

## Morocco Declaration for Land Governance

20 February 2025 • Rabat, Morocco

The Third Arab Land Conference is an important milestone in advancing good land governance for the achievement of adequate housing and social, economic, cultural, environmental and peace dividends in the Arab region. As land sector stakeholders and participants of this Conference, representing governments, civil society, private sector, academia, professional bodies and local, international and regional organizations, we:

**Recall** the findings and recommendations of the two previous Arab Land Conferences, held in Dubai and Cairo in 2018 and 2021, respectively;

**Recognize** the challenges faced by people of the Arab region from climate change, land degradation, water scarcity and conflict which threaten access to land, adequate housing, peace and stability; we also recognize the many positive developments including advancement of property registration, use of innovative land management tools, and new technologies for improved monitoring and decision making;

**Acknowledge** the global and regional frameworks governing land and housing, such as the *New Urban Agenda*; the UN-Habitat and League of Arab States *Arab Strategy for Housing and Sustainable Urban Development*; the *Sustainable Development Goals*; and the *Voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security*.

We call on each other and all actors influencing the land sector in the Arab region with a sense of urgency and collective responsibility to take the following actions, which are based on the discussions, outcomes and recommendations of the Third Arab Land Conference.

### Agenda for Action

1. Enhance regional cooperation by using existing platforms to highlight the links between good land governance, adequate housing for all, sustainable development and food security. Form new partnerships between Arab States by supporting the development of joint technical and academic knowledge-sharing platforms to exchange best practices for addressing land issues in the Arab region.
2. Design sustainable, inclusive and, where appropriate, conflict-sensitive land-based investment strategies for urban regeneration and rural development. Ensure investments respect and protect land rights, contribute to long-term economic growth, create resilient communities and unlock opportunities for adequate housing, services and infrastructure, while addressing challenges such as land fragmentation, urban sprawl and environmental degradation.
3. Develop policy and legislation for sustainable, adequate and affordable housing and for informal settlement regularization and prevention. Promote the development of land use plans and land management approaches that promote compact urban development and prevent unplanned urban sprawl to protect agricultural land. Design fit-for-purpose land administration systems and leverage modern technology to scale up inclusive approaches with the resources available.
4. Innovate land administration systems through digital transformation of tenure, cadastral and topographic data to enhance efficiency and transparency. Strengthen geospatial data infrastructure, property valuation, taxation, land use policies and spatial planning. Develop inter-operable platforms to analyze

and share spatial, legal and land-use data to improve urban areas and regularize informal settlements. Link digital reforms with legal and institutional reforms to support sustainable, inclusive development.

5. Develop capacities and partnerships that improve land and housing management in different contexts.
6. Provide the necessary and urgent support to countries in need of recovery and reconstruction, including supporting the efforts of the Palestinian government to rebuild the affected areas in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank through the relief and early recovery plan in the Gaza Strip prepared by the Palestinian government and regional and international organizations.
7. Develop integrated land use policies that support national food security, food sovereignty and rural development, while addressing environmental and climate challenges. These policies should ensure secure and equitable land tenure and support farmers in their use of sustainable agricultural methods to prevent and reverse land degradation. These policies will enhance resilience to climate change, empower male and female food producers and contribute to sustainable rural transformation.
8. Advocate for gender-responsive land governance in national and regional policy frameworks. Prioritize women's land and property rights in all stages of land policy development, from legislative design to implementation, and promote women's participation in decision-making processes on land tenure, agricultural policy and land-use planning, for equitable and sustainable outcomes. Secure long-term commitments from Arab governments to protect women's land rights and inheritance rights.
9. Create a legal framework to facilitate private investment, including in post-crisis recovery, that respects and protects people's land rights. Strengthen public land management, recognizing that good land governance also protects private property, and encourage partnerships between the private sector, governments and civil society to use technology to modernize land records, streamline property transactions and develop smart urban development strategies.
10. Integrate land professionals into decision-making processes and international dialogue, where their expertise can shape land policy development and governance initiatives. By leveraging their knowledge, land professionals can help governments, local authorities and institutions design policies that are gender-responsive and meet the needs of both urban and rural communities, which will foster sustainable development, social inclusion and responsible land use.
11. Strengthen collaboration between governments and civil society, including women and youth, to foster inclusive, non-discriminatory land governance practices. Develop multi-stakeholder platforms to enhance civil society participation in decision-making processes on land rights, sustainability and planning to promote community-led policies that prioritize equitable land access and climate resilience.
12. Increase the role and capacity of academic institutions and researchers through training workshops to equip scholars with the tools and knowledge needed to resolve land governance challenges. Support the development of specialized research and education programs in land management to improve the evidence base and enable governments to design more effective strategies for sustainable land development.

Rabat, 20 February 2025.