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**ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN HOUSING: THE ACTION PLAN FOR ENERGY
EFFICIENT HOUSING IN THE UNECE REGION**

Executive Summary of the Action Plan for Energy Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region

Note by the secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In accordance with the Project Plan 2009-2012 for the Energy Efficiency 21 Project (ECE/ENERGY/2009/8) and decisions of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) (ECE/HBP/160), the UNECE has been engaged in developing the Action Plan for Energy Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region (the Action Plan). The UNECE Environment, Housing and Land Management Division (EHLMD) has organized two international meetings, the First UNECE Workshop on Energy Efficiency in Housing in Sofia, from 21-22 April 2009 and the International Forum on Energy Efficiency in Housing in Vienna, from 23-25 November 2009, which gave directions to formulating the Action Plan. The UNECE Sustainable Energy Division (SED) contributed to developing this Action Plan by participating in the Workshop and the Forum and by providing comments on the drafts of the Action Plan and other related documents. This note by the secretariat presents the Executive Summary of the Action Plan. The Action Plan is expected to be adopted at the Ministerial segment of the 71st session of the CHLM in September 2010.

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II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Action Plan for Energy Efficient Housing in the UNECE Region (the Action Plan) provides a framework programme of work for the UNECE Member Governments to improve energy efficiency of their housing sector and thus to enable this sector to more fully accomplish its potential in addressing environmental and economic challenges and satisfying social needs. Improved energy efficiency in housing is defined as reduced energy intensities in the residential services without compromising the levels of wellbeing of the residents or environmental conditions. The Action Plan specifies a range of measures for removing barriers to so defined energy efficiency and for a progressive transformation towards a low-energy and ultimately zero-energy and carbon-neutral housing sector. The Action Plan is based on the principles of comprehensiveness, flexibility, people-centred approach, and sensitivity to geographical context.

3. The Plan outlines three Policy Areas to act upon. Each Policy Area consists of four Goals, which are supplemented by more detailed Targets and suggested Actions. Each of the Goals is also underpinned by an overall Vision of what is expected to be achieved in the UNECE region by the year 2020. While the Actions suggested can be operationally adapted to the local requirements, it is expected that the Member Governments will ensure an all-round and coherent implementation of the Goals and Targets. The Policy Areas and Goals are summarised below:

(a) Energy efficiency governance and financial infrastructure. This Policy Area outlines measures for the establishment of organizational and financial capacities necessary for the implementation of the comprehensive policies with regard to improved housing energy efficiency. Goals include: (1) setting up administrative systems for effective policy formulation and implementation; (2) developing financial stimuli; (3) integrating energy efficiency into housing management and maintenance practices; and (4) improving incentives and capacities for efficient end-use management of energy services;

(b) Energy performance standards and technology integration. This Policy Area embraces measures to ensure that new and existing residential buildings progressively meet better technological standards. Goals include: (5) strengthening mandatory energy and carbon performance requirements; (6) promoting very-low-energy and low-carbon technology; (7) integrating energy efficiency into spatial planning and development practices; and (8) stimulating the development of cost-effective technological solutions and innovations;

(c) Access to energy efficiency and public housing. This Policy Area is concerned with a better outreach of policies in question so that the benefits of energy efficient housing, and knowledge of these benefits, are not limited to a few areas or social groups but contribute to wider social and spatial integration, as well as to housing affordability. Goals include: (9) transforming social (public) housing towards greater energy efficiency; (10) ensuring energy affordability; (11) raising awareness and capacity building; and (12) balancing geographical development with respect to the access to housing energy efficiency.
