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### VERBAL NOTE

The Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III) and has the honour to communicate the following:

With reference to the HABITAT III issue papers submitted to the Member States for comments, please find hereafter the Romanian proposals:

#### **Report 1 - Inclusive cities**

On this subject, during the Greek Presidency of the EU Council (first semester 2014), it was developed by the EUKN a study about The Inclusive City: Approaches to combat poverty and social exclusion in urban Europe. Considering that the study was developed with the involvement of all Member States in the inter-governmental cooperation platforms, consider taking necessary all information and proposals from the study mentioned above.

#### **Report 2 - Migration and refugees in urban areas**

The theme of this chapter is the issue of raising awareness of how all-inclusive planning for rapid urbanization can achieve a favorable environment to maximizing the skills, resources and creativity of migrants and refugees which can contribute to sustainable development.

This issue has a complex of components such political, legal, planning and financial resources, human and material recognized in this chapter.

Regarding the component of planning (restricted to urban planning) we make the following remarks:

- In the national strategic documents on national security specified that the accentuation of migration from conflict zones or from areas with a precarious economic situation has generated challenges to the capability of Member States to manage flows of illegal immigrants and reception / integration in local communities, creating regional instability and possible negative phenomena, including migration, organized crime, but also affect economic development potential. In this context, the process of developing an urban planning strategies must be ensured that the integration of migrants and refugees and allocation at local level to host them. It should also strengthen the political and legal framework enabling the reception of migrants and refugees, temporary or permanent.

#### **Report 3 - Safer Cities**

- In this report, more attention should be paid to urban regeneration as a tool of integrated sustainable urban development. Use this tool by cities would lead to the creation of safe and attractive public spaces, such reuse urban space ensuring reintegrates it within functional urban system. Therefore, the urban regeneration should be mentioned in Chapter *Key drivers for action*.

#### **Report 4 - *Urban culture and heritage***

In this report should be taken into account:

- the need to limit the effects of globalization by exploiting local advantages;
- the public awareness of the values that they hold in their towns;
- involvement of the population in protecting, development and promoting local culture and the local identity;
- the importance of the urban regeneration operations - as the main instrument for the preservation and development of local identity.

#### **Report 6 - *Urban governance***

In this report must be stressed:

the importance of developing urban - urban areas partnerships at horizontally level and cross level - between the various administrative structure at European, national, regional and local levels (implementing the concept of multi-level governance).

- the importance of developing functional urban areas leading to correlation development proposals in relation to the economic relations and activities in the field and not with administrative boundaries.
- the importance of redefining urban areas in agreement with the proposals submitted by OECD.
- the importance of urban planning instruments.
- the importance of cost and administrative tasks reduction in the process of attainment of the construction license.

#### **Report 7 - *Municipal finance***

Within the report, a closer attention should be pay to the following subjects:

- correlation of the tax collection process with the property registration process and with attainment of the construction license through the development of an informatics platform.
- correlation of urban planning with the actual implementation of the development proposals in the urban environment in order to ensure an efficient use of funds.
- the need of supporting cities in promoting development projects through insuring dedicated financing.
- development programs must be structured according to each specific area and adapted to the needs (developed areas - supporting projects that ensure competitiveness / less developed areas - supporting projects that ensure territorial cohesion). Also, financing programs must be focused on encouraging cities to develop their endogenous potential.

#### **Report 8 - *Urban and spatial planning and design***

The report should be updated with:

- the need of rational use of land - ensuring optimal population density and limitation of uncontrolled urban expansion (urban sprawl) and the use of land reserves inside urban areas (reintegration of unused industrial sites);
- the importance of developing of urban regeneration thus ensuring an oriented approach through implementation in the field of urban planning;
- the need to correlate Land use & transport;
- capitalization of the endogenous potential and local conditions;
- taking back the city by the citizens - new developments should be related to people not to vehicles. Also, it's important that interventions inside cities ensure the requirements of urban and architectural quality.



- underlining the importance of ensuring an attractive urban environment through capitalization of water streams that flow through cities.

#### **Report 9 - *Urban land***

The report shall include provisions related to:

- the importance of rational use of land in the urban areas given that the land represents a finite and hard renewable source;
- the importance of ensuring a structure and optimal densities of cities so as to limit the requirements for travel and the distances to be followed at the urban level and respectively to ensure effective accessibility to the town public transport.

#### **Report 10 - *Urban - Rural linkages***

The report should emphasize the importance of establishing administrative structures in order to facilitate the urban-rural connections for the development of functional urban areas.

#### **Report 11 - *Public Space***

The report should highlight the importance of planning and design of public spaces so as to enhance the specificity of the urban environment - that place of encounter and dialogue. Also, the report must include that the public space should generate social equality.

#### **Report 12 - *Local Economic Development***

The report should emphasize the importance of using endogenous potential for local economic development.

#### **Report 14 - *Informal sector***

The report should highlight the importance of using computing platforms in urban governance, such that to ensure full information and participation of the citizens, ensure transparency and to streamline decision-making processes for obtaining authorizations for building constructions.

#### **Report 15 - *Urban resilience***

The urban elasticity (urban resilience) is a relatively new concept, recognized as a quality of sustainable urban development. Because urban elasticity refers to the urban capacity to withstand shocks (social, environmental, technological) and to recover from them, in the operational conclusion of the chapter in question "Action Key" (Key drivers for action) we appreciate that useful to introduce the following factor:

- „Leveraging city planning instruments to diminish the vulnerabilities:
- Acknowledgement and assessment of vulnerable groups
- Acknowledgement and assessment of vulnerable areas, infrastructure, facilities
- Developing procedures and mechanisms in order to evaluate and address the vulnerabilities”

#### **Report 17 - *Cities and Climate changes and disaster risk management***

The report should highlight the importance of integrating natural and industrial hazards in the urban planning. The report should also include provisions from the report prepared by the Hungarian Presidency of the EU Council, Climate-friendly cities, in which 11 measures are identified in order for cities to avoid or limit the effects of climate change.

#### **Report no. 19 - *Transport and mobility***

- Intensified and sustainable development, as well as improved correlation of urban functions, needs putting together different types of transportation that will take into account population mobility, decrease congestion and lowering pollution. Therefore, in order to achieve these goals, a clear vision is needed, coherent and bringing cohesion, a vision of complementary strategies, policies and legal framework, which in some cases will be reformed.

- As regards transport, it must be taken into consideration that in line with the urban expansion should be ensured adequate infrastructure as well as pollution mitigation and traffic decongestion, to propose switching to alternative non-motorized transport, such as improving / renewing vehicles used to provide public services of local transport - electric buses, trolleybuses, trams, cable transportation (where possible) or alternating with non-motorized water transport. The Report should also promote the "ridesharing" and cycling, yet the latter require that related infrastructure is ensured together with a high road safety.

- In order to achieve efficient transportation, intermodal transport must be designed and planned, with a coverage area of settlements with adequate infrastructure and a high-tech coordination center. For streamlining the flow of passengers, e-ticketing systems, real-time data and an information integrated system should also be introduced.

#### **Report no. 20 - Housing**

The report should mention the need to ensure accessibility to the housing in order to limit informal or inadequate housing.

#### **Report 22 - Informal Settlements**

In order to combat informal settlements is necessary to promote and apply the sectoral strategies regarding proper development and to promote and apply the competent management of these forms of human settlement, by competent, coherent visions and territorial cohesion to improve the living standards of the population through easy access to infrastructure essentials, public services, schooling and primary health services. It requires a clear vision, policy and strategy relevant and specific legislation. Also, it needs a global solidarity and partnership for more effective and consistent support of these policies and strategic visions on informal settlements.

Expressing our gratitude for the fruitful collaboration, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration avails itself of this opportunity to convey to the Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III) the assurances of its highest considerations.

Bucharest, June 30, 2015



TO:  
Secretariat of the United Nations  
Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III)