



## Focus on social dimension and exclusion at Toledo meeting

Mr. Sven Carlsson, the president of IUT and co-chair of the European Housing Forum gave a speech on the social dimension of the EU social cohesion policy at the EU housing ministers meeting in Toledo, in which he reflects on social exclusion, affordable housing and a better future.

On the 21 of June, the EU ministers gathered in Toledo, Spain for an informal meeting. The theme of the EU ministers meeting was "The renovation of existing housing stock".

The meeting in Toledo was an excellent opportunity to present common standpoints. IUT and the fellow members of EHF had prior to the meeting, agreed on a common document to refer to in discussions concerning renovation in existing buildings. In his speech, Mr. Sven Carlsson addressed "The housing dimension of the EU social cohesion policy".

This is a shortened version of Mr. Sven Carlsson's speech held at the EU ministers meeting in Toledo.

*As co-chair of the European Housing Forum I have the pleasure to represent a wide range of housing organisations in Europe - the housing providers - like the landlords, the housing consumers - like the tenants and the housing professionals - like surveyors and researchers.*

*Housing is on the agenda of the EU - access to affordable housing is one of the key structures of the social and territorial cohesion policy of Europe. Housing is a basic and fundamental need. Without a home and a family life, education and health are out of reach. Poverty and housing poverty are two sides of the same coin. As representative of the EHF as well as president of the International Union of Tenants my appeal today is: Respect and strengthen the housing dimension in your social inclusion policies and strategies at EU level. Follow the way you entered - it's the right direction. Make a maximum use of the EU structural funds for investments in refurbishment*



Mr. Ian Perry, (RICS) and Mr. Sven Carlsson at the EU ministers meeting, Toledo, Spain. 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2010.

*of the existing housing stock.*

*The refurbishment of the housing stock has direct impact on the inhabitants - less energy costs, more healthy living conditions, more comfort. Investing in affordable, energy efficient rental housing is fighting poverty.*

*Keep the European Regional Development Funds further open for energy investments in housing in the post 2013 structural funds period. Reinforce the instruments to fight housing exclusion and reinforce the instruments for urban development. The recent Euro-Barometer poll reveals the importance of the housing question. In these challenging economic times, EU citizens worry most about jobs and housing costs.*

*I hope to find your support for our central message: The provision of housing remains competence of the member states - the fight against social exclusion and poverty is shared competence in a Europe without borders.*

*The EHF realises that the current funding rules limit the possibilities. We urge the Housing Ministers to ensure the inclusion of housing for the excluded segments of the population and urban development in the post 2013 cohesion fund period of the EU.*

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