

Roundtable: Addressing land administration and land rights challenges to pave the ground for peace and stability in Libya

29 and 30 June 2021, 9:30-15:30, Regency Tunis Hotel, Tunis

Concept Note

Background

Access, use, and control of land and land-based resources are deeply linked to power, identity and livelihoods and as such are at the heart of the Libya's conflict¹. The growing pressures of climate change, population growth, increased food insecurity, migration and urbanization are additional stressors for the land management system that needs to be reformed and strengthened.

Protection of housing, land and property rights and adequate land management and administration are key to peaceful, inclusive and socially and economically prosperous societies. In contexts emerging from conflicts and with a history of fragile institutions such as Libya, developing a sufficient shared understanding of such issues and define a range of options for addressing them is crucial for the establishment of technical processes that can sustain the broader political processes of social reconciliation, peace building and state building. It is also necessary to pave the way for reconstruction, sustainable development and sustainable urbanisation.

Some of the most visible manifestation of the failure of the land management system in Libya are: dysfunctional land markets, increase of land prices in urban areas, unaffordable housing, lack of investments in reconstruction and repair of infrastructure and building, forced evictions, and unregulated sprawl of informal settlements.

Addressing the various waves of dispossession and resolve conflicts over housing, land and property rights must be part of the transitional justice mechanisms that Libya will need to put in place to create the conditions for peace, reconciliation and reconstruction. The functioning of the Libyan land sector has been very heavily impacted by the suspension of property registration since 2011. The measure, put in place to prevent illegal registration, is now affecting recovery and reconstruction and the capacity of raising revenues from local property taxes, a key stream of income that local authorities can re-invest in local services and infrastructure.

The partners

The roundtable is organised by UN-Habitat in partnership with key Libyan land related institutions, including:

1. Real Estate Registration Authority, Ministry of Justice
2. Urban Planning Authority, Ministry of Housing and Construction

¹ Guidance Note of the Secretary General 'The United Nations and Land and Conflict' (2019)
<https://glttn.net/2019/03/15/guidance-note-of-the-secretary-general-the-united-nations-and-land-and-conflict-march-2019/>

3. State Property Authority, Ministry of Finance
4. Survey Authority, Ministry of Planning
5. Ministry of Local Government
6. Case management, Ministry of Justice

Additional UN, INGO, civil society and private sector partners will be invited.

Objective

The objective of the roundtable is to bring together land experts and practitioners from different institutions and disciplines to exchange their experiences and discuss the priorities for action in the Libyan land sector.

The event will foster the understanding of existing land issues and their impact on broader Libyan priorities such as social and economic development, peace and reconciliation, reconstruction, state building and institutional strengthening, and promotion of human rights. Challenges, practices and possible solutions will be tabled for discussion.

Participants to the roundtable will:

- Define key features of the land administration sector in Libya;
- Describe the main land management and land tenure security challenges, including land market, land taxation, equitable access to affordable housing, etc.;
- Discuss options for improving land administration and access to land;
- Learn from existing experiences;
- Identify areas of convergence and potential collaboration among stakeholders;
- Consolidate priorities for the way forward; and
- Prepare recommendations for the Libyan government at the ministerial and local administrations' level.

Methodology and languages

The roundtable will be an open, frank and informal discussion on the land administration sector in Libya. A series of presentations, facilitated discussions and panel discussions on specific topics will take place. Small group discussions will complement the plenary sessions. The event will be in Arabic and English and simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

Key topics

Round table's discussions will revolve around key topics of interest. These are:

1. Roles and work of the Libyan institutions with land-related mandates and collaboration among them;
2. Collecting, storing and using for decision-making land related information;
3. The land and property registry;
4. Land markets and land prices;

5. Land-based taxation and revenue generation for local authorities;
6. Protection of housing, land and property rights and forced evictions in present times and over the past decades.
7. The legal framework. Destructive laws have been imposed during the 1977-2000 period, greatly contributing to land right violations.
8. The disputes' resolution system

Expected outcomes

Improved awareness and shared understanding of the land-related mandates and activities undertaken by the various institutions, organisations and partners in Libya. Better cohesion and improved relationship among land sector stakeholders. A set of recommendations for the way forward on which to build the next steps. A database containing the presentations made and a report of the outcomes of the discussions.