

**POLISH PREPARATORY COMMITTEE UN CONFERENCE „HABITAT II”
MINISTRY OF PHYSICAL PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION**

NATIONAL REPORT
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS IN POLAND

UN CONFERENCE „HABITAT II - 1996”

The National Plan of Action aimed at the development of human settlements in Poland was constructed on the inspiration of United Nations. The Plan expresses The Polish Republic Government determination to act towards improvement of human settlements and their sustainable development. This determination is shared by Local Authorities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who have cooperated in the construction of the National Plan of Action.

The objectives, directions and tasks defined in the National Plan of Action shall provide the basis for public administration action plans and programmes as well as inspiration for NGOs activities.

INTRODUCTION

(1) The preparations for the UN Conference on Human Settlements and the construction of the National Plan of Action are taking place during the time of political and economic changes in Poland. So they constitute a part of the transformation process, underlining the significance of human settlements related actions for the successful restructuring of political and economic systems.

(2) The re-formulation of the legal system accompanying the changes in socio-political and economic relations is creating favourable conditions for comprehensive actions aimed at the sustainable development of human settlements. The scope of the changes and the unsatisfactory state of human settlements - together with the existence of other indisputable macroeconomic priorities - shall however be responsible for long delays in the implementation of objectives defined in the National Plan of Action.

(3) The National Plan of Action shall constitute the basis for action programmes of Government Agencies and for definite plans and tasks implemented by Local Authorities. The public administration task will be to promote objectives and actions formulated in the Plan and to create conditions for non-governmental organizations and for informal citizens groups to participate in the implementation process.

(4) The Minister of Physical Planning and Construction is in charge of the preparations for Habitat II Conference. Bearing in mind the comprehensive approach to the human settlements problems and the need for cooperation between various public and professional bodies and social groups, The Prime Minister has appointed the **Polish Preparatory Committee for Habitat II Conference, chaired by the Minister of Physical Planning and Construction Ms. Barbara Blida**. The Parliamentary Commission on Spatial Policy, Construction and Housing, several Ministries dealing with issues vital for the development of human settlements, also Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Central Planning Office and the Central Statistical Office, as well as Local

Authorities and their Associations, non-governmental organizations concerned with housing, research institutes and professional associations are all represented on the Preparatory Committee.

(5) The first task of the Polish Preparatory Committee was to elaborate the Interim Report forwarded to the Habitat II Conference Secretariat in 1995. The Report included the Evaluation of the Condition and Changes in Human Settlements in Poland in the years 1976-1994, as well as preliminary definition of the National Plan of Action objectives.

(6) The construction of the National Plan of Action was preceded by specialised elaborations dealing with problems most important for human settlements development. These elaborations were prepared by teams of eminent researchers and practitioners. The work on the National Plan of Action was coordinated by a special Team composed of Preparatory Committee Members.

(7) Another aspect of preparations for the Conference was concerned with the selection of the best practices related to human settlements improvement and development. Information on three projects was submitted to „Habitat II” Conference Secretariat, these are:

- * Sustainable Katowice Agglomeration Project,
- * Environmental Conditions for the Qualitative Development of Poznań,
- * Local Initiatives Programme - Community Planning Process and City - Neighbourhood Partnership in Lublin.

The Conference Secretariat has decided to include all three projects in the group of „100 Best Practices” and the one from Lublin was awarded one of the 12 prizes.

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PART ONE

THE EVALUATION OF CONDITION AND CHANGES IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

- (1) the Interim Report on the Preparations for the UN Conference on Human Settlements - „Habitat II” presents the conditions and changes in human settlements in Poland. Part One of the National Report contains the most important conclusions only.

I. Evaluation of human settlements condition.

(2) **The network of settlements in Poland**, a country with population of 38.5 millions, whose territory amounts to 313 000 sq. km, is made up of nearly 58000 settlements, including 853 towns. The urban population is 24 millions, that is 62% of total population. The real population increase in towns amounted to 83300 in 1993 and 56000 persons in 1994, but in rural settlements it was 3300 in 1993 and 19000 in 1994 persons only. The balance of the permanent migration from rural to urban areas closed in 1993 with 59900 and in 1994 with 39000 persons in favour of towns.

(3) The settlement network is characterised by moderate concentration of population in large towns. About 30% of the countrys population (50% of urban population) reside in 42 towns, each with over 100000 inhabitants. Majority of the towns (445) have less then 10000 inhabitants. The average population of over 57000 rural settlements amounts to about 260 persons.

(4) **The human settlements management** system is related to the two levels of administrative sub-division of the country into 49 provinces (voivodships) and 2483 urban and rural communes (gminas). A province is administrated by Governor (Voivoda) who represents the Central Government. Gminas are self-governed by Local Authorities with full legal rights too dispose of communal property, to perform public tasks in their own name and on their own responsibility. Central administration tasks and duties can be entrusted to Local Authorities on the condition that sufficient additional resources shall be provided. Organized local community groups, particularly housing cooperatives and house owners associations, work in partnership with gminas, helping them in the implementation of their duties and tasks. The gminas may enter into mutual unions and agreements with the objective of joint execution of their own tasks and duties or create associations in order to provide common representation. Over 1800 gminas have entered into 115 mutual unions in 1994 and also created 19 associations, including 5 national ones, 7 regional and 7 local.

5) **The gminas independently manage their finances** according to a budget passed by the gmina Council. Gminas income is generated from a share in general taxes and from local fees, it includes income from gminas assets, general subsidies and specific grants from the State budget. The gminas can not levy their own taxes and may not run profit enterprises not connected to provision of public services. The income of gminas represented from 23.73% to 20.59% of the State income in the years 1991 to 1994. The structure of gminas income in 1994 was as follows: income from own assets - 40.3%, participation in general taxes - 23.1%, subsidies and grants from State budget - 36.6%.

(6) **The gross national product** per inhabitant amounted to 2402 US dollars in 1994, according too official exchange rate (according to buying capacity it equals to 5380 US dollars). The household incomes differ considerably. The income of 33% households in 1994 and 31% in 1995 (38% in rural areas and 35% in small towns) fell below the relative poverty line.

Unemployment is the primary cause of impoverishment of the population. It reached its highest level in 1993, and is successively decreasing from 1994 onwards. Small towns and settlements have the highest unemployment rate of over 20%. More then 450 gminas have been identified as being threatened by structural unemployment and are covered by special Government programme.

(7) **The transformation of economy** from centrally planned to free market results in the appearance of numerous independent private enterprises, particularly in large towns, where economic opportunities are highly differentiated. Medium sized and small towns had previously relied on employment in industry, but now, in view of the rapidly declining production they are faced with the need to promote local economic activity and the services sector.

(8) **The income of gminas** has reached 2.5 millions zł per inhabitant in 1993 (about 130 US dollars) and in 1994 3.8 milions zł. Development and construction expenditure amounted from 23% to 28% of total gminas expenditure, depending on the type of gmina. Lowest expenditure occurred in large towns which had to cope with high maintenance and running costs of technical infrastructure. Also because those towns were forced to spend funds from their own budgets for the execution of tasks entrusted by Central administration, as the additional resources from State budget have in many cases proved insufficient.

(9) **The inhabited housing stock** of the whole country has been estimated as about 11.4 millions dwellings in 1994, including over 7.6 millions in towns, which represents 67% of total dwellings, while urban population amounts to 62% of total inhabitants. The statistical dwellings deficit is estimated to be about 1.5 million dwellings and 1.0 million dwellings are in very bad technical conditions fit for demolition, so total housing needs amount to 2.5 millions dwellings. The yearly construction output amounted from 200 000 to 300 000 dwellings in the 70s. In the following decades this have decreased to 81000 in 1993 and 76000 dwellings in 1994. However the standard of new dwellings have improved considerably as well as the building materials quality and construction technologies.

(10) **Poland can be counted among the countries characterised by considerable degree of environmental pollution.** This is a result of industrialization and urbanization processes carried out for a long time with disregard for the consequences of treating nature and land as free resources.

Most dangerous effects for the state of environment in human settlements result from the following:

- * emission of dust particles and gases in the process of energy production (both in industrial power stations and in local boiler houses) and those originated by motor vehicles,
- * emission of dust particles and gases by industry (over 85% of dust and about 80% of gases of total industrial emission in Poland takes place in 320 towns, representing 40% of total number of towns),
- * water pollution by industrial and municipal sewage(sewerage systems existed in about 90% of towns in 1993, but only 65% of sewage was being treated, although 970 industrial and municipal sewage treatment plants were built between 1991 and 1993),
- * increasing volume of waste, both industrial and household, deposited on municipal waste dumps.

II. Up to date activities.

(11) Change of the political system and return to the rules of free market economy have opened in 1989 the long term process of creating democratic power structure, transforming the economy, as well as rectifying past mistakes

and negligences. Many new regulations have already been introduced and actions undertaken in respect of human settlements management, housing, environment protection and public services. Work on new legislation is continued and new programmes are formulated.

(12) **Human settlements management** system in Poland is regulated by Local Government Act. The structure of public administration, both central and local, is presently under revision. Issues under consideration include: introduction of second level of Local Government, aspects of gminas economic activities.

(13) **The main objective of the national housing policy** after 1989 is to facilitate free choice of dwelling occupancy type differentiated by cost factor and also to initiate permanent increase in housing construction output. The main initiatives include:

- * introduction of partially market orientated credit principles for housing construction, repairs and modernization (mortgage loans with double indexing according to real value and to permanent share of family budget),
- * introducing assistance and encouragement to households (capitalization of interest in arrears and temporary purchase of interest by State budget, tax reliefs and privileges),
- * introduction of housing ownership transformations (endowing to gminas housing stock which was State owned up to 1990, privatizing public housing and re-privatizing urban housing stock which was taken over by the State during post-war years),
- * giving gminas the right to determine the level of public housing rents, assuming that market prices shall be reached in 10 years (retaining social assistance for the poorest families),
- * introducing shared responsibility for maintenance of partly privatized public housing,
- * supporting non-profit housing construction corporations.

(14) **The standing of environment protection problems** has considerably risen after 1990. A document formulating national policy on ecology has been accepted by Parliament in 1991. This policy is now being implemented by improvements in legislation (eg.: new parliamentary Acts on nature protec-

tion, physical development and Building Code), by sectorial policies and by projects related to environmental improvements. The financing for environment protection reached 1.3% of gross national product and 6.4% of total investment outlays in 1993. Complementary to the operating National and Provincial Funds for Environment Protection and Water Economy, Gmina Funds are being set up since 1993. A system of economic incentives, encouraging investments in environment friendly facilities and technologies, is being developed currently. The execution of protective regulations is becoming more effective, partly due to the work of State Inspectorate for Environment Protection and State Sanitary Inspectorate.

(15) **As far as public services** are concerned a market for them is slowly emerging. The existing monopolies are being broken and the prices of services are successively regulated so as to cover the incurred costs. The process of technical infrastructure modernization and development has also started, but the required level of financing is much higher than the means at the disposal of gminas (even with the credit assistance provided by World Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development). A special system of medium and long term credit shall have to be created with the assistance of Communal Development Agency.

III. The relation to the recommendations of „Habitat I” Conference, of the Global Strategy for Shelter and of Agenda 21.

(16) **The evaluation of Habitat I Conference** recommendations should start with the reminder that the Polish nation has acquired the sovereign right to choose the political, social and economic system in 1989 only. Up to that time possibility to act according to the Declaration of Principles was considerably limited.

The guidelines and recommendations of Habitat I Conference had specifically stressed the responsibility of the State for the conditions of human settlements and the resulting role of the Government in the planning and organization of development process. This corresponded with the administrative system in Poland up to 1990, where national, regional and local town and country planning was the responsibility of the State, which also acted as the main

actor in the implementation process. This management model had however curtailed the rights of local communities to prepare and implement programmes for their settlements.

Never the less many of Habitat I Conference guidelines were taken account of and had influenced the development of human settlements. This influence was particularly noted in the legislative scope, that is in the new Physical Planning Act of 1984 and in several Acts referring to environmental development and natural resources protection.

The attitude of the present development policies towards Habitat I Conference recommendations is negatively affected by experiences of the period before 1990, connected with the excessive and often incorrect State interference. Particularly the recommendations that refer to housing subsidies and income redistribution are not well received. But one can note better concurrence with recommendations related to public services development and rational land management.

(17) The housing policy of 1976-1990 was concurrent with recommendations of the **Global Strategy for Shelter** but it had assumed that it refers to the needs of practically total urban population and not the poorest household only. Therefore it remained in the sphere of declarations as its scope was far beyond existing national resources.

The general objective of present national housing policy is to create opportunities for every citizen to fulfil his/her housing needs by his/her own efforts with some State support. Implementation of this objective is a complicated and time consuming undertaking. Housing market has to be created, construction industry modernized and land management system reformed. In consequence the housing construction output has not yet started to increase and the objective of Global Strategy for Shelter - separate dwelling for every family - shall not be attained till some time after year 2000.

(18) **The overcoming of ecological problems** is of high priority in the Central and Local Government action programs in Poland. The principles of the national policy on ecology have been defined in a Parliamentary resolution adopted in 1991. While assessing the implementation of this policy in 1995 the Parliament has passed a resolution in respect of sustainable development policy, creating a new incentive in the course of **implementing Agenda 21 action programmes**.

Those documents represent binding guidelines for formulation of sectorial development policies and for Central administration actions. The Governmental Commission on Eco-development is monitoring implementation of the guidelines.

PART TWO

THE NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

I. PRECONDITIONS AND OBSTACLES

(1) Creation of the Plan of Action, and first of all the subsequent implementation of programmes and tasks, shall have to account for many preconditions and the need to overcome obstacles. The reasons for those difficulties are in most cases historically justified or are inherent in the perturbations of the times of socio-political system transformations.

These times also provide opportunities for carrying out permanent changes and opening development possibilities for human settlements.

1. Management

(2) The management of towns and rural settlements had radically changed parallel with change of political system and the emerging of citizens orientated State. However the process of creating democratic power structures has not yet been completed, and one has to account for difficulties which may slow down the pace of implementing the tasks resulting from the National Plan of Action. **The most important preconditions include:**

- * be-polar pattern of executive power: Central Government administration and self-governed gminas, without intermediate level of Local Government, what is responsible for the limitations in Local Authorities competences,
- * uniform system of Local Government not differentiating gminas according to their functions in the settlements structure (agglomerations, towns, rural settlements),
- * unclear position (in the system of citizens orientated State) of Local Government subsidiary units, first of all city districts which are not gminas and town neighbourhoods, as well as of housing cooperatives which administer a large portion of housing stock in towns.

2. Economy and Finance

(3) **The general economic condition** of State is decisive for the creation and implementation of the National Plan in the scope of economy and finance. This condition is characterized by rather low although increasing national income, still high level of inflation, unstable economic system, as well as low level of individual income.

Essential preconditions and obstacles include:

- * incorrect relation between Local Authorities tasks and duties and their economic situation,
- * difficult access to capital for housing construction by both Local Authorities and individual inhabitants,
- * limited resources and reluctance of private capital to participate in gminas programmes.

(4) **Differentiated financial situation of local authorities** often limits gminas activities to those concerned with immediate needs. In such conditions not many gminas may appreciate and make use of the inspiring role of long term development programmes in the process of awaking inhabitants initiatives and financial participation.

(5) **Specific situation of high unemployment rate** occurring in rural areas (settlements connected with abolished State farms) and in industrial towns (neighbourhoods connected with bankrupt State factories) is a real challenge for the National Plan of Action. No alternative work places and no casual income opportunities, accompanied by strong local ties (large families and existing dwelling as the only stable factor) lead to social and economic decline of these settlements.

3. Social behaviour

(6) **Understanding the need for joint action** is an essential prerequisite of attaining success in the Plan's implementation. The centralized system that reigned for nearly half a century produced social disintegration, disappearance

of community ties and reluctance to undertake joint actions. Formal conditions facilitating the overcoming of these barriers are already existing, but the actual process of local communities organization shall take a long time.

(7) At the same time **new and different attitudes and preferences** are arising. Higher ambitions and demands, inspired by changes in the socio-political system, are confronted with incompetence in searching for new forms of professional activities and new sources of income.

4. Environment protection

(8) **The resistance capacity of the environment** has been overridden in many regions of the country and in large towns particularly. This results first of all from:

- * the pollution emission in the process of energy production,
- * the large amount of untreated sewage emptied into the soil and open waters,
- * increasing deposits of not recyclable solid waste mainly domestic,
- * the accumulation of undersirable physical, chemical and biological elements in the top soil layers,
- * rapid increase in the participation rate of traffic originated air pollution and noise pollution,
- * difficulties in protecting open spaces and undeveloped land in towns.

5. Physical development

(9) The main preconditions in physical development result from:

- * ineffective spatial structure of settlements (eg.: excessive demands for use of transport and for energy consumption),
- * ineffective use of land in general, with particularly extensive industrial development, and haphazard subdivision for development of agricultural land in towns,
- * lack of maintenance in existing development resulting in loss of its functional value,
- * incoherent legal system.

(10) Particular preconditions are connected with **the unfinished process of introducing order into land ownership relations**, these include:

- * reprivatization and privatization of real estate,
- * transfer of real estate ownership to State enterprises and to Local Authorities
- * non existence of cadastral records and incomplete Land Property Registers.

6. P u b l i c s e r v i c e s

(11) Achieving improvement in the scope of **public services** is preconditioned and hampered by the following:

- * progressive decline in the quality of technical infrastructure and housing stock, resulting from lack of maintenance,
- * ineffective technology and unreliable centralized systems,
- * effects of „saving” (cheap) technologies previously used in housing installations,
- * insufficient density of street network, low efficiency of public transport and ineffective traffic management system.

II. PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN OF ACTION

1. G e n e r a l p r i n c i p l e s

(12) The following principles are applied while determining strategic objectives and general directions of actions and programmes:

- * **the principle of full protection of ownership rights** and of private interests, but allowing for possible State intervention in case of public objectives implementation,
- * **the principle of joint responsibility**, allowing for clear definition of duties and rights of all participants: central administration, Local

Authorities, commercial enterprises, NGOs and inhabitants,

- * **the principle of subsidiary actions**, particularly essential while solving social problems,
- * **the principle of territorial self-government** standing for creation and legal protection of institutional conditions for independent formulation of policies leading to the improvement of situation in human settlements,
- * **the principle of treating the immediate, current actions** as an element of general strategy,
- * **the principle of transparency, social acceptance and control** in respect of all public activities,
- * **the principle of allowing for market rules**, standing for general application of the profit criteria, both at the stage of decision making and the stage of choosing the manner of implementation,
- * **the principle of agreeing the standards, programming assumptions and legal regulations to the accepted international principles and norms** (including those created by Habitat and proclaimed by European Union).

2. General objective of the plan

(13) The aspiration to improve social, economic and ecological quality of human settlements expresses the general objective of the National Plan of Action. If this objective is to be implemented each inhabitant must share responsibility for his/her life conditions and for those of his/her co-inhabitants, and for the state of natural environment for the benefit of the present and future generations.

(14) Particularly important aspect of the Plan's implementation is to create **a chance for all inhabitants to meet their housing needs** on an elementary level at least, to allow access to basic services, and to ensure public safety in human settlements.

3. Priority partial objectives (operational)

(15) Assessment of the settlements' condition in Poland, the current socio-political transformations together with the preconditions and obstacles determine the priority partial objectives, fit to the situation, these are:

- * to create conditions for improvement of the economic status of the society, to limit the extend of unemployment and poverty,
- * to improve housing conditions and neighbourhood facilities including social infrastructure,
- * to improve the state of natural environment,
- * to rationalize the settlements' spatial structure
- * to improve the standard of public services
- * to improve transport facilities in human settlements, and to counteract traffic congestion in large towns,
- * to rise the efficiency in management of settlements

III. DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIONS

(16) In order to implement general objective of functional improvements and further development of human settlements it is necessary to overcome the main obstacles and to open possibilities for the implementation of partial, operational objectives.

III (A). GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIONS

1. Management of settlements

(17) In the fundamental aspects of the political system it is necessary:

- * to continue decentralization of public authorities strengthening the position of Local Government, clearly defining the division of competences between Central administration and Local Authorities.
- * to strive for introduction of specific regulations for the management of agglomerations,

- * **to strive for creation of second level of Local Government** and irrespective of the above, **to introduce several categories of gminas**, differentiating their rights and duties, depending on their functions in the national settlements network.

(18) The house owners, the inhabitants and non governmental organizations should participate **in the management to settlements** to a large extend. Therefore it is necessary:

- * **to create opportunities for the local communities to increase their participation** in the creation and implementation of development policies and programmes for their settlements,
- * **to create legal conditions for emerging various organizational forms** (private and public-private) of implementing tasks included in the Plan.

2. Economy and finance

(19) In order to formulate detailed principles and conditions for the implementation of the Plan's tasks, preliminary solutions of key issues shall have to be reached, these are:

- * **determination of general participation principles** of public and non-public bodies and of inhabitants **in the running and development costs of human settlements**,
- * **matching the principles of financing the gminas to their actual responsibilities** (including those entrusted by Central administration) and creation of communal financial infrastructure including mutual-aid institutions,
- * **giving support to market enterprises** contributing to effective economy and development in human settlements and **creating** systemic and institutional **incentives and conditions for the participation of private capital** in the implementation of the Plan's objectives.

3. Social behaviour

(20) The inclinations and abilities of the society (inhabitants) to participate in the implementation of the Plan's objectives depend on their financial standing and on the assessment of chances for actual improvement.

Promotion of behaviour models, that is personal resourcefulness, mutual help actions and thrifty household management, shall be of great value.

(21) **Public participation** in the implementation of the Plan's objectives requires:

- * **awaking the social understanding** of the need for joint action in the development of spatial order, local identity, environment protection and in the creation of new values through economic and cultural development,
- * providing **information** about new initiatives, adopted policies, proposed programmes and tasks,
- * seeking public opinion, initiating discussions aiming at public acceptance,
- * **reporting to the public** on implementation of undertaken obligations

4. Physical development and environment protection

(22) General declaration on sustainable development of human settlements should find its expression in:

- * **definition and updating of minimum living standards** in human settlements, indicating relevant responsibilities,
- * **development strategy for each gmina** and local physical development plans, where the objectives of development policy and the tasks resulting from the Plan are given material form.

(23) In order to implement development objectives and tasks, particularly in the scope of physical development, it shall be necessary to put in order the

real estate ownership relations, including:

- * **the process of reprivatization of real estate** - the present situation limits the gminas abilities to conduct active economic, spatial and land management policies,
- * **transfer of real estate ownership to State enterprises** - the present situation leads to extensive use of land or to real estate privatization at loss to Local Authorities,
- * **the process of privatization**, by creation of conditions for sale of communal real estate
- * **formal documents** - through creation of cadastral records and updating Land Property Registers.

5. P u b l i c s e r v i c e s

(24) Local solutions for technical infrastructure systems in human settlements, particularly in large towns, must be supported by national policy in respect of public services provision, which should include first of all:

- * definition of the duties of Central Administration and of Local Authorities in the scope of public services (the type and standard of services considered as public obligation),
- * identification of the type and conditions for access to environment friendly energy medium,
- * determination of the principles for the participation of commercial enterprises and of the inhabitants in the development and running costs of technical infrastructure facilities and networks.

III (B). DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIONS IMPLEMENTING PARTIAL OBJECTIVES

1. Creation of conditions for improvement of inhabitants' economic situation

(25) The solution of social problems should take place according to the **principles of subsidiary actions** - meaning that problems should be tackled firstly by individuals, families, groups of friends and neighbours, then by organizations which work directly with individuals and families. Local Authorities, their Association or Central Government Offices should be involved only in cases when the problem has proved to be too difficult for small groups.

(26) **Local Authorities have a particular role** in the creation of policy for counteracting poverty and unemployment, in conducting and promoting definite actions.

Primary task for Local Authorities is to **elaborate the programme for social problems solution** according to the principle of linking actions addressed to most deprived groups with more general policy of improving living standards for all inhabitants.

(27) The general and local programmes for the improvement of the inhabitants' economic situation, besides continuing the existing forms of assistance, should also allow for:

- * **the definition, implementation and updating of the minimum living standards in towns** and rural settlements, specifying responsibilities for the provision of:
 - access to housing, work places, education and health service,
 - access to energy supply, drinking water, disposal of sewage and waste,
 - access to public transport facilities,
 - improved facilities for disabled persons,
- * **the specific situation of people living in settlements connected with the former State farms** - irrespective of plans for restructuring agriculture, special „**survival**” programmes should be created including organization of public works, tax allowances and reliefs,

- * **reducing the expenditure** in household budgets for **housing running costs** (by systemic and immediate actions, eg. financial help for installation of energy and water meters) **and for food** (organization of cheap markets and sales of second-hand clothing and household goods),
- * **supporting the joint activities** of social organizations, neighbourhood committees and housing cooperatives in respect of living standards improvement or provision of jobs (eg. by giving grants for the implementation of best programmes),
- * **providing advice and support to families** starting small businesses or trying to obtain their own separate dwelling.

2. Improvement of housing conditions

(28) The main objective of **the housing policy** is to improve housing conditions by initiating permanent increase in housing construction output and by implementation of modernization programmes.

Action directions cover the following scopes:

- * financing
- * real estate management
- * housing environment
- * organization of the construction process
- * protection for the poorest families
- * public participation

(29) **In the scope of financing** it is necessary:

- * **to create a system of public funds subsidies** for rehabilitation of housing stock,
- * **to create conditions for higher participation of private capital** in housing construction (eg. by extending tax reliefs and privileges),
- * **to aim at extending the banking mortgage loans system** and introducing new system of **Housing Societies** combining saving and credit facilities, also to promote mutual help financial institutions,

- * **to abolish general rent subsidies** in public housing, while retaining the system of rent grants for poorest households.

(30) In the scope of **real estate management** it is necessary:

- * to hasten **the clarification of ownership titles** for development land in towns and to complete the process of reprivatization of real estate and of transferring State owned real estate to Local Authorities,
- * to introduce more effective encouragement for **privatization of housing stock** belonging to Local Authorities and to the State,
- * **to accumulate financial means in gminas** (partly from State budget subsidies) for purchase and preparation for development of sites for public housing and non-profit Housing Corporations,
- * to introduce **fiscal instruments counteracting so called „freezing” of development sites** and promoting quick turnover of land for building (increased rates for empty development sites).

(31) In the scope of **housing environment** it is necessary:

- * to create conditions for improvement and development of social infrastructure, particularly educational and health service facilities,
- * to ensure elementary conditions for safety of people, their possessions and property,
- * to initiate and support the organization of Neighbourhood Watch and neighbourly help for the aged and disabled,
- * to support the organization of local interest groups for cultural, sport or recreational activities.

(32) For **organization of the construction process** it is necessary:

- * to elaborate **governmental and gminas housing rehabilitation programmes** as separate actions, or within the programme for spatial structures rationalization, particularly allowing for the improvement of standards in dwellings, buildings and their surroundings,
- * to create conditions for **commercial housing developers** and to support **non-profit Housing Corporations** (eg. allowing for purchase of sites by limited entry tenders).

(33) In the scope of **protection for the poorest families and for persons requiring special care** it is necessary:

- * to **protect** the socially accepted **minimum standard** of housing conditions,
- * to **retain the system of rent grants** for the poorest households as a permanent principle for rental housing,
- * to introduce system of financial preferences for disabled persons (grants, low interest credit for building or buying a dwelling or adapting it to their special needs),
- * to elaborate and implement in gminas programmes for **low-cost housing** to provide accommodation for the lowest income groups and for the homeless,
- * to **promote active cooperation of NGOs** (professional, trade unions, charities and religious) in collecting financial means and building medium standard dwellings for persons requiring special care.

(34) In the scope of **public participation** it is necessary:

- * to create various **mutual help associations** at the local level with the objective of accumulating capital and building or modernizing dwellings for their members,
- * to create organizations for protection, within existing regulations, of tenants rights and also of house owners, particularly against unjustified increase in the real estate running costs,
- * to **seek public acceptance for programmes** and actions undertaken by gminas, reporting to the public or their implementation.

3. Improvement of the state of environment

(35) Actions leading to environmental improvements are based on the documents accepted by the Parliament: „National Policy on Ecology” and „Sustainable Development Policy”.

The documents state that it is the duty of all Central and Local public administration to act according to the accepted principles. The directions of actions leading to environmental improvements develop those principles in respect of human settlements, relating them to the following:

- * implementation of eco-development policy
- * financing
- * energy saving and natural resources protection,
- * reducing the scale of pollution, noise level and waste volume
- * protection of nature and of natural areas

(36) **In the scope of implementing eco-development policy** it is necessary:

- * to introduce programmes of **ecological education** for the general public and to promote pro-ecological attitudes and sustainable consumption model,
- * to develop **methods for the assessment of ecological costs** involved in economic ventures and also for the evaluation of expenses necessary for environment protection undertakings,
- * to create **local eco-development policies**, identifying specific environmental problems and formulating action programmes,
- * to develop **monitoring systems** for urban environment, including creation of local monitoring networks (permanent monitoring of imminent sources of pollution: waste dumps, power station, traffic routes...),
- * to prepare and publish periodical **reports on the state of environment** in regions and in towns,
- * to create **pressure groups** advocating for development of ecological facilities and for improvement of environmental conditions, and participating in the selection of suitable solutions.

(37) **In the scope of financing** it is necessary:

- * to make use to higher degree of National Environment Protection Funds for the creation of national and local protection policies and programmes,
- * to apply tax reliefs and lower rates and fees for those who are introducing technologies reducing water and energy consumption and limiting water, soil and air pollution,

(38) **In the scope of energy saving** and natural resources protection it is necessary:

- * to introduce suitable measures for bringing about **the modernization** and increase in efficiency of **energy system in towns**,
- * to promote and to support the financing of energy saving solutions in housing construction and of improving thermal insulation of existing houses,
- * **to increase water retention** by proper development in reception basins and by construction of small scale reservoirs,
- * to promote and support the construction of drinking and household water distribution networks,
- * to promote economic use of water and to introduce the principle of charging for water supply according to meter readings for individual users.

(39) **In the scope of reducing the scale of pollution, noise level and waste volume** it is necessary:

- * **to review the acceptable norms** of industry and traffic originated pollution, matching them to increased efficiency of environment friendly technologies and facilities,
- * to introduce zones **of limited access for motor vehicles** and to promote electrified public transport as well as use of bicycle and pedestrian access,
- * to prepare **gminas programmes for selective waste collection and for their recycling**,
- * to introduce a system of economic encouragement for selective waste collection and recycling, including waste segregation in households and in commercial and industrial establishments.

(40) **In the scope of protection of nature and of natural areas** it is necessary:

- * to introduce new ideas of nature protection, based on **the Convention** for

Biological Diversity Protection, including the creation of conditions for nature survival in urbanized areas,

- * to create preferences for actions protecting natural areas so they can be used for preventive health care activities, including recreation,
- * to create conditions for afforestation of undeveloped areas in towns, as an element of open spaces protection,
- * to identify, in the local physical development plans, those areas which contribute **to the ecological system of urban green spaces and landscape**, and to prepare programmes for development and maintenance of such systems.

4. Rationalization of settlements spatial structure

(41) The problem of rationalization of settlements physical development structures is understood and dealt with, in a more comprehensive manner than it would result from its simple interpretation, as rational distribution of urban development related to different functions. The directions for actions are related to the following:

- * planning, programming and real estate management,
- * financing
- * division of competences and organizational structures,
- * public participation

(42) In the scope of **planning, programming and real estate management** it is necessary:

- * to prepare **programmes for the rationalization of spatial structures in gminas** (as a separate document or as part of gminas development strategy), allowing for rehabilitation of derelict areas, modernization of existing building stock, for economic and spatial development and for environment protection needs,
- * to introduce an obligation to prepare local physical development plans for areas covered by such programmes,
- * **to include, in the programmes and in local plans**, activities leading to:
 - reduction in energy consumption resulting from the spatial pattern, par-

- particularly by means of limiting the transportation needs and by the changes in the consumption structure of energy and fuels,
 - effective use of land, particularly in extensively developed industrial districts,
 - provision of improved facilities for disabled persons,
 - protection of open spaces and afforestation of undeveloped land in towns,
- * to match the principles and procedures in real estate management to the conditions allowing for implementing the spatial structures rationalization objectives.

(43) **In the scope of financing** it is necessary:

- * to create a **system of public funds subsidies** for gminas restructuring programmes,
- * to create **Gmina Funds** which would finance the programme and provide subsidies for actions organized in the framework of the programme by housing cooperatives, associations of house owners or others,
- * to create **systemic encouragement** and conditions for **private capital** participating in the programmes

(44) **In the scope of competences** and the organization of programmes implementation process it is necessary:

- * to transfer Central administration competences to gminas in the areas covered by programmes and in the scopes linked to them,
- * to appoint Modernization and Development Boards in gminas, representing the programmes participants, local communities and banks financing the programmes,
- * to promote the emerging structures competent for organizing the programmes implementation process (public controlled by gmina, public-private companies limited, or private)
- * to create conditions for the transfer of gminas administrative competences to the non-public organizations implementing gminas programmes.

(45) **In the scope of public participation** it is necessary:

- * to make use of all available means for creating public awareness of the

necessity for joint action in protecting our living environment and in creating new, permanent, economic and cultural values,

- * **to inform inhabitants** about undertaken actions, seeking their opinion on the proposed policies and programmes, and to publish reports on the implementation of programmes and tasks,
- * to create institutional opportunities for public control over gminas activities,
- * to promote the institution of „Public Well-being”

5. Improvement of the standard of public services

(46). Improvement of the state of technical infrastructure services in settlements depends on **the provision of general access to public services** of suitable standard, eliminating or reducing the negative effects on the environment, therefore it is necessary:

- * to provide **water supply** of suitable quality and **sewerage system** for urbanized areas, including sewage treatment facilities,
- * to arrange for **waste disposal** and treatment,
- * to provide **electricity supply and suitable heating energy** medium, allowing for the requirements of environment protection,
- * to provide for **acceptable level of local public transport**.

While implementing these obligations care should be taken to calculate the charges for households as low as possible, but on fully economic bases (allowing for reduction of charges as specified in the National Plan of Action).

(47) Local Authorities are responsible for the formulation of policies and programmes of public services provision in settlements and for their implementation. Central Administration is responsible for related scientific research, for promotion and support of the best technical and technological solutions and for creation of legal and economical instruments.

Directions of actions leading to improvement of public services in settlements cover the following scopes:

- * division of competences,
- * financing
- * organization of public services provision.

(48) **In the scope of competences** it is necessary:

- * **to decide finally which Central Administration Office** is responsible for coordinating the national policy on public services,
- * to define **the role of Local Authorities** in the formulation of policy on public services, and to establish economic and administrative instruments of this policy,
- * to make provisions for non-public organizations of economic self-government (in respect of water supply, energy supply, urban sewerage systems, etc.) while formulating policy on public services and determining conditions for its implementation.

(49) **In the scope of financing** it is necessary:

- * **to establish system for financing public services development**, allowing for:
 - re-establishing of municipal banks and savings banks system, providing them with a right to organize consortiums for financing technical infrastructure,
 - a right to apply for State support in obtaining credits, subsidies, tax reliefs and guaranties,
 - differentiating of public services financing system depending on the specific character of towns and urban settlements,
 - issue of municipal (gmina) bonds on preferential conditions,
- * **to consider whether it would be justified to establish a financial institution - Municipal Loans Programme** - which would facilitate access for gminas to foreign financing sources, and finally would contribute to the creation of municipal capital home market,
- * **to introduce following principles for establishing charges** for public services:
 - calculating the charges at economic, self-financing level, but allowing for consumers interests,

- assuring that level of charges shall not be affected by external influences, including the changing political options,
- determining clear obligatory principles for the regulation of charges, depending eg. on the standard of services, economic standing of consumers, etc.

(50) **In the scope of organization of public services provision** it is necessary:

- * to achieve **legal order in respect of communal (gminas) economic activity**, in relation to legal rights (possible granting of concessions) and to organization-legal forms (public enterprise, communal public utility unit, commercial company),
- * **to determine the duty and the right of Local Authorities to coordinate and control** the establishments that are providing public services, irrespective of the adopted organization form,
- * to introduce monitoring of public services provision.

6. Improvement of transport services in towns

(51) The general objective of transport policy is to provide for conditions allowing efficient, safe and economically sound movement of people and goods, respecting the requirement of reducing traffic originated environment pollution. This objective can be achieved only when **the principle of sustainable development of transportation system** shall be adopted.

The essence of this principle is to retain ecological balance in the whole town and in its suburban areas.

Directions of actions leading to implementation of transport policy are related to the following:

- * division of competences and management
- * financial policy
- * public transport
- * road network

(52) **In the scope of division of competences and of management** it is necessary:

- * to transfer the responsibility for comprehensive management of transportation system in towns to Local Authorities (public transport, streets and roads, traffic management),
- * to introduce the principle of Local Authorities being responsible for the provision of the public transport services, with the right to coordinate all operators (firms, agents, etc.),
- * to elaborate general strategy and directions for transport development in towns and to determine principles for cooperation between Central Administration and Local Authorities in the creation of programmes for transportation systems development in towns, including participation of State budget in financing of strategic projects.

(53) **In the scope of financial policy** it is necessary:

- * to supplement the municipal budget funds by:
 - funds from State budget allocated for strategic projects, and projects reducing environmental damage,
 - local rates from commercial enterprises, allocated for public transport
 - income from special fees levied, eg. for using a bridge or tunnel, or for entering particular area of the town (eg. centrum)
- * to introduce parking fees in order to provide for more rational use of parking space and on the other hand to discourage use of private cars,
- * to modify the form of road tax by including it in the price of fuel.

(54) **In the scope of activities connected with public transport** it is necessary:

- * to check the deterioration of related technical infrastructure and make effective use of the existing facilities, improving operational conditions,
- * to introduce traffic privileges for public transport vehicles in town centres and on most congested routes, in the form of:
 - provision of bus lanes,
 - restrictions in curb-side stopping and parking,
 - permission for traffic manoeuvres prohibited for other road users and

- use of special traffic lights facilitating free passage,
- * to apply the principle of integration and substitution for different public and private transport means, achieving mutual agreement between all carriers in respect of common time tables and common system of fares,
- * to secure the possibility of independent, safe and comfortable use of public transport by disabled persons.

(55) In respect of **road network, traffic ,management and parking** it is necessary:

- * to orientate the development projects so that roads deterioration shall be checked, traffic management systems shall be modernized, current development completed, and transit traffic re-routed out of protected areas,
- * to widen the scope of introducing car-free zones, pedestrian areas served by public transport, and calmed-down traffic in residential areas,
- * to establish bicycle routes,
- * to introduce order in lorry traffic,
- * to apply differentiated approach to the parking problem, with restrictions in town centres (limited increase of parking space, parking fees) and better facilities for parking on the peripheries with possible introduction of Park and Ride system.

7. Higher efficiency in management of human settlements

(56) Progressive improvements in the national political system, including strengthening of the Local Government position (see Chapter III.A.1), shall be decisive for the implementation of the National Plan of Action. According to the principle of subsidiary actions, that is solving of problems at the lowest possible level of local communities, the territorial structure of Local Government should allow for:

- * villages and settlements standing apart in result of formal or neighbourhood relations (rural communities, housing communities, housing cooperatives),

- * districts in towns standing apart in result of historical processes or functional links,
- * towns in their differentiated national settlement pattern,
- * agglomerations and metropolitan areas.

Directions for the improvement of settlements management, within the Local Government competencies, are related to:

- * direct management
- * strategic and operational planning
- * financing
- * public participation.

(57) In the scope of **direct management** (general and business administration) it is necessary:

- * to achieve **high professional and ethical standards for the Local Government staff**, and to protect them as public officers from the opportunistic, changing, political influences,
- * to entrust **business administration** (management of communal property, implementation of programmes resulting from Plan of Action and development projects management) to **specialized professional organizations**,
- * to appoint a **Commissioner of gmina or Modernization and Development Board** (depending on the size of town or on the scope of programme) who would effect coordination and control of the implementation of the Plan of Action programme.

(58) In the scope of **strategic and operational planning** it is necessary:

- * to prepare **Gminas Plans of Action** (as continuation of National Plan of Action) related to local needs and capabilities,
- * to prepare **gminas development strategy** (possibly in the framework of the Study on physical development preconditions and directions) and actions programmes connected with modernization and development of settlements,
- * to establish **data base system** on towns and to introduce, whenever possible, a system for monitoring changes in the functioning of towns,

(59) **In the scope of financing**, independent of general activities (see Chapter III.A.2.) it is necessary:

- * **to establish gmina fund** for implementation of programmes, first of all those associated with modernization, rehabilitation of derelict areas and provision of assistance to the poorest segment of population,
- * **to attract private capital** for the implementation of programmes - eg. by issue of gmina bonds, or by supporting NGOs in launching local charity fairs and fetes,
- * **to introduce fees for use of communal facilities** (eg. for street parking or for special entry permits to car free zones), but also to grant reduced rates if level of service charges would eliminate certain groups of potential users.

(60) **In the scope of public participation** it is necessary:

- * **to establish a system of informing the public** about gminas activities and to create efficient procedures for gathering public opinion,
- * **to support the emerging local organizations** and informal social groups, **concerned with the problems of the town or neighbourhood**, eg. through inspiring publications, provision of accommodation, or access to gminas printing facilities,
- * **to invite representatives of social and professional associations and of local communities** to participate in the work of gmina auxiliary bodies (commissions, Modernization and Development Boards).

IV. PROGRAMME FOR THE YEARS 1996 - 2000

(61) The directions of activities formulated in the National Plan of Action (see Chapter III) incorporate two spheres:

- * of the permanent involvement of all interested parties in the promotion of principles and practical solutions leading to the implementation of the Plans objectives,
- * of the problems and actions requiring systemic solutions.

The programme for years 1996 - 2000 refer first of all to the most pressing problems connected with the second sphere in the scope of:

- * legislation,
 - * planning and programming,
- and also priority tasks in the implementation of partial, operational objectives.

1. Legislation

(62) Legislative work represents the key position in the programme of action for 1996 -2000, because of its importance for the implementation of National Plan of Action, and the scope of tasks ranging from the constitutional parliamentary Acts, down to detailed procedure regulations.

(63) **Revision of constitutional parliamentary Acts** refers first of all to:

- * **the Constitution itself** in the paragraphs dealing with Local Government position and role in the State structure, with the State obligations for implementations of public goals and with the institution of „Public Well-being” and also in the paragraphs dealing with the protection of ownership rights, allowing for possibility to implement public objectives,
- * **the Local Government Act** in the paragraphs dealing with the categorization of gminas and with organization and competences of local communities,
- * **the Financing of Gminas and Local Rates and Fees Act** in the paragraphs dealing with gminas participation in the State income (to increase it) and with gminas competences to levy local rates and fees (to extend the scope).

(64) **Parliamentary Acts requiring revision** (in continuation of the commenced legislation process) include:

- * **Nature Protection Act and Environment Protection and Development Act** in the paragraphs referring to undeveloped urban land, to protection of open green spaces and landscape in towns, also to acceptable pollution norms (to make them more strict), to financial advantages of adhering to environmental requirements and to charges levied for polluting the environment,

- * **Water Code** in the paragraphs referring to Local Government responsibilities and capacities (to increase them),
- * **Energy Code** in the paragraphs referring to charges for heating energy and to duties and rights of Local Government,
- * **Public Roads Act** in the paragraphs referring to responsibilities and capacities of Local Government (giving it full authority) including rights to introduce charges for such facilities as parking, tunnels, bridges, or for entry to areas of limited traffic.

(65) **Work on projects for new parliamentary Acts, which would be instrumental in the implementation of National Plan of Action objectives,** should be completed. This include projects for:

- * communal economic activities
- * rehabilitation and modernization of towns, or in a more comprehensive version to towns development,
- * real estate management,
- * reprivatization of State and communal real estate,
- * waste management and maintaining cleanness and order in gminas.

2. Planning and Programming

(66) In the scope of planning and programming it is necessary:

- * to bring to-date national policies and programmes for public tasks in the scope of: unemployment and protection of the poorest segment of population, transportation, housing, environment protection, public services allowing particularly for urbanized areas,
- * to elaborate gmina policies and programmes for public tasks leading to implementation of National Plan of Action objectives,
- * to define and up-date minimum living standards in towns and to elaborate methods for evaluating the functioning of human settlements,
- * to elaborate a system (as broad as possible in scope) for monitoring changes in the functioning of human settlements and to try to put it into operation as soon as possible.
- * to appoint **National Plan of Action Secretariat** (see Chapter V).

3. Priority tasks for implementation of partial objectives

(67) In the scope of activities leading to **the improvement in the economic situation of population** it is necessary:

- * to define minimum living standards in towns and settlements, specifying responsibilities for their implementation,
- * to formulate and implement emergency programmes for the improvement of deteriorating conditions in settlements and villages previously depending on State factories and State farms, which have been closed down,
- * to promote joint activities of social organizations, neighbourhood committees and housing cooperatives in respect of living standards improvement and provision of jobs.

(68) In the scope of activities leading to **the improvement of housing conditions** it is necessary:

- * to create conditions facilitating the increased participation of private capital in housing construction (including rental housing),
- * to aim at widening and strengthening of the banking system of mortgage and contract loans and to introduce new system of Housing Societies combining savings and loans facilities,
- * to accelerate the ordering-up of ownership titles for development land and to complete the process of transferring real estate ownership to Local Authorities,
- * to create conditions for commercial housing developers and to support non-profit Housing Corporations,
- * to support and promote the creation of local mutual help associations engaged in the modernization and construction of dwellings.

(69) In the scope of activities leading to **environmental improvements** it is necessary:

- * to create a system for monitoring urban environment, including local monitoring networks,

- * to introduce suitable measures for bringing about the modernization and increase in efficiency of energy systems in towns,
- * to create conditions and to support the initiatives to build sewerage treatment plants in towns and settlements,
- * to promote economic use of water and to introduce the principle of charging for water supply according to meter readings for individual users,
- * to promote and support the construction of drinking and household water distribution networks,
- * to promote low-waste technologies, selective waste collection and recycling,
- * to revise periodically the acceptable norms of industry and traffic originated pollution, so to make them more strict,
- * to introduce the new idea of biological diversity protection, including the creation of conditions for nature survival in urbanized areas.
- * to promote environment friendly local cultural traditions, particularly in areas of high environmental value.

(70) In the scope of activities leading to **rationalization of spatial structures** it is necessary:

- * to aim at elaboration of gminas restructuring programmes, allowing for rehabilitation of derelict areas, modernization of existing buildings stock, economic and spatial development; also to introduce obligation to prepare local physical development plans for areas covered by such programmes,
- * to establish Gmina Funds for implementing modernization programmes, also too provide subsidies and grant tax reliefs for non-public organizations participating in the programmes,
- * to make use of all available means for creating public awareness of the

necessity for joint action in protecting existing environmental values, and in creating new, permanent, economic and cultural values.

(71) In the scope of activities leading to **the improvement of public services** in settlements it is necessary:

- * to decide finally which Central Administration Office is responsible for national policy on public services and on Local Government tasks and duties,
- * to consider whether it would be justified and possibly establish Municipal Loans Programme to serve as the nucleus of municipal capital market,
- * to review the principles of calculating public services charges, so as to achieve self-financing but allowing for consumers interests,
- * to introduce monitoring of public services provision.

(72) in the scope of activities leading to **the improvement of transport services in towns** it is necessary:

- * to transfer the responsibility for comprehensive management of transportation system in towns to Local Authorities (roads and streets, traffic management, public transport),
- * to apply the principle of sustainable development in the planning and management of transportation systems, limiting the freedom of using private cars (particularly in town centres), promoting public transport and use of bicycles,
- * to check deterioration of transport related technical infrastructure, and make effective use of existing facilities, improving operational conditions,
- * to secure the possibility of independent, safe and comfortable use of public transport by disabled persons,
- * to widen the scope of introducing car-free zones and calm-down traffic in residential areas.

(73) In the scope of **improving the management of settlements** it is necessary:

- * to achieve high professional and ethical standards for the Local Government staff and to protect them as public officers,
- * to entrust business administration (management of communal property and development projects management) to specialized professional organizations,
- * to support the emerging local organizations and informal social groups, concerned with the problems of the town, eg. through provision of accommodation or access to gminas printing facilities, etc.,
- * to establish data base on towns and to introduce, whenever possible, a system for monitoring changes in the functioning of towns.

V. MONITORING THE PROCESS OF THE NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION IMPLEMENTATION

(74) As a general principle the Plan will be implemented at the local level. **A National Plan of Action Secretariat** will be opened as an institution independent from public administration and from political influences. The Secretariat will be responsible for:

- * providing information about the objectives and tasks of the Plan,
- * monitoring and evaluating the Plan's implementation process,
- * evaluating solutions applied and results achieved,
- * creating a library of „best practices”, facilitating exchange of information and consultations,
- * suggesting corrections and modifications to the National Plan of Action,
- * facilitating international cooperation.

(75) It shall be necessary to review, modify or extend the National Plan of Action in the course of its long term implementation. In order to facilitate proper evaluation and review it shall be essential:

- * **to elaborate and apply a system of indicators**, precisely describing the situation in human settlements and the effects of implemented actions,
- * to accumulate a full set of information collected in **the central and regional data base banks** and to create an effective system of feeding

these information to the Secretariat and to Central and Local Government public administration.

(76) The National Plan of Action with its principles, objectives and directions for actions represents a long term challenge and can not be treated as one-time operation. Therefore permanent organizational structures should be created, independent of political situation or current patterns of political power. The National Plan of Action Secretariat, as an independent institution, should be responsible for all present and future activities in respect of human settlements.

VI. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

(77) Local problems of functioning and development of human settlements will be well understood on the condition that they are suitably presented, discussed and generally accepted. It is in this context that we consider UN Conference Habitat II to be the right forum for exchange of experience in the search of the best solutions for human settlements problems. We are sure that this will be reflected in the Conference Resolutions. In the National Plan of Action we allow for development of international cooperation in the scope of:

- * **disseminating** the information collected in the National Secretariat library related to the manner of the Plans implementation and promoting „best practices”,
- * **establishing contact** with National Secretariats or related institutions in other countries, and with respective organizational structures of Habitat,
- * organizing regional **Training Centre for all that are involved in the implementation of Plan of Action in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe**, - taking advantage of the existing intellectual and institutional assets (academic researchers, members of scientific and technical associations, foundations with their training centres) and also of the National Secretariat data base.

(78) In order to make an effective use of financing available in the framework of World and European Aid Programmes, they should be introduced into the National Plan of Action implementation process, in all cases when their respective objectives are concurrent. This would mean the National

Secretariat would participate in the procedures for assessing applications and deciding on the allocation of funds.

CONCLUSION

The National Plan of Action was constructed on the basis of elaborations dealing with seven separate objectives. These elaborations represent an integral part of the Plan, although they contain individual views of their authors as to the partial objectives and tasks. The proposals included in these elaborations should be treated as inspiration for definite activities.

