



Human  
Settlements  
in Crisis

# HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY IN CRIMEA



UN-HABITAT

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## List of Acronyms

ARC	Autonomous Republic of Crimea
ASSR	Autonomous Socialistic Soviet Republic
BTI	Bureau of Technical Inventory
CAE	Collective Agricultural Enterprises
CIS	Community of the Independent States
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EU	European Union
FDPs	Formerly Deported People
HRV	Hrivnia (the Ukrainian national currency)
NKVD	Soviet secret Police during the WWII
RLRC	Republican Land Resources Committee
RSSR	Russian Soviet Federative Socialistic Republic
SLRC	State Land Resource Committee
TIKA	Turkish Agency for International Development
TACIS	Technical Assistance Programme for Community of Independent States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UkSSR	Ukrainian Socialistic Federative Soviet Republic
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics
US\$	United States Dollars

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# **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to provide an assessment of land disputes in Crimea. The report highlights the principal weaknesses and gaps in institutional capacities of the authorities in the region. It also makes recommendations for addressing deficiencies and ensuring equitable and transparent administration of housing, land and property in Crimea.

The report recommends a UN-HABITAT presence in Crimea to assist the **domestic institutions** in developing a response to the problems identified. Although these do not flow from a post-conflict or natural disaster situation, disputes over land could lead to considerable inter-ethnic tension between the majority of the Russian population and the Crimean Tatars, which could generate instability. The report, therefore, proposes the development of a **preventive** approach to avoid the aggravation of these disputes.

Currently, **land related disputes in Crimea are at a critical stage**, both in numbers and intensity. The national authorities acknowledge that they lack the capacity to deal with the situation. The vast majority of institutional representatives in charge of land management interviewed during the research for this report expressly welcomed the prospect of an **international** presence in Crimea to empower their institutional position and to reduce their political dependency. As the specialist agency on human settlements, UN-HABITAT would be well placed to fill this role.

The two biggest challenges regarding land and property rights in Crimea are:

- how to increase the **transparency of decisions** taken by the national authorities regarding the allocation of land
- how to ensure **claims for land by formerly deported people** are dealt with fairly and in accordance with the law.

The aim of a possible UN-HABITAT intervention in Crimea should be to assist the domestic institutions to restore the rule of law and put an end to the widespread practice of illegal occupation of land.

The first stage of the intervention should focus on preventing conflict and reducing tensions generated by the current land disputes. The second intervention should concentrate on providing technical assistance to promote good governance and improve the public administration of land management, through training, supporting best practices and increasing the involvement of civil society in the planning process. The third stage should involve addressing longer-term issues such as **institutional, legal, and administrative reforms through the development of a Land Code** to consolidate the fragmented and chaotic legislative framework that currently exists.

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