



Brussels, 17 February 2020

Statement of Intent at the occasion of the International Donor's Conference after the earthquake

By this Statement of Intent (the "Statement"), each of the Republic of Albania, the Council of Europe Development Bank (the "CEB"), the European Investment Bank (the "EIB"), the European Union represented by the European Commission (the "Commission"), and the World Bank (the "WB"), (hereinafter each referred to individually as a "Party" and collectively referred to as the "Parties") expresses shared intent to support the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the housing sector in Albania, guided by the following principles of engagement.

Consistency

A uniform national housing reconstruction program that ensures coordination of multiple international and national initiatives and consistently applied standards for equity, irrespective of funding sources, is needed. This must be guided by harmonized, clear and fully enforced policies.

Clarity

Clear implementation arrangements, with defined responsibilities of and effective coordination between all levels including national and local authorities, should be agreed. Implementation can be led by a dedicated housing reconstruction agency, or alternative constructs involving multiple relevant Ministries and Agencies, so long as responsibilities and the decision-making hierarchy are clearly delineated and followed. Procurement, financial management, auditing and monitoring requirements and processes must be defined up front.

Participatory

The national housing reconstruction program must be owner-driven, with effective participation and consultation mechanisms. These mechanisms must recognize that as most of the damaged housing consists of multi-unit apartment blocks, recognition, engagement and similar multi-owner coordination approaches are needed.

Transparency

The design, details and decisions of the national housing reconstruction program must be publicly accessible. Eligibility criteria for beneficiary selection must be clear and be subject to independent verification mechanisms. Monitoring of progress indicators, timelines, and flows of all funds must be published on-line regularly.

Accountability

A clear communication strategy and a grievance redress mechanism must be integral to program design. Potential negative social and environmental impacts of demolition, new construction and/or new settlement plans must be pro-actively managed.

Equity

Public resources must prioritize and support the most vulnerable households, with due consideration of gender issues and through the application of nondiscriminatory principles. Existing and new social issues that may arise during reconstruction must be monitored and addressed, including fair and forward-looking policy reforms to address illegal housing and construction.

Efficiency

A financing strategy that leverages private sector funds from a range of sources including the domestic banking sector, both for homeowners and the housing supply chain, is needed. Interventions to ensure adequate, consistent and fair-priced supply of building materials should be considered.

Resiliency

Institutional and regulatory frameworks that promote resilient reconstruction are required, including codification of multi-hazard risk reduction aligned with the Eurocodes, improved construction quality control, expansion of property insurance, and assurance that settlement designs pursue concepts of livability and infrastructure resilience. These must be supported by sufficiently empowered and capacitated institutions.

Sustainability

Housing reconstruction must support broader urban development goals, including promotion of transformative urban development that is modern, green, low-carbon and community friendly. Potential impacts to the environment during reconstruction are to be avoided and/or properly mitigated with special attention to waste management, recycling and life-cycle approaches.

This Statement reflects the intentions of the Parties as of the date of this Statement, expressed in good faith but without the creation of any legal obligation or the incurrence of any liability on the part of either of them. Nor shall any third party obtain any legal benefit from this Statement.

Nothing in this Statement shall constitute or be construed as constituting a waiver, express or implied, of any privileges, immunities and exemptions enjoyed by either of the Parties, its Directors, officers, employees or experts performing missions.

