In response to a proposal by the International Council of Women to explicitly mention women in a reference to vulnerable groups in chapter two’s section on social inclusion and participation, Chair Szolgayová explained that the negotiators had decided to explain the interpretation of the term “vulnerable groups” in a footnote to the Charter.



During the review of chapter three on key directions of work and measures to promote sustainable housing, the REM representative questioned whether it was necessary to include “gentrification” in the subsection on promoting healthy, barrier free and safe housing, and whether the term would be understood in all countries and official UN languages. Chair Szolgayová explained that the 7 October informal negotiating session had decided that the reference was needed and commonly understood.

In the chapter three subsection on promoting the continued application of sustainable housing principles, the Committee approved a UK amendment on making housing data publicly available, not only to support policymaking, but also for research and economic development purposes.

Finally, the Committee accepted a suggestion by UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary Andrey Vasilyev to change the title of the Charter from “UN Geneva Charter on Sustainable Housing” to “Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing.”

Chair Szolgayová congratulated the CHLM on agreeing on the Charter text. She explained that the text would be submitted to the EXCOM for its review before being sent for adoption by the biennial session of the full UN Economic Commission for Europe scheduled for April 2015. If adopted by the full Commission, she said, the Charter would constitute a UNECE contribution to Habitat III. Vasilyev added that the Charter would also be reported to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which may spark the interest of other UN regions in undertaking similar exercises.

#### **OUTCOME DOCUMENT: THE GENEVA UN CHARTER ON SUSTAINABLE HOUSING**

As now agreed by the CHLM and reported to the EXCOM (ECE/HBP/179, Annex 1), the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing is organized in three chapters outlining challenges to sustainable housing, the scope and goals of the Charter as well as key directions for future action. In chapter one, UNECE Member States note multiple challenges to sustainable housing, resulting mainly from globalization, demographic changes, climate change and the economic crisis. These challenges include, *inter alia*:

- reducing the environmental impact of housing provision, management and demolition;
- limiting physical and mental health risks of poor indoor environments as well as degraded urban environments;
- enhancing the stability and transparency of housing markets to prevent imbalances such as those following the 2008 crisis;
- ensuring affordable and adequate housing for the poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable;
- coping with urban sprawl and informal settlements that may result from urbanization; and
- making settlements more resilient to extreme weather events and enhancing national policies and planning for emergency situations.

Chapter two defines the goal of the Charter as supporting Member States in ensuring access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all, with due attention to reducing the impact of the housing sector on the environment. The scope is to improve the sustainability of housing in the ECE region through effective policies and actions at all levels, supported by international cooperation. The principles or rationales that form the basis for sustainable housing are defined as: environmental protection; economic effectiveness; social inclusion and participation; and cultural adequacy.

In chapter three, Member States express their intention to support actions in four key directions. The first is to limit the negative environmental impact of the housing sector and enhance its energy efficiency, including measures to:

- reduce the carbon footprint throughout the entire life cycle of buildings;

- apply standards for energy efficiency and environmental safety;
- retrofit and renovate existing housing stocks;
- provide technical and financial support to ensure the feasibility and affordability of energy efficiency measures;
- integrate green housing policies into urban and territorial development;
- bring workplaces and services into closer spatial relations to housing;
- pay attention to air and water quality and waste management;
- promote multifamily housing and integrated public transportation; and
- provide universal access to green and public spaces.

The second direction is to promote access to housing in the context of sustainable economic development, and in order to do so Member States should support measures to, *inter alia*:

- promote secure tenure and a neutral treatment of tenure options;
- facilitate residential and labor mobility by promoting fair and transparent rental markets;
- promote both private and public investments in the housing sector;
- favor credit access for socially and economically vulnerable populations;
- assist those in danger of housing-loan default because of social or economic shocks;
- encourage the regularization of informal constructions and assist access to adequate infrastructure and services in informal and low-income settlements, where possible and appropriate; and
- ensure fairness and non-discrimination and fight corruption in the housing sector.

The third area notes that in order to promote decent, adequate, healthy, barrier free and safe housing, Member States should support measures to, *inter alia*:

- improve access to basic utilities and services, including safe drinking water and sanitation;
- promote universal design principles to increase the ability to live independently for all;
- develop socially mixed communities, reduce homelessness and avoid social segregation, gentrification and gated communities;
- encourage healthy housing design as well as public and green spaces around and within housing areas; and
- improve the resilience of buildings to natural and human-generated hazards through safety planning, design and construction.

Finally, the fourth direction notes that in order to promote the continued application of sustainable housing principles, Member States should support measures to, *inter alia*:

- gather internationally comparable data on housing, including on homelessness, and make it publicly available;
- encourage research and innovation in all aspects of sustainable housing;
- develop capacities for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management; and
- intensify the regional and international exchange of experience and cooperation.

#### **BIENNIAL EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 2012-2013**

On Thursday afternoon the Secretariat presented the biennial evaluation report for 2012-2013 (ECE/HBP/2014/3), which the Committee endorsed. Vice Chair Giginishvili informed the Committee that in October 2014 the EXCOM approved a new UNECE evaluation policy under which Commission subprogrammes' evaluations in the future will be conducted

by independent experts and not by the subprogrammes themselves. In light of the new policy, the CHLM decided to discontinue the preparation of biennial evaluation reports.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE ECE REGION 2014-2020 AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE HABITAT III CONFERENCE**

On Wednesday afternoon Chair Szolgayová recalled the adoption of the Strategy on Housing and Land Management (ECE/HBP/2013/3) by the Ministerial Meeting on Housing and Land Management in 2013 and opened discussion of its implementation by asking Amie Figueiredo of the Secretariat to brief the Committee on the preparation of the publication “Challenges and Priorities in Housing and Urban Development in the ECE Region” (Informal Note 1).

Figueiredo reported that so far only 36 countries had responded to the questionnaire serving as the basis for the report, a 64% response rate. She urged other countries to turn in their responses soon, so that the report can be finalized in time for submission to the Habitat III Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) session planned for April 2015. She said the top challenges identified included inefficient use of energy in the residential sector, low political attention to housing and urban development issues, limited access to affordable, quality and healthy housing, lack of easy access for disabled and aged persons, and deteriorated housing stock due to a lack of maintenance and investment.

Michael Falzon, Parliamentary Secretariat for Planning, Malta, discussed his country’s efforts to promote green and socially inclusive human settlements in the broader political and socioeconomic contexts, including its relation to the “Strategic Plan for Environment and Development” adopted recently by his government. He also outlined integrated urban development actions in targeted areas within the Grand Harbour area.

Alina Shaikova, State Registration Service, Kyrgyzstan, discussed her country’s automation of property registration and the creation of an electronic database that provides online access to up-to-date data. She also noted increases in real estate sales and mortgage transactions, and the adoption in 2013 of a new housing code and a law on condominium housing.

For the Czech Republic, Daniela Grabmüllerová, Ministry of Regional Development, outlined steps taken to address Czech strategic objectives of reducing energy use in the housing sector, encouraging private investment in housing stock, ensuring efficient management of housing stock, and supporting good governance, through such measures as retrofitting, providing state loans for private investors in rental dwellings, and legislating on services in multifamily residential buildings, spatial planning and construction codes. Eva Helclová, Czech State Housing Development Fund, described how her institution provides an information platform and supports municipal and private investment in housing and residential buildings, including programmes for refurbishments, deprived rural areas, young people, rental housing, and post-flood support, the latter to be replaced by a more comprehensive programme targeting all natural disasters.

Elena Szolgayová, speaking for the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development, Slovakia, reported on the implementation of the UNECE Strategy in her country. She said that a Slovakian law on energy-efficient buildings contains obligations for certificates and that the new state housing policy prepared for 2015 aims to further stimulate retrofitting. Slovakia is currently preparing a new law to ensure efficient management of the housing stock, she said. With respect to affordable housing, she highlighted that her country funded social housing at a constant level throughout the post-crisis years.

Lise Nielsen, Ministry of Housing, Urban and Rural Affairs, Denmark, noted that despite comparably high living standards, the country faces the same challenges as the rest of the ECE region, such as providing affordable housing, improving energy efficiency, and dealing with rural migration. She reported that while the Danish social housing scheme primarily targets vulnerable groups, it is open to all citizens so as to promote socially mixed communities. With the aim of cutting energy consumption in new dwellings by 75% from 2006 to 2020, she explained how the Danish building code demands increasingly ambitious construction standards.

On behalf of Daiva Matoniene, Vice Minister for the Environment, Lithuania, Vilma Vaiciuniene presented the country’s programme for the renovation of multi apartment buildings (JESSICA). Noting that the loan financing scheme of the European Investment Bank complements public resources, she reported that a new ambitious model subsidizes up to 40% of investments if they yield energy efficiency gains of at least the same percentage. Stressing the importance of integrated urban renewal, she said Lithuania was pleased that the idea was now also reflected in the newly endorsed Geneva Charter.

Alena Rakava, Ministry of Architecture and Construction, Belarus, said the UNECE Strategy was the basis for work at the national level in her country. She said that the government adopted in April 2013 a concept of public housing to govern policy through 2016 that emphasizes support for better and more energy-efficient housing. She also described the creation of a regional methodological center to guide the Confederation of Independent States (CIS) in preparing their national reports for Habitat III, which will also result in a single CIS report to Habitat III. Chair Szolgayová observed with regret that a similar exercise had not been undertaken for coordinating reports to Habitat III of the UNECE or EU Member States.

Andrey Chibis, Vice Minister, Ministry of Construction, Housing and Utilities, Russian Federation, noted projects by his government to give 800,000 poor citizens new comfortable homes and to renovate existing housing to become more economic and energy efficient. He also discussed the effort to privatize municipal waste management and to improve the climate for private capital to invest in housing. He said the Russian Federation has a very clear plan for modernizing housing, with each region of the country adopting modernization plans that meet the climate specificities of that region.

Saying that the Committee would take note of these presentations, Chair Szolgayová urged those governments that had not yet done so to respond to the questionnaire and provide national reports by the end of October, so the UNECE report to Habitat III could be prepared in time for the next PrepCom session scheduled for April 2015.

### **REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2014-2015**

**SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND REAL ESTATE MARKETS: Towards Affordable and Social Housing:** On Wednesday afternoon, Orna Rosenfeld, Secretariat, presented preliminary findings of the UNECE Social Housing Study (Informal Note 2). With record numbers on application lists and at least 100 million people in the UNECE region spending more than 40% of their income on housing, she reported that governments are determined to tackle the housing shortage, but unsure how to proceed. Noting regional disparities as well as diversified target groups, ranging from low- to middle-income and from young to elderly people, she recommended responding to local drivers and adopting inclusive policy designs. Since the range of stakeholders involved in social housing is on the rise, she pointed to the need for cooperative platforms including at the international level, potentially bundling a number of initiatives through the UNECE. She



concluded by recalling that every pound invested in social housing yields some 2.8 pounds worth in returns for the wider economy.

Chair Szolgayová said that the Committee would entrust the CHLM Bureau with overseeing the finalization and publication of the study.

Galina Khovanskaya, State Duma, Russian Federation, reported on the commercial housing law adopted in June. It aims to facilitate rental markets at a medium level in between publicly-funded social housing and purely commercial housing markets, she said. Stressing that continuous rents are an attractive return on investment in times of crisis, she explained that Russia now provides incentives for affordable rental homes on three levels: tax benefits, land transfer on preferential terms, and direct subsidies granted on a regional level, as required.

Alice Pittini, Housing Europe, said her organization's general assembly has identified four main housing challenges: providing affordable housing, especially in times of cuts to public budgets; combining quality and energy-efficient housing stock with affordability; providing housing to those most in need while also responding to social and demographic trends; and ensuring that housing is available at affordable costs where it is most needed. She observed that the EU lacks a coherent policy on affordable housing, and suggested that the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing could provide a framework for EU policy. She noted Housing Europe's work in support of EU legislation on energy efficiency in buildings, and the European Declaration on Responsible Housing adopted on 6 October by Housing Europe, the International Union of Tenants and others.

**Real Estate Markets:** On Wednesday afternoon, Chair Szolgayová presented the new ToR of REM drafted by the CHLM Bureau (ECE/HBP/2014/5). The Committee endorsed the ToR, recommended to the EXCOM that the REM's mandate be extended for two years based on the ToR, and entrusted the Bureau and WPLA with overseeing the REM's programme of work for the 2015-2016 period. Chair Szolgayová invited governments to send in nominations for REM members no later than 20 November.

**Energy Efficiency in the Housing Sector:** On Thursday morning, CHLM Vice Chair Daniela Grabmüllerová, substituting for Chair Szolgayová, opened the Committee session by asking Gulnara Roll, CHLM Secretary, to summarize CHLM activities supporting the implementation of the ECE Action Plan for Energy-Efficient Housing (ECE/HBP/164). Roll reviewed CHLM activities, including publications and workshops at the regional and lately at the national level as well. She encouraged Member States to delegate technical experts as in-kind contributions to the Secretariat's work in countries with economies in transition. Having disseminated knowledge and built capacity, she suggested that the development of standards should be the next step. Presenting the proposal for preparing a study on standards (ECE/HBP/2014/4), Roll recalled that a series of expert meetings would first be held to further build understanding of the standards needed. At the suggestion of Vice Chair Grabmüllerová, the CHLM approved proceeding with the study and invited governments and other organizations to provide financial or in-kind expert support to the implementation of the study.

Stefanie Held, Secretariat, presented the recent establishment of two new expert groups on energy efficiency and renewable energies under UNECE's Sustainable Energy Committee. She explained how the former group's mission to take stock of energy efficiency activities and to develop policy options based on best practices opens up an opportunity of collaboration with the CHLM, *inter alia*, in establishing standards for the housing and buildings sector. She noted that

the expert groups would first meet and have their work plans set by the Committee during UNECE's Sustainable Energy Week from 17-21 November 2014.

Doris Andoni, Albanian Housing Agency, reported on the national workshop held in Tirana in July 2014. With energy efficiency measures generally being undervalued in the mild climate of Southern Europe, she highlighted the success in building awareness and attracting media coverage, including additional thematic talk shows broadcasted on the occasion. The workshop also succeeded, she said, in bringing together a variety of decision makers and other stakeholders, and establishing a network of experts, which then provided inputs to a draft law on energy efficiency.

Florian Steierer, Secretariat, discussed a study by the UNECE Forestry and Timber Section of leading public policies in the ECE region which promote sustainable construction materials. He explained that the study started with an online questionnaire receiving responses from 32 UNECE countries, from which was developed a list of current policies and programmes. He said the next phase will involve identifying six key policies for detailed analysis. Steierer said the 26 types of policies, programmes and initiatives identified include those on: support for products selection based on life cycle assessment; advanced environmental norms; focus on proportion of wood in buildings; advanced technical specifications and structural norms; guidance for public procurement; and market-based instruments. He added that a draft of the study will be presented to the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry at its 18-21 November 2014 meeting, with a view to publishing the final version in March 2015.

Canada suggested that the CHLM become involved in the proposed Sustainable Buildings and Construction Programme to be led by UNEP under the 10-year framework of programmes (10YFP) for sustainable consumption and production (SCP). Vice Chair Grabmüllerová expressed support for the idea.

**SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT: Smart Cities:** On Thursday morning the session on smart cities was opened by Domenica Carriero, Secretariat, who outlined the UNECE's "Sustainable Urban Solutions for Transition and Developing Countries" Project ("Smart Cities Project") (Informal Note 3). She explained that the Project has three phases: the development of the methodology with indicators for evaluating cities, the selection of pilot cities, and the development of "smart city profiles"; implementation of profile recommendations, monitoring of activities, and measurement and analysis of changes made; and publication of a report showing the achievements, and setting up a wider network of smart cities to exchange best practices. She also mentioned a series of parallel activities planned, including events and capacity building workshops. She said that the pilot cities selected under the Project are: Goris, Armenia; Graz, Austria; Rakvere, Estonia; Rimini, Italy; Turov, Belarus; and Vinnitsa, Ukraine. She added that the wider network of smart cities being built includes Amman, Jordan, Astana, Kazakhstan, Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Vienna, Austria. She invited participation and inputs from all Committee members.

Kari Eik, Secretary General, Organization for International Economic Relations (OiER), provided background on OiER, stressing that urban development and smart cities was one of the four main sectoral themes for its current work. She said OiER is seeking to help transition and developing countries in the UNECE region, Middle East and Northern Africa to develop "smart urban solutions," working with the UNECE, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), the Dubai Real Estate Institute, Environment Agency Austria (EAA), the International Society of City and Regional Planners and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) to develop a multi-stakeholder Smart City Project and Global Platform.

Andreas Littkopf, EAA, discussed his agency's "smart city profile methodology" and accompanying indicators to evaluate cities and the development of smart city solutions. The methodology, already tested in 12 cities in Austria, will be applied for cities in countries with economies in transition. He explained that after looking at existing urban indicators worldwide, the Agency came up with 25 to use, divided into three categories: economy, environment and society. He said EAA is now looking into where data for these indicators already exists and where gaps need to be filled. He concluded by arguing that the development of profiles and indicators will allow cities in countries with economies in transition to assess their fitness regarding sustainable development, while enabling them to identify priorities, monitor their progress and learn from others.

Artem Sedov, National Research University Moscow State University of Civil Engineering, described the work of the Laboratory of Intelligent Systems in Automation ("Smart City Laboratory") to provide training, equipment and software and to create networks regarding smart buildings, primarily in energy management. He also discussed: his Laboratory's selection to help Astana, Kazakhstan, become one of the 50 smartest cities in the world; a project to create pilot small smart cities throughout the Russian Federation; work on green construction certification; and energy modeling and certification for buildings.

Andres Jaadla, Rakvere Smart House and Intelligent Building Competence Center, detailed the efforts of Rakvere, Estonia efforts to become a smart city, and the mission and activities of the EU-funded Competence Centre, including its efforts to become the first public near-zero energy building in Estonia, its partnering with universities, vocational schools and business, and its promotion of technologies for smart houses, intelligent buildings, and smart cities.

At the suggestion of Vice Chair Grabmüllerová, the Committee took note of these presentations. Paola Deda, Secretariat, suggested that the Committee examine and endorse the smart city indicators being developed. The Committee approved the proposal.

**Urban Planning and Disaster Risk Reduction:** On Thursday afternoon Vice Chair Grabmüllerová opened the thematic discussion on urban planning and disaster risk reduction. Recalling that UNECE's publication "Spatial Planning" dated from 2008, Gulnara Roll presented a proposal for an updated and more specific policy brief on urban planning (ECE/HBP/2014/6), which would contain recommendations for addressing disaster risks, such as earthquakes, floods, landslides and industrial accidents. She explained that, like the Committee's previous work on energy efficiency, the plan was to form a virtual task force or network, building on existing knowledge and initiatives to draft the brief. The main work would then consist of advising interested countries and assisting their policy processes through use of the policy brief's recommendations. The Committee endorsed the proposal.

Nick Land and Paola De Salvo presented the work of the software company ESRI, which provides geographic information system (GIS) applications to assist disaster risk reduction. Land explained that the power of GIS lies in bringing data from a huge range of sources together on a single platform, including maps, images, tables as well as information from social media and real-time data from sensors. Since this platform is available on any device, anywhere, at any time, it helps in connecting people and breaking down institutional barriers. De Salvo then illustrated how the software allows linking authoritative data, such as that from UNEP's Global Risk Data Platform or the Copernicus Programme of the EU, to first-hand stories and impressions, such as a recording of the latest flood posted on YouTube. In the case of floods, for example, satellite imagery allows for pre- and post-event comparisons that help in choosing preventive actions.

Han Admiraal, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), reported on the work of the recently formalized Urban Planning Advisory Group. Besides advising the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, key purposes of the Group are to advocate the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction in planning policies and to establish a network of experts from the UN, regional organizations, national planning associations and academia, among others. Admiraal welcomed the CHLM initiative for a policy brief on urban planning and offered linking up with their network for inputs.

Matina Halkia, Joint Research Centre, European Commission, presented the urban-related work (Task SB-04) of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), involving 90 countries and 77 international organizations. She illustrated how information on buildings and open and green spaces are automatically extracted from satellite images. Using buildings as a proxy for population, combining this data with thermal or topographic maps can yield estimates about the population at risk in case of a heat wave or the eruption of a volcano. Such mapping also can help overcome administrative barriers, and enhance planning for waste collection across municipal borders along lines of population density, Halkia said.

**LAND ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT:** On Thursday afternoon, WPLA Chair Elshad Khanalibayli, Azerbaijan, reported on the publications, workshops and other activities carried out by the WPLA since the last CHLM session and outlined proposals for possible future activities (Informal Note 4). Khanalibayli also presented the publication "Survey on Land Administration Systems" (ECE/HBP/180), explaining that the study provides an analysis of national land administration systems services, data security, practices on recovering data in the event of a disaster and other aspects of land administration.

Rik Wouters, Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency, Netherlands, reported on a WPLA study underway on advantages and disadvantages of the unification of land registries and cadastres (Informal Note 6). He said the final phase of the study should be launched during October 2014, with a view to completing the study by April 2015.

Amie Figueiredo briefed the Committee on a study of informal settlements in the ECE Region (Informal Note 5) prepared in cooperation with the International Federation of Surveyors, which focuses on five UNECE countries in southeastern Europe and central Asia: Albania, Cyprus, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Greece, and Montenegro. She explained that the study: looks at the impact of informal development and the various strategies, policies, legislation and procedures and tools used to address it; assesses the progress of legalization; and identifies examples of good practice.

Galina Elizarova, Federal Service for State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography, Russian Federation, briefed the Committee on preparations for a WPLA workshop in 2015 in the Russian Federation.

Figueiredo noted WPLA plans for: a 16-17 October workshop in Geneva on "Real Estate Infrastructure" which will share insights on organizing real estate infrastructure and land administration; a 28 November workshop in Baku, Azerbaijan on "Benchmarking of Land Administration Systems and Implementation of Land Governance Assessment Frameworks"; a workshop on Land Management for Smart Cities to be held within the context of the 15-17 February 2015 Middle East Geospatial World Forum to be held in Dubai, UAE; and a workshop to be held during the 25-29 May 2015 INSPIRE Geospatial Forum in Lisbon, Portugal, which will focus on public private partnerships.

**COUNTRY PROFILES ON HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT:** Gulnara Roll, Secretariat, updated CHLM on the utilization of the guidelines for the preparation of country profiles on housing and land management (ECE/HBP/2013/8) in preparing new country profiles and related national action plans.



Abduvali Komilov, Committee for Construction and Architecture, Tajikistan, reported that, based on the policy recommendations of the country profile for Tajikistan (ECE/HBP/163), his country created a database of projects and programmes, set up an interagency coordination council, and drew up a draft law on energy efficiency. Recalling that Tajikistan experiences heavy earthquakes, he stressed efforts to improve construction standards and inspections.

Anatolie Izbînda, Institute INCERCOM, reported on outcomes and policy recommendations in Moldova's profile on housing and land management (ECE/HBP/181). He said a 2013 meeting had brought together important stakeholders in Moldova, which had since worked, *inter alia*, on responding to demographic challenges, improving the legal system of land administration, and enhancing policies and financing for housing in general. Izbînda also reported on currently considered regulations for condominiums, which aim at motivating owners to manage their communal property more effectively.

Given that the population of Uzbekistan has multiplied by a factor of 1.5 since the early 1990s, Shukhrat Ismailov, Ministry of Economy, said access to adequate housing was one of the most pressing challenges of the country. With less than 2% of Uzbeks renting dwellings, he reported that the construction of individual homes in rural areas was a priority for the government. Ismailov also presented preliminary recommendations of Uzbekistan's country profile, to be finalized in spring 2015, and reported on recent measures such as the introduction of e-governance in the registration of real estate property rights.

Nshan Martirosyan, Ministry of Urban Development, Armenia, briefed the Committee on steps taken to prepare his country's profile, an update of a profile done in 2000.

Andrey Chibis, Vice Minister, Ministry of Construction, Housing and Utilities, Russian Federation, presented on actions taken to improve housing and land management in his country. He noted the Russian Federation's financial support for profiles of CIS countries, and expressed an interest in a possible profile for the Russian Federation.

### **DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE COMMITTEE**

On Thursday afternoon, Vice Chair Grabmüllerová recalled that the Guidelines on Procedures and Practices for ECE bodies adopted by the full Commission in 2013 allow UNECE sectoral committees to adopt their own rules of procedure, and that the 2013 session of the CHLM had invited the Secretariat to develop such rules for consideration and approval at the 2014 session. She presented the draft rules (ECE/HBP/2014/7), and asked Paola Deda to outline a few amendments suggested by the EU regarding the rules on adoption of the Committee session report, procedures for adoption of the work programme, and procedures to replace inactive Bureau members. After some refinements to these proposed amendments offered by the Russian Federation, the rules of procedure were endorsed as amended.

### **STATUS OF THE TRUST FUND ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

Gulnara Roll, Secretariat, reported on the status of the trust fund on human settlements and thanked the governments of the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation, OiER and the European Institute for Real Estate for their contributions to the Trust Fund. Displaying a graphic showing the huge gap between contributions and expenditures, she said that it had been possible to cut expenditures in 2014 due to generous in-kind support of external partners. Vice Chair Grabmüllerová urged Committee members to lobby their governments for more contributions to the Trust Fund.

### **INTERDIVISIONAL AND INTER-AGENCY ACTIVITIES**

Brian Emmott, REM, reported on the UN Global Compact project with RICS aimed at providing a toolkit to help the land, real estate and construction sector to improve responsible business practices by promoting the Compact's principles in the fields of human rights, labor rights, environment and anti-corruption in their dealings. The Committee took note of this ongoing work.

### **ELECTION OF THE BUREAU**

On behalf of Chair Szolgayová, the Secretariat presented a proposal for the election of Bureau members based on informal consultations. Azerbaijan proposed to include Ali Musa Jafarov as well, and as no objection was voiced, the proposal was accepted. The Committee endorsed the amended proposal and elected Elena Szolgayová, Slovakia, as Chair, Daniela Grabmüllerová, Czech Republic, and David Gigineishvili, Georgia, as Vice Chairs, with Ali Musa Jafarov, Azerbaijan, Alena Rakava, Belarus, Lise Nielsen, Denmark, Stefano Scalera, Italy, Vilma Vaiciuniene, Lithuania, Inger Vold Zapffe, Norway, Svetlana Ristić, Serbia, Abduvali Komilov, Tajikistan, and Paul Dowse, UK, as members. The Committee also welcomed WPLA Chair Elshad Khanalibayli. Azerbaijan, as *ex-officio* member of the Bureau.

### **CLOSING OF THE SESSION**

Vice Chair Gigineishvili announced that the next session of the Committee was planned for 2-4 November 2015 in Geneva. Gulnara Roll reported that a member country had approached the Secretariat about hosting the next meeting of the Committee. She suggested listing the date and place of the next meeting as "to be confirmed" for the time being and if a formal offer is made, it would be reported to the Bureau for a decision and all Committee members would be informed. The Committee agreed to this suggestion.

The report of the session was reviewed paragraph-by-paragraph, with minor amendments noted. The report was adopted as amended (ECE/HBP/179).

The meeting closed at 6:06 pm.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**Asia Urban Futures Workshop:** The US Agency for International Development (USAID), together with UN-HABITAT, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Global Pulse are co-hosting this workshop under the theme "Shaping solutions to the challenges of tomorrow for Asia's cities." The event seeks to bring together diverse stakeholders to discuss some of the major challenges and opportunities facing Asian cities as the result of rapid urbanization and climate change. The workshop will look at scenarios, models and forecasts from experts on Asian cities, as well as examples of state-of-the-art science and technology-based approaches for building urban resilience. **dates:** 14-15 October 2014 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** Liam Fee **email:** fee@un.org **www:** <http://www.usaid.gov/asia-regional/asia-urban-futures-workshop>

**5<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development:** The Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (APMCHUD) was established in 2006 to promote sustainable housing and urban development for human settlements in the Asia-Pacific Region. The theme of the 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD is "Equal Opportunity for Sustainable Development." Sub-themes will include: inclusive urban planning; upgrading informal settlements; inclusive technology for the delivery of basic services; financing sustainable housing; and urban development for equal opportunity responding to natural and climate change-related disasters. **dates:** 3-5 November 2013 **location:** Seoul, Republic of Korea **contact:** 5<sup>th</sup> APMCHUD Organizing Committee **email:** [programs@apmchud-seoul.com](mailto:programs@apmchud-seoul.com) **phone:** +82-31-738-3807 **www:** <http://www.apmchud-seoul.com/>

**Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Housing Workshop:** Organized jointly by the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), this workshop will be part of the 5<sup>th</sup> International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development. It will address the long-term environmental impact of energy efficiency in the housing sector as well as discuss how to facilitate the use of appropriate financial mechanisms, legislative framework and policies for the access to sustainable energy, especially to low-income and vulnerable groups. **date:** 5 November 2014 **location:** Hammamet, Tunisia **contact:** Domenica Carriero, Housing and Land Management Unit, UNECE Secretariat **email:** Domenica.Carriero@unece.org **phone:** +41-22-917-1672 **www:** <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=36344>

**Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction:** The PrepCom is scheduled to approve the programme of work for the Conference and develop a draft post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. **dates:** 17-18 November 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **venue:** Palais des Nations **email:** [wcdrr2015-un@un.org](mailto:wcdrr2015-un@un.org) **www:** <http://www.wcdrr.org/preparatory/prepcom2>

**UNECE Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency:** In its first session the Group of Experts will examine, *inter alia*: options to improving energy efficiency faster; best practice in the UNECE region; the UNECE role in achieving the objectives of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General; smart grids; and Promoting Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation. **dates:** 17-18 November 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **venue:** Palais des Nations **contact:** Oleg Dzioubinski, UNECE **email:** [oleg.dzioubinski@unece.org](mailto:oleg.dzioubinski@unece.org) **phone:** +41 22 917 23 60 **fax:** +41 22 917 00 38 **www:** <http://www.unece.org/energy/welcome/areas-of-work/energy-efficiency/meetings-and-events/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-21/2014/group-of-experts-on-energy-efficiency-first-session/docs.html>

**Urban Future Conference:** OiER and UNECE are co-sponsoring this conference aimed at providing mayors, urban planners, decision makers and policy makers with input for developing cities more sustainably. The Conference is organized around four core topics: smart mobility; smart energy; smart communications; and smart living and city planning. **dates:** 18-19 November 2014 **location:** Graz, Austria **contact:** Domenica Carriero, Housing and Land Management Unit, UNECE **email:** [domenica.carriero@unece.org](mailto:domenica.carriero@unece.org) **phone:** +41 22 917 16 72 **www:** <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35944>

**72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI):** The UNECE Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) will consider the "Rovaniemi Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy." It also will review a study of leading public policies in the ECE region which promote sustainable construction materials. **dates:** 18-21 November 2014 **location:** Kazan, Russian Federation **contact:** Paola Deda, UNECE **e-mail:** [paola.deda@unece.org](mailto:paola.deda@unece.org) **www:** <http://www.unece.org/forests/kazan2014.html>

**23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UNECE Committee on Sustainable Energy:** Among other things, the Committee is to approve the programme of work for the new expert groups on energy efficiency and renewable energy. **dates:** 19-21 November 2014 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Stefanie Held, UNECE **email:** [stefanie.held@unece.org](mailto:stefanie.held@unece.org) **phone:** +44 22 917 2462 **fax:** +44 22 917 0038 **www:** <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35137>

**Rakvere Smart House Annual Conference 2014:** The Rakvere Smart House Competence Centre's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference will focus on the development of Smart City basic principles and exchanging knowledge about smart city initiatives, networks, development and funding opportunities. The Centre is a EU-supported regional competence center in Estonia that focuses on smart house and intelligent building technologies. **dates:** 25-26 November 2014 **location:**

Rakvere, Estonia **email:** [info@rakveretarkmaja.ee](mailto:info@rakveretarkmaja.ee) **www:** <http://rakveresmarthouse.weebly.com/rakvere-smart-house-competence-center-4th-annual-conference.html>

**Workshop "Land Management for Smart Cities":** This workshop, co-sponsored by the UNECE Smart Cities Project, will be held as part of the Middle East Geospatial Forum as part of its efforts to build a broad network of cities with sustainable urban initiatives. **dates:** 16-17 February 2015 **location:** Dubai, UAE **venue:** Hotel Al Bustan Rotana **phone:** +9716 5529592 **fax:** +9716 5529584 **www:** <http://www.megf.org/2015/index.htm>

**UNECE Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA):** WPLA will hold its 9<sup>th</sup> annual session to review its programme of work and approve a schedule of national workshop. **dates:** 26-27 February 2015 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Amie Figueiredo, WPLA Secretary **email:** [amie.figueiredo@unece.org](mailto:amie.figueiredo@unece.org) **phone:** +41 22 917 16 72

**UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction:** The Conference will be hosted by the Government of Japan and organized by UNISDR, and is expected to agree a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. **dates:** 14-18 March 2015 **location:** Sendai, Japan **contact:** UNISDR **phone:** +41-2291-78907 **fax:** +41-2291-78964 **e-mail:** [wcdrr2015-un@un.org](mailto:wcdrr2015-un@un.org) **www:** <http://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/hfa>

**Habitat III PrepCom2:** The second session of the PrepCom (PrepCom2) will continue preparations for Habitat III planned for 2016. **dates:** April 2015 (TBD) **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **email:** [habitat3secretariat@un.org](mailto:habitat3secretariat@un.org) **phone:** +254-20-762-1234 **www:** <http://unhabitat.org/preparatory-process/>

**66<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Economic Commission for Europe:** Among other things, the biennial session of the Commission is expected to adopt the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. **dates:** 14-16 April 2015 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **venue:** Palais des Nations **contact:** UNECE Secretariat **www:** <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35851>

**76<sup>th</sup> Session of UNECE CHLM:** The CHLM will hold its 76<sup>th</sup> 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:** 3-4 November 2015 (tbc) **location:** Geneva, Switzerland (TBC) **contact:** Gulnara Roll, Head, Housing and Land Management Unit, UNECE Secretariat **email:** [gulnara.roll@unece.org](mailto:gulnara.roll@unece.org) **phone:** +41-22-917-2257 **www:** <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/meetings-and-events.html>

## GLOSSARY

CHLM	Committee on Housing and Land Management
CIS	Confederation of Independent States
EAA	Environment Agency Austria
EXCOM	Executive Committee
Habitat III	Third UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
OiER	Organization for International Economic Relations
REM	Real Estate Market Advisory Group
RICS	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
WPLA	Working Party on Land Administration