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GUIDELINES

ON

REAL PROPERTY UNITS AND IDENTIFIERS



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Guidelines on Real Property Units

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FOREWORD

Land administration and land-related policies are fundamental to good governance, sustainable economic growth, social cohesion and security, and the well-being of and the economic opportunities open to urban and rural populations. In 1993 the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) launched an initiative to strengthen land administration capabilities, mainly for countries in Eastern and Central Europe. The main purpose was to identify their needs and problems related to land administration, and for experts both from countries in transition and from the West to share views and experiences. UNECE also sought to assess the opportunities for applying land administration methods, policies and procedures similar to those that had evolved over a long period of time in the market economies of the UNECE region.

In 1996, UNECE published the Guidelines on Land Administration with special reference to countries in transition (ECE/HBP/96). These Guidelines defined land administration as the process whereby land and the information about land may be effectively managed. They are written mainly for senior governmental staff and politicians engaged in land administration issues. The aim was to outline the social and economic benefits of having a relevant and reliable land information system in place. The Guidelines have played a significant role in establishing and modernizing land administration systems in the UNECE countries within their own social, economic and cultural environment.

The present Guidelines have been prepared to address the need for an effective system of land registration, real property units and land parcel identification. The terminology used in land administration differs among countries. Likewise, there is no agreement on the definition of the basic unit of real property ownership and its identifiers across the UNECE region. The Guidelines aim to assist those who are seeking harmonization among UNECE countries so that they can share data on land and real property and to facilitate international cooperation on land administration. I hope that these Guidelines will lead to a better understanding of the different land registration systems used in the UNECE countries and that, through these Guidelines, UNECE will make a crucial contribution to the much-needed harmonization of information.



Brigita Schmögnerová
Executive Secretary

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Preface

The Working Party on Land Administration of the UNECE Committee on Human Settlements at its second session in November 2001 agreed to prepare a set of guidelines on real estate units and identifiers. In 2002, the Bureau of the Working Party considered the organizational and financial arrangements and invited Professor Peter Dale to serve as a consultant in preparation of the Guidelines. It also established a task force to assist the consultant in this work. The Task Force consisted of Mr. Ndoc Vata (Albania), Mr. Hayk Sahakyan (Armenia), Mr. Franz Hutterer (Austria), Mr. Pekka Halme (Finland), Ms. Chryssy Potsiou (Greece), Mr. Bronislovas Mikuta (Lithuania), Mr. Auke Hoekstra (Netherlands), Mr. Helge Onsrud (Norway), Chairman of the Task Force, Mr. Jesper Paasch (Sweden), and Mr. Robert Ashwin (United Kingdom).

To support the work, a questionnaire was prepared and sent to selected land administration authorities of the UNECE countries. In addition to information provided by the members of the task force, replies were received from Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Latvia, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine. Valuable additional information was provided by Australia and the United Nations administration in Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro).

The Guidelines have been prepared to assist national land administration authorities to modernize their cadastre and registration systems. They should also prove useful for other parties who are directly or indirectly involved in land administration and the management of land resources, both in the public and in the private sectors. They can also be used for professional training and to help students understand various definitions of real property objects and land administration systems.

The Guidelines contain a number of recommendations but do not attempt to provide a single solution to what are complex problems. Many cadastral issues relate to the history and culture of each nation and there is no unique solution that is the best for all countries. There are underlying issues that are common in most if not all cases but ultimately each country must decide what it wants and what is best for its own circumstances. The Guidelines offer examples of good practice that should help to make land administration systems more efficient and effective as well as to facilitate internal and external cooperation.

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