Fifth African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD V)

25-28 FEBRUARY 2014, N'Djamen, CHAD

THEME:
A. Introduction

1. Background

The African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD) is a pan-African body composed of all African Ministers responsible for Housing and Urban Development in Africa. It was established in 2005 during the inaugural meeting held in Durban, South Africa. It is the main consultative body on the promotion of sustainable development of human settlements in Africa, as well as the primary inter-governmental vehicle for governments to improve African cities, enabling them to realize their full potential as centres of hope and prosperity. AMCHUD provides a continent-wide platform to share ideas, exchange best practice, and discuss effective strategies to achieve sustainable urbanization in Africa. Its inception was inspired by Decision 29 of the African Union Assembly adopted on urbanization and chaotic urban growth in Africa, in which Heads of State and Governments called for a coordinated African response to the challenges of urbanization.

AMCHUD was established to serve as a consultative mechanism on the promotion of the sustainable development of human settlements in Africa. It aims at developing, facilitating and co-ordinating a common African Position on issues of sustainable urban development and human settlements in Africa. Its Vision is to ensure a continent of people housed in sustainable human settlements with access to land, security of tenure and basic services. Its structure comprises of three organs namely a Biennial Ministerial Conference, a Bureau, and Secretariat. The Biennial Ministerial Conference comprises Ministers responsible for Housing and Urban Development and normally meet after every two years to consult and review progress on the promotion of sustainable development of Human settlements in Africa. To date four Conferences have been held and their discussions are guided by selected thematic areas.

2. Development Context

In 2008, the 2nd ordinary session of AMCHUD adopted the Abuja Implementation Plan which, among other issues, outlined key decisions relating to the financing of housing and urban development in the Continent. Encompassed within the implementation plan was a series of profound recommendations and considerations which African governments were called upon to undertake as a way of enhancing their capacity for financing sustainable urban development. Ministers committed to apprise their respective Heads of State and Governments on the outcome of the conference and to take appropriate action towards implementing the Abuja Plan.

It is now five years since the adoption of the Abuja Implementation Plan. There have been major developments taking place in various African countries. Non-conventional modalities for financing urban development have been embraced, including infrastructure bonds, variants of land value-capture, mortgage re-financing facilities, and micro-lending for housing. In addition, more countries have put in place instruments for accessing local and global capital markets and robust fiscal mechanisms are being developed for mobilizing and deploying resources for urban development.

However, even with the strides achieved after the Abuja Implementation Plan, challenges still abound in establishing sustainable mechanisms for financing human settlements in Africa. A key factor of these challenges is lack of enabling legislative frameworks. It is against this backdrop that the Ministers Responsible for Housing and Urban Development at their special session in Nairobi adopted the theme “Case Studies in Financing Human Settlements in Africa: Appropriate Legislative Frameworks and Innovations in Implementation.”

AMCHUD 5 also will take place at a time when world is redefining its development paradigm through various international platforms. In line with this process of redefining
the world development focus, the African Heads of State and Government pronounced themselves on the need for a new vision for the Continent, building on the achievements of the past five decades, captures the significance of the evolving situation. Consultations which have been launched by the African Union on giving content to Africa Agenda 2063 underlines an acknowledgement that the Continent is entering a new phase, almost in every aspect.

In Nairobi, at AMCHUD’s 4th ordinary session, Ministers acknowledged this dynamism and its association with the process of increasing urbanization and the unprecedented rapid rate of urban growth. The notion of ‘optimizing the urban advantage’ adopted by the conference signified the urgency of harnessing urbanization as a dynamic for accelerating the overall sustainability of the Continent and its citizens.

As the African Union embarks on defining ‘Africa Agenda 2063’ AMCHUD has to ensure that the urban dimension is included within the core of this process. Apart from the transformative impetus of urbanization acknowledged by Ministers at their Nairobi meeting, the dominant setting of Africa in 2063 will be prominently an urban one. Definitely, the process leading to that horizon needs to be steered and its requirements anticipated. African Ministers of Housing and Urban Development need to define urgently an ‘Africa Urban Agenda 2063’ that will feed into the ongoing consultation process of articulating a long term vision for the continent.

It is a coherent urban agenda that is linked to the continental vision that will inform and guide the major programmes and undertakings – such as financing human settlements. Experience of the past five years both from within and outside the Continent demonstrates that the transformative potential of urbanization is optimized when the critical levers, such as financing, are appropriately synchronized within a broader developmental agenda.

At the global level, there are also rapidly advancing developments of which Africa’s voice should not be left out. While some regional consultations have taken place on defining a successor to the MDG, the African position has to be further consolidated by key principles and elements derived from the broader Africa urban agenda and with a view to bolstering the African voice. In the same regard, in step with preparations for Habitat III, a shared Africa Urban Agenda will provide a useful framework for articulating African issues to be addressed and incorporated during the various stages of preparing the conference and deliberating on the agenda items.

3. **Conference Objectives**

AMCHUD V will seek to achieve the following objectives:

(i) Develop an enhanced operational compendium of enabling legislative frameworks and innovative practices which enhance human settlement financing;

(ii) Define ‘Africa Urban Agenda 2063’ that will also serve as an input into the African Union’s ‘Agenda 2063’ as well as to the Post-2015 Agenda and to Habitat III;

(iii) Approve the foundation documents for enhancing the institutional capacity of AMCHUD.

(iv) Adopt a Ndjamena Declaration

**B. Conference Highlights**

1. **Conference Organizers**

The Fifth African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD V) is being organized by the AMCHUD Secretariat in partnership with the Government of Chad, the host country, with the technical support of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

2. **Conference Format**

The AMCHUD Conference will consist three segments:
The Conference will be conducted in three segments:

1) the Experts Group Meeting will take place from 25-26 February 2014 to reflect on the theme as well as on the Africa Urban Agenda and prepare draft decisions for consideration by the Conference;

2) a round table between the Ministers, investors, financial institutions and development partners on 26 February 2014; and

3) the High Level Segment which will take place from 27-28 February 2014.

The Conference will consist of a balanced mix of plenary, round table and working group sessions as well as parallel events. Plenary sessions will include: (a) Statements by high level officials and keynote addresses by senior representatives of international and regional development banks and other financial institutions; (b) A presentation of the thematic paper “Case Studies in Financing Human Settlements in Africa: Appropriate Legislative Frameworks and Innovations in Implementation”; (c) A presentation of a background paper “Africa Urban Agenda 2063” and (d) a presentation of a concept note for the round table. Parallel event will consist of launching the UN-Habitat flagship report on African cities report. The focus of the 2014 report is on: “Re-imagining sustainable urban transitions”

Country case studies, selected to represent the respective African sub-regions, will enrich and deepen the deliberations of the EGM. These case studies will feature topics that are central to the theme on financing human settlements.

A detailed Conference programme and agenda will be sent out to invited participants ahead of the conference date. It will also be available at the conference website: www.amchud5.org

3. Participants
Participants will include:
Country delegations which will consist of political representatives at ministerial level and their experts in housing, urban development and finance.
Representatives of African Union Commission, UNON, UN-Habitat, UNECA, AfDB, AMCOD, UCLGA and Shelter Afrique.
Other participants will include senior representatives of international and regional financial (and Real Estates ?) institutions, invited for the critical roles they play in financing human settlements and provision of affordable housing.
Participants are requested to register online. Registration form will be available at www.amchud5.org.

4. Exhibition
An exhibition is planned to showcase country, regional and international initiatives in financing human settlements. This exhibition will be an excellent medium for participants and exhibitors to network and exchange ideas.

5. Conference documentation
The meeting documents will include the following:
(i) Aide-Memoire;
(ii) Background document on the theme of the Conference;
(iii) Strategy document on Africa urban Agenda 2063;
(iv) Outcome document Outcome of the take-off Conference on Strengthening Partnership for a New Africa Urban Agenda;
(v) Financial status of AMCHUD;
(vi) Concept note for the investors round table;
(vii) Progress report on preparation for WUF 7;
(viii) Report on Development Agenda post 2015;
(ix) Report on the Preparations of Prep-com 1 for Habitat III;
6. Dates and Venue
The fifth session of the African Ministerial conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD 5) will be held at the International Conference Center in N'djamena, Chad from 25-28 February 2014.

7. Conference Languages
Conference languages will be English and French and simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

8. Administrative Arrangements
An information Note providing details of relevant information on the host county, hotels and logistics relating to the meeting will be posted in the Conference website: www.amchud5.org