**Questionnaire on the right to adequate housing**

**Response, Slovakia**

1. What role will national and international human rights standards on the right to adequate housing play in informing your positions and proposals for Habitat III? Can you please provide concrete examples in this regard?

In the line with the Slovak housing policy the responsibility for acquiring of one’s housing is passed on to the individual citizen, but in every society there are groups of population unable to procure an adequate housing themselves due to the commercial character of a dwelling. Therefore it is necessary to create suitable conditions particularly for housing of disadvantaged groups of population. The global objective of state housing policy is the gradual increase of the overall housing standard to make housing affordable for population and allow each household to procure adequate housing.

Regarding HABITAT III in the housing area the main message will focus on role of municipalities in creating suitable conditions and adopting efficient measures to provide the housing accessibility for the inhabitants.

2. One aspect for discussion in the context of Habitat III will likely be “social cohesion and housing”. What public policies, programmes or plans are being considering or have been put forward by national or subnational level governments related to “social cohesion” (for example: non-discrimination and equality) and the right to adequate housing? Please specifically reference any policies, programmes or plans aimed at ensuring inclusive housing for disadvantaged groups such as migrants and refugees, women, young people, older people, and people with disabilities in urban centres.

Social cohesion is an important condition for the stability of the political system, the source of economic performance and the basis for a sense of security and citizen satisfaction. For creating cohesion in society it is necessary that State encourage it mainly indirect intervening by removing existing disadvantages and promoting equal opportunities. In the area of housing in Slovakia it takes place through economic instruments of support for housing development, which should enable different groups of citizens to obtain adequate housing.

The main principles of the Slovak housing policy are defined in the State Housing Policy Concept to 2020 as a framework document in in the area of housing. There are also sectoral policies focused on specific group such as older people, migrants, people with disabilities or marginalized Roma communities. All of them respect the basic principles of housing policy.

3. In light of the fact that subnational and local governments play an essential role with respect to the implementation of the right to adequate housing, what plans and procedures does your Government intend to implement to ensure they are engaged in the lead up to Habitat III as well as with respect to the implementation of commitments coming out of Habitat III?

Local governments are actively involved in the preparatory process of HABITAT III Report. The challenges of Slovakia´s HABITAT III National Report are under discussion so at this stage it is too early to address the issue of implementation.

4. What interesting or unique housing policies, programs or good practices consistent with the human right to housing does your Government intend to highlight through the Habitat III process? Please provide examples both from local, subnational or national levels of government, and, if applicable, from non-government actors as well.

To improve the housing development and to increase the housing accessibility the Slovak Republic (at national level) introduced various types of economic (also legislative) instruments. The Programme of housing development introduced in 1998 belongs to the most efficient instruments. Housing funding is supported by subsidy scheme available through the Programme of housing development by which the state directly supports municipalities in financing housing development. This Programme is managed by Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic and the aid is targeted into three areas: construction of social rental housing in public sector, construction of technical infrastructure and elimination of systematic failures of housing buildings.

It is possible to combine subsidy with the long term low interest loan from the State Housing Development Fund (SHDF). SHDF was established by the Law of the National Council of Slovak Republic in 1996 to help resolve the unsatisfactory housing situation. The fund offers long-time loans for housing at a low interest rate. In accordance with Act No. 150/2013 Coll. on the SHDF it is possible to provide support for the construction of a flat in a housing building and family house, including obtaining flat superstructure, built-in rooms, extensions or reconstruction of non-residential premises, construction or completion of social service facilities, purchase of new flat, reconstruction of building, construction of municipal rental flat in a housing building.

Results of these programs are positive. In the period 1998 - 2015 they helped to start construction of about 37 000 municipal rental housing units.

5. Please reflect on mechanisms used to monitor compliance with Habitat II (1996) at the national level that have proven effective and, if possible, provide examples. What kind of mechanisms would your Government envisage as part of the monitoring and implementation of Habitat III?

The HABITAT II was implemented through National Action Plan of Settlement and Housing Development. The National Habitat Committee as a permanent advisory body for monitoring and coordinating the implementation of the Habitat Agenda was also established at the Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic.

Regarding the monitoring and implementation mechanisms of HABITAT III there hasn´t been taken any decision on that matter.