

Policy Statement
Charleroi, October 2nd, 2001

The representatives of the Member States of the European Union, gathering for the 13th meeting of Housing Ministers of the European Union which took place in Brussels and Charleroi on October 1st and 2nd, 2001;

Considering that :

- some EU initiatives and decisions within the framework of European Community policies have impact on the housing sector and national housing policies;
- the final communiqué of the 12th meeting of Housing Ministers recognized that "situations regarding housing vary: slack markets in sectors that are in economic and demographic decline, and tight markets often in high-growth areas";

Recalling the decision of the European Council of Nice regarding the implementation of policies which aim to provide access for all to decent and healthy housing conditions;

Mandate the Presidency, on the one hand, to explore with the Commission, the best way so that the latter can produce a report and a communication summarising the interactions between Community and national housing policies and, on the other hand, to ask the Commission to regularly inform the Meeting of Housing Ministers about Community initiatives and decisions that might have an impact on Housing policies;

Decide that :

- their future meetings will take a position on EU initiatives and decisions which have an impact on national housing policies;
- their meetings will regularly review the tools allowing market regulation and the development of housing policies;
- their future meetings will consider a common strategic approach, evaluated in their annual reports, in order to promote access to decent housing in favour of social demand and to struggle against unsanitary and poor housing conditions;
- they will undertake the analysis, evaluation and promotion of the Habitat agenda by all concerned partners through a better co-ordination of the different existing platforms;
- a meeting of civil servants is useful, on the one hand, to exchange information on a precise topic, chosen and prepared by the State presiding the EU and, on the other hand, to develop the emerging themes put forward by the Member States in order to allow the Meeting of Housing Ministers to concentrate on themes requiring a common strategic approach.

Ask for an appropriate European Council of Ministers to receive the Meeting of Housing Ministers and integrate the concerns of this meeting in the conclusions and decisions resulting from the Council of Ministers' working sessions from 2003 onwards.