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# **The Third Land for Development Programme Forum**

*“PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR THE POOR: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE”*

**Tempio di Adriano, Piazza di Pietra, Rome, Italy  
13-14 December 2004**

## **FINAL DECLARATION**

### **Introduction**

Delegates from over 30 countries and four continents, Europe, America, Africa and Asia, gathered in Rome to discuss the UNECE REAG Land for Development Programme and its contribution to transforming property rights into usable capital for poverty alleviation.

### **1. Main conclusions**

Delegates agreed that property rights are a vital link in economic development but many countries lack a rights based culture which would enable emphasis to be placed on integrating the poor, excluded and vulnerable groups into the financial system. In many countries there is a continuing need to formalize property assets into legal rights, to create an enabling environment for secure lending, to develop more just and fair distribution of property rights. This requires political will and support from all levels of government. Participants endorsed the efforts of the UN to make property rights and financing to the poor as an integral part of the global effort to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

### **2. UN High Level Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor**

Delegates welcomed the progress reported by the Executive Secretary Ms. Brigita Schmognerova on the establishment of the HLC. They congratulated the Government of Norway for its leading role in this initiative. They agreed that the HLC will play an important role in scaling up the efforts of different organizations in securing property rights for development and in raising the political profile of the respective efforts of different bodies in order to achieve stronger impact.

They endorsed Mr. Hernando de Soto as chairman of this Commission and appreciated his views and inspiration through a satellite-link up between Rome and Lima during the Forum.

They strongly recommended that, in view of the initiative taken by REAG with respect to promoting the HLC and the expertise available within UNECE, the secretariat for servicing the HLC be located in Geneva at UNECE.

Delegates called for governments, international organizations development banks and the donor community to support the Land for Development Programme with its comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach and the HLC initiative.

### 3. Action plan

#### *Objectives:*

- Implementation of concrete Projects to inspire the HLC in its work and to elaborate a reform toolkit for global, regional and sub-regional implementation.
- To explore the ways and means of deepening the interaction between the financial and real estate markets and the role of secure property rights in lowering business transaction costs and the need for this understanding to be transferred to the other regions of the world.
- To encourage the financial community and governments to work closer together in order to bridge the gap between the financial services industry and the Poor.
- To bring the “Land for Development” and “Property Rights for the Poor” issues to highest possible national level in the respective / concerned (i.e. Head of State, Prime Minister, Parliament).
- To bring these issues also to the attention of ECOSOC (Substantive Session 2005) and the UNGA (60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> regular sessions, 2005 and 2006).

#### *By:*

- Convening a meeting during the first quarter of 2005 of the Executive body of UNECE REAG to develop further an action plan for 2005, to review progress in the establishment of governmental support of HLC and to consider its future programme of work, including possible events to take place and deal with, Ukraine, South East Europe, and Central Asian republics.
- Broadening the REAG network. To this end they approved the proposal to appoint the four representatives from REAG to the executive body of REAG:
  1. Mr. Sani Ljubuncic (Croatia, Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship)
  2. Ms. Elena Kaniovskaya (Russian Federation, Ministry of Economy and Trade)
  3. Mr. Olexiy Yanov (Ukraine, Centre for Land Reform Policy)
  4. Mr. Alexander Peytchev (Bulgaria, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- Holding a meeting between UNECE REAG representatives and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) with a view to establishing a REAG body in that region.
- Contributing to the implementation of UNECE programmes and projects such as those relating to TPAC and cooperation with the Russian Federation (as for example, through EU TESIS Project).

### 4. Commendations

The delegates congratulated the Executive Secretary of the UNECE on receipt of a silver medal from The President of the Republic of Italy, Mr. Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, in recognition of the contribution of the Land for Development Programme to UN goals as instigated by UNECE REAG and in cooperation with Tecnoborsa.

#### ***Tecnoborsa***

In view of the tremendous support provided in the last three years, and offered to be provided in the next three years, to the UNECE REAG Land for Development Programme by Tecnoborsa and its provision of sponsorship for the next editions of the LFDP Forum in Rome, the delegates agreed to support REAG's proposal that Tecnoborsa be asked to nominate a vice Chairman of UNECE REAG. Tecnoborsa has, and will play an active role in the technical activities for the High Level Commission, including to be member of the Commission, provided the structure and the representation will allow it. The Italian Government is encouraged to play an active role in the Commission and to propose a representative to the HLC, with Tecnoborsa supporting the Italian member to the Commission.