

**Workshop on Institutional Framework for Securing Real Property Rights (Tbilisi, Georgia
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INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

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Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of the secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, I would like to thank the host authorities of Georgia, for organizing this workshop in Tbilisi and for kind words of welcome to the participants. I would like to express particular appreciation to the Ministry of Justice of Georgia and the National Agency of Public Registry and their staff for organization of this workshop.

The issue of the institutional set up is a fundamental aspect of an effective land administration system. It is generally accepted that the state must have a dominant role in setting up and operating a cadastre or land registration system. Resources in the private sector can be used to supplement the work of the public sector through public-private partnerships. The influence and extent of involvement of the private sector differs between countries. Public-private partnerships occur in different forms throughout the member countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

Land administration services strongly relate to the areas of responsibility of many ministries and government organizations such as: real property taxation; environmental protection; agriculture; forestry; urban and housing development. In theory, public agencies are able to combine data from different sources, share spatial information, develop a spatial information market policy for cost recovery, improve cooperation with potential users and the private sector, and develop the ‘e-market’ and related value-added services. In practice, this is not so easy because of coordination problems and discontinuities in both

the vertical and horizontal flow of information.

The main reasons for the lack of cooperation and coordination are common to almost every country. They include the existence of different short-term priorities in each ministry and organization; attitudes of mind; and concerns over copyright and financial matters. There may be technical issues (such as a lack of information technology and deficiencies in the national spatial data infrastructure); uncertainty over legal responsibilities for coordination; or a lack of specialized knowledge and experience. There may also be competition between different ministries and organizations, thus preventing a land administration system from working effectively and resulting in much overlap in land administration activities. This leads to less efficient governance and creates additional expense and delays in implementing projects.

Because of these potential conflicts, evolving national land information systems have often been driven more by the strength of the individual officials involved than by an objective assessment to determine the best institutional arrangements. There is an inherent danger that if one organization is designated as the lead agency it will have its own priorities and give less weight to other interested parties. Historically, in many countries the various professions involved in managing land and its resources have had different visions of what is most important and this has resulted in conflicting priorities and a fragmented approach to land matters.

One way to ensure closer cooperation between government bodies is to establish a high-level land administration coordination board. Such a board can help to coordinate the administration of land and the environment and can develop policies for handling land-related data that are in line with those of the national government and its various ministries. It can help to reduce overlaps between ministries, increase efficiency, and provide a forum in which improvements to land administration services can be discussed in the light of changing circumstances and any consequent need to amend the law. It can also recommend policies for archiving data that may be needed in the long-term national interest. It can also address matters of personal privacy and the confidentiality of data in order to protect the interests of private citizens.

Finally, I would like to state that the ECE secretariat is looking forward to continue our cooperation with the land administration authorities of Georgia and to wish all participants successful discussions and good results at the Workshop.

Thank you for your attention