



**Statement by Mr Karam Hasanov, Chairperson of State Committee
on Property Issues, the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the 77th Session of
the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management
(Geneva, Switzerland, 13 September 2016)**

Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We can say with full confidence that the period from 2000 to 2016 has been marked in the history of Azerbaijan as a period of social and economic renaissance of the country. During this period, Azerbaijan saw significant progress in all areas. Our country has become one of the fastest developing countries in the world. The mere fact that the income of the population of Azerbaijan in the last 10 years has increased almost sevenfold is a clear evidence of stable economic development of the country. I'd like to note that over the past 10 years, there has not been a single area in the country that did not experience reforms or did not see the development.

One of these areas is the process of privatisation and state property management, introduction of a state register and unified real estate cadastre, improvement of the ownership and land relations, formation of an advanced address register as well as development of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure.

Housing is, and has been, an influential sector in the national economy of Azerbaijan like in other countries. Housing is both a sustainable element in the vibrant domestic economy as well as a sector for meeting people's needs. And according to the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, this should also be addressed through: i) Secure and neutral tenure; and ii) Cadastral and land registration information and services that support an environment conducive to investment in housing and the promotion of secure land and housing tenure.

In order to improve land administration, in 2004, the country began a new stage of establishing the legislative framework in the area of state registration of rights to real estate: the country had adopted the Law "On State Registration of Real Estate" and other legal acts, that was a major step in the area of introduction

of state registration of property ownership by a unified registration body in centralized manner. I want to note that even during those times the state registration of property and land ownership was being conducted by different bodies.

And in 2009, to improve governance and increase efficiency in the areas of state property management and state registration of rights to real estate, the State Committee on Property Issues was created, and, alongside with the state property privatisation and management issues, such activities as the state unified registration of land and real estate property as well as maintenance of a unified state cadastre and technical inventory of real estate were included into its mandates. Besides that, to centralize the land cadastre and land registration, last year, the State Land and Cartography Committee was abolished and its key functions were transferred to the State Committee on Property Issues. Today the State Committee on Property Issues implements its activity according to the existing legislation taking into account international best practices.

For instance, within the Real Estate Registration project – implemented jointly with the World Bank – we achieved our ambition of creating a unified automated system of registration, cadastre and land management, which will also contribute to the development of housing and land market.

Just to serve the business environment and property owners more transparently and efficiently, we carry out the necessary measurements. With taking into account the recommendations of the Geneva UN Charter, the UNECE Working Party on Land Administration, the UN FAO as well as INSPIRE initiatives and modern trends of European land administration system, most of the land administration services in Azerbaijan has been digitalized. Currently, more than 30 e-services for land administration and management are integrated into a portal of e-government of Azerbaijan. And this helps the services to be provided more transparent, in online regime and in more qualitative manner.

With the view of improvement of land administration and supporting security of tenure to ensure access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthy housing for all citizens, we have developed an up-to-date cadastre system, including digital cadastre data. Thus, these data are already available for almost the whole country. In order to promote the use of spatial, cadastral and land registration information and services to create an environment conducive to investment in housing and the security of land and housing tenure, in 2015,

Azerbaijan hosted a UNECE Working Party on Land Administration workshop on “Development of key registers in land administration in the UNECE region”.

Within the framework of increasing the functional and human capacity and applying international experience to the areas of state registration and unified real estate and land cadastre, we broaden the geography of bilateral cooperation with the relevant agencies of other states. We also attach a great importance to the cooperation with international organisations. We actively participate in the activities of the UNECE Working Party on Land Administration.

As I mentioned before, we are in the process of completing the National Spatial Data Infrastructure Concept, and it is going to be adopted soon. Besides, we have developed the unified Land Registration, Cadastre and Information System.

Of course, I cannot list all the relevant works we are carrying out in land administration due to the session agenda. Nevertheless, I'd like to be limited with the fact that according to the rating of “Doing Business”, Azerbaijan ranked 10th in property registration and 12th in business registration among 189 countries thanks to the reforms implemented in these areas.

Despite the noted successes, there are also areas in need of serious improvements. Those are mainly the improvement of private sector in conducting cadastral works and broadening cooperation with private sector, as well as developing professional skills of employees with the view of current requirements. We are working on those issues.

Dear colleagues, the Session of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management is one of the unique ways to share our experience in land administration as well, that supports an environment conducive to investment in housing and the promotion of secure land and housing tenure.

I'd like to thank the Committee and the UNECE Secretariat for giving us this opportunity to meet, and wish all my colleagues every success in achieving the goals in their countries.

Thank you.