Enforcement of Mandatory Cadastral Registration in Eritrea

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SUMMARY

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Proper management of land and other immovable property requires accurate information for policy-makers. In Eritrea, voluntary registration of land and other immovable property existed for over a century. But the absence of mandatory registration system has been a handicap for proper management of land and its resources. In 1997, the Eritrean Registration Law introduced a legal mandatory registration of land and other immovable property built over land. It was a necessity for individual or legal person's rights over land and ownership of buildings, transfer of land rights and ownership of buildings.

A well-functioning cadastral system is inconceivable without mandatory registration. It is the basis of social stability, welfare of people and sustainable development. Secure rights over land provide 'sense of ownership and belongingness' and encourage development. Despite the legal proclamation of mandatory registration and attempts made at implementation, the enforcement of mandatory cadastral registration in Eritrea remains largely ineffective. Reactivating the legislation is more than ever before necessary for comprehensive proper management of land and its resources.

This paper attempts to elucidate the crucial role mandatory registration plays in the management of immovable property, explores the requirements of a modern cadastral system and the gaps in Eritrea and points out the course of action that needs serious consideration.

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