

## **Welcome**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to this Symposium on behalf of Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. I would like to start by greeting the International Federation of Surveyors, the Kosovo Cadastral Agency and the UN-Habitat for organising this important Symposium. It is very much appreciated.

Secure access to land is a crucial factor in the eradication of food insecurity and poverty, which together with rural development form the mandate of FAO. Providing secure access to land is particularly complex in post conflict situations and particularly important as it is often one among the crucial factors for achieving sustainable peace.

FAO has provided technical assistance to improving access to land in a number of countries emerging from violent conflict within the context of food security, poverty alleviation and rural development. The Land Tenure Service of FAO is currently reviewing its experiences and those of its partners in order to identify key issues of land access and land administration in this context. This symposium serves well the latter process.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention that in the Central and Eastern Europe, FAO has supported member countries in various land issues such as rural property taxation (for financing of the decentralisation), land consolidation and real property markets. We have also helped a number of member countries in EU accession for improving their land tenure databases to meet the established European criteria.

Lastly, I would like to one more time to express my content for beeing able to participate in this symposium. Having lived in a conflicted country, I strongly feel the importance of working together for finding means to promote sustainable post conflict land administration. In such conditions, the secure access to land is a key for long term social and economic stability.

I want to wish for us all a good and useful symposium.