

INVESTMENT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING XXXVII

“On Legal Certainty of Property – Progress and Challenges”

Tirana, 20 April 2026, 15:00 – 17:00

The meeting was chaired by the Minister of Economy and Innovation, Ms. Delina Ibrahimaj, Chair of the Investment Council (IC). The meeting was attended by 16 IC members and 30 observers, including representatives of local and foreign business associations and public institutions in Albania.

I. Opening of the Meeting by Minister Delina Ibrahimaj, Chair of the IC

In her opening message, Minister Ibrahimaj welcomed the participants and emphasized the importance of the topic for the country’s business climate, describing it as a highly important and historically challenging issue. She noted that she would not go into technical details, as these would be presented by the IC Secretariat.

She further highlighted the Government’s progress in the digitalisation of public administration and services, noting that more than 95% are now available online. She referred to ongoing efforts to simplify and streamline administrative processes (through deregulation and service re-engineering), particularly those related to the business sector, in cooperation with the relevant institutions. The Minister also announced a new legislative initiative aimed at ensuring that all draft normative acts assess whether they regulate, overregulate, or facilitate service delivery processes, with the objective of accelerating and simplifying their provision.

With regard to the cadastre, she highlighted the ongoing digitalisation process of its services, which forms part of the Growth Plan and the Reform Agenda agreed with the European Union. She acknowledged the progress made in this area and noted that more time would be allocated to the Director of the Cadastre (present in the meeting) to provide a more detailed presentation.

In the following remarks, the Minister highlighted the need to enhance the long-term sustainability of the IC, referencing ongoing consultations with the EBRD and SECO. The Government aims to build sustainable and effective structures, that can be fully operational beyond donor support. In this context, the Minister emphasized the need for consolidation of several existing business councils under a comprehensive umbrella framework. Minister Ibrahimaj highlighted, both as the current IC chair and previously as a member at various stages, that the IC stands out as a leading public-private dialogue platform, for its professionalism and effective bridging between the business community and government. Building on this foundation, the aim is to broaden the scope of the Council aiming at the facilitation of the consultation and discussions where businesses and government participate as equals and provide recommendations, while having professional structures that engage in analysis and follow up of the recommendations.

To conclude, the Minister emphasised that any subsequent decisions will be shaped through consultation with IC members, and proposed that the next IC meeting include an in-depth discussion on this topic, based also on a comprehensive briefing that shall be prepared.

Ms Ekaterina Solovova, EBRD, said that EBRD welcomes the Government’s initiative to review a sustainable model for a platform of dialogue such as the Investment Council. She noted,

that as discussed with the Minister and SECO, partner and donor to this initiative, the Bank is keen to consider new ideas and approaches, provided that the fundamental principles underpinning this platform are maintained. She highlighted that the IC is widely recognised as one of the most effective forums for public-private dialogue, a reputation reinforced by its members, the recent external evaluations, and the celebration of its tenth anniversary. Ms Solovova stressed the need to balance the preservation of its existing principles with the prioritisation of sustainability, adding that this process should be conducted in a structured manner and with the involvement of IC members. She also supported the Minister's proposal to continue the discussion on this matter at the next IC meeting.

Mr Philipp Arnold, Embassy of Switzerland, highlighted the Swiss Government's commitment, through its State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), in supporting the IC since 2019. He considered the current moment appropriate to discuss the Council's long-term sustainability and how this format can be preserved in the future, stressing that this is a matter requiring the active involvement of members themselves in defining what should be maintained and what can be improved. He further underlined the importance of the Council's independence, as well as the professional role of the Secretariat in preparing topics and in-depth analyses that serve as the basis for discussions during meetings. In conclusion, he expressed Switzerland's readiness to continue its support and to contribute to ongoing discussions on the sustainability and further development of the IC.

II. Digitalisation Progress and Modernisation of Cadastre Services: Progress and Challenges at State Cadastre Agency (SCA)

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, welcomed the opportunity for an open discussion on property-related issues and presented the main progress achieved by the institution, noting that 2025 has been an intensive year for digitalisation and initial registration processes. She reported that approximately 90% of cadastral records have been digitised, while the full scanning of documentation (around 54 million pages) has been completed, with the finalisation of full card digitisation expected by June 2026. In parallel, work is ongoing on the digitisation of cadastral maps with the support of the EU and UNOPS, with the aim of achieving a fully digital cadastre by the end of 2026. She further highlighted the expansion of automated services and their increased volume, aimed at improving both speed and quality of service delivery, as well as ongoing work across 177 urban and rural cadastral zones under the initial registration process, which is key for property formalisation and facilitating economic circulation of assets. In terms of performance, she reported 2.5 million services delivered in 2025 (+35% compared to 2024) and 260,000 property certificates issued (+53%), alongside a significant reduction in processing time to an average of 2–3 days above the statutory deadlines. She also explained the functioning of the application system via notaries and the e-Albania platform, noting that around 60% of applications are submitted through notaries, while there remains a need to improve the accuracy of applications and payments. She acknowledged the existence of perceptions of corruption, while underlining that the institution is implementing its 2025–2027 integrity plan and strengthened control and monitoring measures, concluding with an openness to further suggestions and discussion.

III. Presentation by the Secretariat on the analysis of cadastre digitalisation and administration in relation to legal certainty of property and the investment climate

Ms Diana Leka (Angoni), IC Secretariat, presented the key findings of the Secretariat's analysis on cadastre digitalisation and administration, focusing on their impact on the legal certainty of property rights and the investment climate. The analysis, based on 146 responses and consultations with businesses and institutions, identified challenges related to access to services, standardisation of procedures, additional documentation requirements, delays, fees, and institutional coordination. The findings highlighted the need for improved access to data, greater harmonisation of procedures, and enhanced transparency. Key recommendations include standardising procedures and documentation, expanding controlled access for professionals, improving transparency of services and fees, strengthening complaint-handling and performance monitoring mechanisms, and ensuring more active involvement of the business community in monitoring reforms.

IV. Summary of Main Discussions

Mr Zak Topuzi, Albanian Tourism Association, noted that issues related to land ownership and the incomplete digitalisation of cadastral data continue to create uncertainty and delays in project development, particularly in relation to construction permits. He explained that, in some cases, information on land status or designated use is inconsistent or differs across institutions, making it difficult for businesses to plan investments with confidence. He also highlighted that inaccuracies in property registration and weak inter-institutional coordination may generate confusion and increase risks for investors. In this context, he stressed the need for a unified, fully digitalised and reliable property data system that ensures clarity and predictability for both citizens and businesses.

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, clarified that concerns related to the registration of construction permits are being addressed through the development of a digital building permit registry, established in cooperation with the relevant institutions (the National Territorial Planning Agency, municipalities, and notaries). This system aims to ensure that data entry is carried out directly by the issuing authorities, thereby increasing transparency and reducing manual procedures and administrative delays. She noted that the system is in its final testing phase and is expected to begin registering the first permits shortly.

Regarding changes in land use (local development plans), she explained that these fall outside the competence of the Cadastre, as they are the responsibility of territorial planning authorities and municipalities, in coordination with the relevant institutions that define land use designation and development intensity.

She further underlined that the digitalisation process is highly complex and involves a large volume of data, which may occasionally lead to technical inaccuracies during processing. However, she clarified that these do not affect ownership rights or imply any transfer of property, but rather constitute data errors that are promptly corrected within the system. She stressed that ownership remains unchanged and that there is no cause for concern, as any identified discrepancies are immediately addressed and corrected by the competent institutions.

Minister Delina Ibrahimaj, confirmed that the cases raised should be assessed on an individual basis, while clarifying that changes in land use (local development plans) fall under the competence of municipalities, which approve development plans in line with public interest and their territorial strategies.

She also positively acknowledged the digital building permit registry, underlining that this system will help reduce existing issues by ensuring that data is pre-registered and accessed in a unified

manner by the relevant institutions. According to her, this will prevent inaccuracies and subsequent changes that create uncertainty regarding property rights.

Mr Zak Topuzi, Albanian Tourism Association, clarified that in the cases mentioned, the relevant permits and institutional approvals, including those from prefectures, had been obtained, while stressing that the issue relates to a lack of inter-institutional coordination in the documentation process.

Mr Erjon Harizi, Association of Builders, raised one of the main issues faced by developers in the old neighbourhoods of Tirana, such as the Pazari i Ri area, which relates to the historical approach to property registration and urban development before and after the country's transition from a communist to a democratic system. He explained that, in the past, there was no comprehensive and standardised cadastre system, which resulted in partial property registration. In some cases, citizens did not register small access roads or shared spaces, considering them as state-owned, while in other cases only the built-up footprint of buildings was registered as property. According to him, this fragmented approach to registration has created present-day ambiguities and difficulties in urban development and construction processes in these areas.

Later, during the formalisation process and the establishment of the modern cadastre system, these unregistered or unclear spaces in the documentation were often recorded as state property, due to the absence of clear proof of private ownership or complete historical documentation confirming their actual status. At the same time, informal urban development in certain areas has led to discrepancies between the factual use of land (e.g. access roads used by the community or spaces partially developed by private actors) and their subsequent legal registration. This has created a gap between the situation on the ground and the legal records in the system.

This historical mismatch between the “factual situation” and the “legal status” is currently creating obstacles to development, as any construction intervention or investment requires clarification of ownership and land status. This often entails lengthy institutional verification and correction processes.

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, clarified that the current legal framework, through Council of Ministers Decision No. 827 and Law No. 20/2020, addresses issues related to old properties, including houses built before 1991, yards in use, and cases where full ownership documentation is missing. She stressed that these processes are among the most complex, as they often involve inherited properties and family disputes over co-ownership. For this reason, the current legal system links the formalisation of property rights to possession as a practical solution to address the complex ownership history that emerged after 1991. She added that, although this approach may generate complaints from different parties, it remains the applicable legal basis, and the relevant procedures continue to be implemented accordingly for property formalisation.

Mr Edvin Preçe, Pro-Eksport Albania Association, stated that from the business perspective, the issues identified in the survey reflect the on-the-ground reality, particularly with regard to cases of repeated payments for services. He underlined that this situation generates additional costs for businesses and undermines process efficiency, creating financial and administrative burdens that often push entities to resort to non-standard practices in order to complete procedures. He called on the relevant institutions to address these issues, with a focus on reducing costs and simplifying procedures for both businesses and individuals.

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, noted that concerns regarding fees do not fully align with the institution's expectations, stressing that the State Cadastre Agency operates as a self-financing

institution, supported both by the state budget and international partners in reform and digitalisation processes. She clarified that cadastral service fees are standardised and relatively low compared to similar legal services, citing as an example that a property registration service costs around ALL 5,000, while notarial services for property transactions can reach significantly higher amounts depending on the value of the asset.

She further explained that the current system also includes a degree of flexibility for citizens and businesses, through a limited number of free-of-charge applications (three cases), which allow users to complete or correct documentation without additional cost. This, she said, is intended to avoid penalising users for inaccuracies or missing documentation at the initial application stage.

She added that one of the main institutional challenges remains the quality of responses and the accurate guidance of citizens and businesses throughout the process, noting that each application requires time and administrative resources. For this reason, the limitation on the number of free applications has been introduced as a balance between facilitating users and ensuring effective management of institutional capacity.

Mr Spiro Brumbull, Albanian Association of Banks, underlined the fundamental importance of property rights for the functioning of a market economy, stressing that without a clear property system there can be no transactions or sustainable financial development. He acknowledged the improvements made in recent years in property administration and digitalisation, noting that, despite remaining challenges, the current situation is significantly better compared to previous periods, and that institutional cooperation has contributed to the gradual resolution of outstanding issues.

In continuation, he raised several specific issues directly related to the functioning of the banking market.

- *First*, he stressed the need to improve access to cadastral systems, arguing that banks require direct and continuous access to property information, as the lending process relies on the verification of collateral. According to him, such access is essential for financing efficiency and should not be limited to notaries or other intermediary actors.
- *Second*, he raised the issue of inconsistencies in property registration across different stages of development, particularly for properties under construction (unfinished buildings at the structural stage) sold through preliminary purchase agreements. He noted that in such cases there is often a lack of full synchronisation between existing records and the final registration of ownership, which creates difficulties at the stage of final formalisation.
- *Third*, he drew attention to the high cost of transactions, proposing that consideration be given to introducing a cap on notarial fees, as percentage-based charges increase significantly in high-value transactions and create a considerable burden for both businesses and individuals.

In conclusion, he thanked the institutions for their cooperation and underlined that, although some issues remain in the process of being resolved, the parties are on a common path toward addressing them.

Minister Delina Ibrahimaj, in response to the issue of data access, clarified that the principle of institutional information sharing operates on a reciprocal basis. She stressed that, just as banks require access to cadastral data for verification and lending purposes, relevant institutions also operate with other specialised registers, such as the Credit Registry, which is administered by the banking system and the Bank of Albania. She clarified that banks have direct access, through their institutional accounts, to the relevant systems in order to verify clients' status and financial information, thereby confirming the effective interoperability of institutional systems.

She also underlined that services provided by the SCA are fee-based, in line with its self-financing model, while a portion of development and reform activities is supported by European Union funds and the state budget. According to her, the digitalisation process will significantly improve the speed and ease of access to cadastral information, substantially reducing the time required to obtain data.

Regarding notarial fees, she stressed that any intervention in this area requires careful legal and institutional assessment, given that it involves a regulated profession and an independent chamber of notaries. For this reason, any changes must be carried out through an inclusive consultation process with all stakeholders, including notaries.

She proposed that the discussion should not be limited to existing recommendations, but should be followed by a more in-depth analysis of cadastral service processes, taking into account business input, and be brought back to the table for further discussion.

Ms Ritva Heikkinen, EU Delegation, appreciated the ongoing cooperation with Albanian institutions in the field of property rights and cadastre, underlining that this reform remains essential both for strengthening the rule of law and improving the business climate.

She noted that unclear property titles continue to be one of the main challenges reported by businesses and are therefore addressed as an important component of the reform agenda and the EU integration process. In this context, she reaffirmed the EU Delegation's continued support, in cooperation with institutions such as UNOPS and the Council of Europe, for the modernisation of the cadastral system and the strengthening of institutional integrity.

She informed that, under the Reform Agenda, the European Union has allocated approximately EUR 40 million to support reforms in this area, stressing that these funds are linked to tangible progress in implementation rather than being solely tied to specific institutions.

She further stressed the importance of accelerating reforms in the field of property rights in the context of the EU accession process, acknowledging the commitment of Albanian institutions while also underlining that important steps still remain to be completed.

In particular, she called for integrity plans not to remain at a purely formal approval level, but to be effectively implemented in practice, alongside improvements in internal procedures, digitalisation, and land policies. According to her, these steps are key to achieving the reform objectives and ensuring full access to financial support until the end of 2027.

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, stated that access to cadastral data is directly linked to the current legal framework, which classifies property ownership information as confidential. She noted that this is not a technical decision of the institution, but a political and legal choice, where different countries adopt different approaches: some, such as France, Italy, and Germany, follow a more conservative model in which information on property owners is not publicly accessible, while others, such as Sweden, apply a more open "open data" model that includes broader datasets on citizens.

She clarified that in Albania, only cadastral map information is currently publicly accessible, while data on property owners can be obtained only with the authorization of the property holder. She described this as a legal safeguard for the protection of personal data and for preventing misuse of information.

She further emphasized that any changes in the level of transparency and openness of data require a thorough political and institutional analysis, taking into account the balance between transparency and personal data protection. For this reason, the institution is currently assessing

options to improve interoperability between systems, in particular between the notarial system and the cadastre, in order to avoid manual data re-entry and increase efficiency through automation.

She added that these developments require investment and financial support to further improve digital systems, which are currently under development and are partly supported through reform-related funds. She also underlined the need for additional funding to accelerate the digital transformation process.

In closing, she also addressed issues related to apartment off-plan purchase agreements and the transfer of ownership, stressing the need for clear legal and documentary continuity. She acknowledged that in practice there have also been cases of misuse, for which citizens often approach the institution, even though their resolution does not always fall within the direct competence of the cadastre. She concluded by underlining that the full digitalisation of registries is expected to significantly reduce such issues in the future.

Mr Reinaldo Pipiria, NAREA, commended the work of the Council and the cooperation with the Cadastre, highlighting a distinction between institutional efforts and political will, particularly with regard to data access. He argued that access to data is primarily a matter of political decision-making, underlining that the European integration process requires rapid progress in areas such as digitalisation, system interoperability, and property administration.

Mr Pipiria also referred to the EU regulatory framework on data (including the Open Data Directive, INSPIRE, and high-value datasets), stressing the need for alignment with European standards and the practices of Member States and neighbouring countries, which apply access models based on “legitimate interest”. He noted that controlled and secure access to data would improve transparency, facilitate transactions, and support compliance with Anti-Money Laundering (AML) requirements, thereby contributing to a more efficient functioning of the real estate market and the EU integration process.

Mr Bardhyl Baltëza, Recycling Association, raised concerns regarding the lack of consistent enforcement of urban planning in certain industrial zones. He cited the example of his recycling facility operating within an industrial area, around which residential construction has been permitted, creating conflicts between industrial activity and residential use. According to him, this situation has led not only to complaints and institutional interventions against the business, but also to operational constraints on production activities.

Mr Baltëza noted that similar cases are evident in other industrial areas, where decisions on construction permits are not always aligned with the original land-use designation. He called for a clearer and more coordinated institutional approach, stressing the need to preserve industrial zones for their intended function and to avoid land-use conflicts arising from incompatible developments.

Mr Agim Rrapaj, Albanian Agrobusiness Council (KASH), stressed that the digitalisation of agricultural land represents an urgent priority, particularly due to its direct link with investments in the agricultural sector. He raised concerns that the current digitalisation process led by the Cadastre is not always aligned with the real investment priorities of the private sector, resulting in some high-value economic areas remaining undigitised while others of lower importance are addressed earlier.

Mr Rrapaj called for closer coordination between institutions and the private sector, as well as the development of a dedicated strategy for the digitalisation of agricultural land, with the Cadastre playing a central role. He emphasised that without such an integrated strategy, the digitalisation process in the agricultural sector cannot be effectively achieved.

Ms Albana Karapanço, AmCham, appreciated the Investment Council discussion as highly relevant for both citizens and businesses, noting that the American Chamber has closely followed property-related issues and remains committed to providing further recommendations.

She underlined that investors' perception of the property system is shaped not only by expectations but also by real experience, suggesting the need for continuous improvement of institutional processes. Ms Karapanço stressed the importance of standardising procedures and establishing a structured complaints database, which would help systematically identify and address recurring issues.

She also raised the issue of human capacity and training within the Cadastre, noting that the frequent transfer of files between legal officers and the repeated request for documentation create additional costs for both the institution and businesses. Improving these processes is essential for strengthening legal certainty and facilitating investment.

Mr Balazs Revesz, FIAA, appreciated the progress achieved in improving and digitalising processes in recent years, but stressed that challenges for businesses remain significant and require continuous attention. He underlined that, in the functioning of the Cadastre, time is a critical factor for business, noting that delays in service delivery create space for informal practices and weaken system efficiency. For this reason, he proposed strengthening institutional and individual accountability for compliance with legal deadlines, as well as introducing both penalising and compensatory mechanisms in cases of delays in service provision.

Mr Revesz argued that increased accountability and strict adherence to deadlines are important instruments in the fight against informality and corruption, alongside training and monitoring. He further emphasised the need to move beyond operational issues within the Cadastre and address necessary legal changes, expressing the readiness of the Foreign Investors Association to contribute with concrete recommendations to this process.

Ms Diana Leka, IC Secretariat, responded by noting that the proposed recommendation is directly linked to institutional integrity and accountability, which are part of the Investment Council's broader set of recommendations on this topic. She stated that, going forward, in cooperation with the Cadastre and relevant stakeholders, concrete steps could be taken to operationalise this recommendation in practice, turning it into implementable measures.

Ms Aurora Sulçe, Diaspora Business Chamber, thanked the Secretariat for the presentation and the findings of the report, focusing in particular on business perceptions regarding the effects of the digitalisation of cadastral services. She pointed out an inconsistency identified in the report, whereby digitalisation is perceived by businesses as a factor that reduces operational costs and increases profitability, but is not accompanied by a clear perception of reduced corruption, which she noted appears contradictory to the theoretical expectations of the reform.

Ms Sulçe underlined that, although these are perceptions, corruption remains one of the key concerns for both businesses and the diaspora, particularly in a context where Albania aims to attract foreign investment and strengthen international economic ties. She suggested the need for a deeper analysis of the actual effects of digitalisation on reducing corruption, in order to better assess the effectiveness of the reform in the cadastre sector and its impact on the investment climate, adding that both active and passive forms of corruption require more thorough institutional reflection and response. In her view, indicators would normally be expected to move in a logical correlation and in the same direction, while the fact that the graph shows different correlations across different dimensions points to the need for more careful interpretation of the data. She clarified that this does not necessarily imply inaccuracies, but rather highlights the need for a deeper analysis to better understand the underlying reasons for differing perceptions.

Ms Diana Leka, IC Secretariat, responded that, despite searches for prior studies, no previous reference on the issue had been found that would allow for a comparative analysis in 2026. Regarding recommendations on corruption, she clarified that the Secretariat had been careful in formulating precise questions across three pillars, in order to clearly identify the issue and avoid duplication with previous recommendations. In this context, she agreed that the matter requires a deeper and more structured analysis.

Ms Ines Muçostepa, Union of Chambers of Commerce, stressed that the concern raised regarding business perception should be addressed with greater focus, despite the significant progress made in the digitalisation and modernisation of the cadastre. She suggested that an important area for improvement would be the more active involvement of businesses in monitoring the reform, by creating institutional spaces where their input is integrated into governance and implementation processes. According to her, this would contribute both to increasing the transparency of the reform and improving its perception within the business community. Ms. Muçostepa also proposed strengthening complaint-handling mechanisms as a concrete tool for addressing grievances and reducing remaining negative perceptions. In conclusion, she emphasised that the progress achieved in digitalisation and in addressing inherited issues should be acknowledged, while further improvements could focus specifically on increasing business participation and strengthening institutional response mechanisms.

Ms Gentiana Brati, National Chamber of Notaries, thanked the Cadastre for the ongoing and constructive cooperation with the National Chamber of Notaries, describing it as fruitful and stable over time. She underlined that, despite the challenges and practical issues that arise in day-to-day practice, institutional cooperation remains essential for addressing and resolving them effectively. Ms Brati also referred to the issue of notarial fees, noting that the National Chamber of Notaries has submitted to the relevant institutions a detailed study on the need for their revision, as these fees have not been updated since 2013 and no longer reflect the current realities of work and operational costs. She reiterated the importance of institutional dialogue and thanked the panel for raising issues of relevance to the sector.

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, responded to several issues raised during the discussion.

- Regarding access to property data, she clarified that the Albanian legal framework classifies such data as confidential, reflecting a policy choice that varies across countries. She noted that some states (such as France, Italy, and Germany) apply more restrictive approaches, while others (such as Sweden) follow more open data models. In Albania, access is granted only on a legal basis or with authorisation from the property owner, emphasising the need to balance transparency with personal data protection.
- She also underlined ongoing efforts to improve system interoperability and service delivery, including cooperation with UNOPS and other partners in analysing work processes. As an example, she mentioned the integration of the notarial system with the cadastre, which would enable automatic data transfer and reduce administrative burden.
- Regarding digitalisation and institutional reforms, she stressed that the process requires continuous investment and inter-institutional coordination, including support from the National Agency for Information Society (AKSHI) and the use of reform funds for further developments.
- On service quality and institutional accountability, she acknowledged that delays and inaccurate responses remain a challenge, but underlined that internal controls, audits, and administrative measures are in place, including disciplinary sanctions where necessary. She also noted the high workload, with approximately 3,000 applications processed per day nationwide.
- On corruption, she reiterated the institution's commitment to zero tolerance, referring to recent criminal complaints filed by SCA. She stated that corruption should be addressed as a two-sided phenomenon requiring responsibility and response from all involved parties.

- She further highlighted *strengthened integrity reforms and internal rules*, including the adoption of a new internal regulation after several years. These reforms aim not only to improve institutional efficiency, but also to strengthen individual accountability and enhance service quality for citizens and businesses.
- She noted that *regular training programmes* are conducted, with an annual training plan in place, including complex topics such as digital map management. She underlined that, as in any institution and in the private sector, key challenges remain limited human resources and high workload. In this context, discussions are ongoing with UNOPS to review the internal working processes to eliminate any delays. The objective is to review workflow stages and identify points where bureaucracy or excessive discretion is created, to improve efficiency and strengthen staff capacity in a more structured and practical manner.

Ms Ana Sekulic Pribicevic, UNOPS, thanked the IC, representatives of the EU Delegation, the Director of the Cadastre, and partners for the cooperation on behalf of the EU-funded project aimed at strengthening property rights and improving cadastral services in Albania. She underlined that the project, implemented in support of the EU integration process and rule of law standards, is still in its early stages but already includes several key activities, such as the digitisation of approximately 33,000 cadastral maps and corresponding sheets, as well as a quality control process. An important component of the project is the review of SCA work processes, with the aim of improving efficiency, transparency, and the digitalisation of services across the entire public service value chain. She clarified that the project is currently in its initial phase, during which the methodology and scope are being defined and engagement with key institutional stakeholders and interested parties is ongoing. She emphasised that the expected outcomes are not only analytical but also operational, through the standardisation of processes and their user-oriented redesign. In conclusion, she appreciated the recommendations and contributions of the IC and expressed readiness to continue cooperation.

Ms Anita Shushku, Albanian Renewable Energy Association (AREA), emphasised the importance of legal certainty as the foundation of any investment and a key element for the country's economic transformation. She noted that the discussion should go beyond cadastral processes and focus on strengthening legal certainty over property, as well as broadening its concept to include investment rights, in line with European practice. Ms Shushku raised concerns about the uncertainty that citizens and businesses may face in cases where property boundaries are altered or where historical and technical mapping errors create ambiguities, stressing the need for clear, transparent, and accessible procedures to address such cases. She also underlined that digitalisation, while a modernising step, must be accompanied by robust rules and effective error-correction mechanisms in order to avoid surprises and insecurity for property owners. In conclusion, she proposed that the IC discussion be broadened to include legal certainty of investments as an integral part of the reform, stressing that without this safeguard, any efforts to improve the cadastre remain insufficient to ensure a stable investment climate.

Ms Lorena Goxhobelli, SCA, stated that legal certainty of property is the fundamental element and ultimate objective of all processes related to cadastre and property rights, grounded both in constitutional protection and European conventions. She noted that Albania carries a complex history of property titles, where post-1991 processes—including agricultural land allocation, restitution and compensation, and initial registrations—are still ongoing and often incomplete, keeping the system in a transitional state. According to her, the main challenges relate both to overlapping titles, which are resolved through the courts when legal in nature, and to inconsistencies between earlier titles and current on-the-ground measurements, resulting from initial inaccuracies in land distribution and registration processes.

She explained that correcting and updating the public register remains a complex process, requiring the review and consolidation of data at cadastral zone level, often with significant social and legal challenges, particularly when existing property rights are affected. In this context, she underlined that while the cadastre is often the institution where issues become visible, the challenges stem from a broader chain of historical and legal processes. For this reason, she stressed that the discussion should remain focused on strengthening legal certainty as a key priority.

Ms Laura Plaku, AIDA, emphasised the importance of the discussion on legal certainty of property and investments, considering it a fundamental element for the investment climate and the development of strategic projects. She clarified that, in the case of strategic investors—particularly when projects are developed on state-owned land—legal certainty over property is directly linked to the legal security of the investment, while for other investments this security is ensured through the relevant contractual frameworks, including concession agreements, which provide mechanisms for risk mitigation. Ms. Plaku underlined that, to date, there have been no cases where the state has expropriated private owners on behalf of strategic investors, despite the existence of such a mechanism in the legal framework, and noted that in practice the process requires direct agreement between the investor and the property owner. She also explained that the current law on strategic investments is approaching the end of its validity period and is under review for a unified legal framework on investments, which is expected to address more clearly issues related to legal certainty of both property and investments, as areas requiring further attention and strengthening in the legislation.

V. Closing of the meeting

At the conclusion of the discussion, Ms. Leka thanked the participants for their contributions and cooperation, noting that, despite the meeting exceeding its scheduled time, the topic was highly important and involved substantial issues that justified the extended debate. She underlined that all recommendations and comments gathered during the discussion would be forwarded to the relevant institutions and further followed up through a joint action plan, with the aim of ensuring their implementation and monitoring going forward. In the end, she declared the meeting closed.

List of Participants

Government representatives

1. Ms Delina Ibrahimaj, Chair of the Investment Council/Minister of Economy and Innovation
2. Ms Laura Plaku, CEO, AIDA

Business representatives

1. Mr Bashkim Sykja, Chief of Staff, Tirana Chamber of Commerce and Industry, delegated by the Chamber President, Mr. Nikolin Jaka
2. Ms Ines Muçostepa, Chairperson, Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry
3. Mr Balazs Revez, President, Foreign Investors Association of Albania (FIAA)
4. Ms Aurora Sulçe, delegated by the President of the Albanian Diaspora Business Chamber, Mr. Ardian Lekaj
5. Ms Antonela Hako, Chairperson, Women's Economic Chamber (DHEG)
6. Ms Albana Karapanço, Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Intellectual Property, AmCham, delegated by the Chamber President, Mr. Grant Van Cleve
7. Mr Spiro Brumbulli, Secretary General, Albanian Banking Association, delegated by the Chair of the Supervisory Board, Mr. Bledar Shella
8. Mr Denald George Tafani, President, Hellenic Business Association in Albania
9. Ms Ardita Seknaj, Secretary General, ICC Albania, delegated by the President, Mr. Nicholas A. Rana
10. Mr Bardhyl Baltëza, CEO, Edipack sh.p.k./Chair, Recycling Association of Albania (*ad-hoc*)
11. Mr. Zak Topuzi, CEO, Hotel Mondial/Vice Chair, Albanian Tourism Association (*ad-hoc*)

International partners

1. Ms Ritva Heikkinen, Head of Cooperation, EU Delegation
2. Ms Ekaterina Solovova, Head of Office, EBRD Albania
3. Ms Laura Qorlaze, Country Representative, IFC

Absentees:

1. Ms. Natasha Ahmetaj, Deputy Governor, Bank of Albania
2. Mr. Massimiliano Paolucci, Country Manager, World Bank in Albania
3. Mr. Davide Rogai, President, Confindustria Albania
4. Mr. Valer Pinderi, President, Albanian E-Commerce Association (AECA)

Guests/observers:

1. Mr. Philipp Arnold, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Switzerland
2. Ms. Lorena Goxhobelli, Director General, State Cadastre Agency (SCA)
3. Mr. Andi Proko, Director, State Cadastre Agency (SCA)
4. Ms. Romina Kostani, Deputy Director General, AKSHI
5. Ms. Nevila Repishti, Director, e-Albania Government Portal Directorate
6. Ms. Gentiana Brati, Representative of the National Chamber of Notaries
7. Mr. Erjon Harizi, Chair of the Board, Builders Association

8. Mr. Reinaldo Pipiria, CEO, National Association of Real Estate (NAREA)
9. Mr. Agim Rrapaj, Chair, Albanian Agrobusiness Council (KASH)
10. Ms. Marinela Jazoj, Executive Director, Foreign Investors Association of Albania (FIAA)
11. Mr. Juljan Saraçi, Chair, Alliance of Freelance Professionals (APL)
12. Mr. Edvin Preņçe, Chair, Pro-Export Albania Association (PEA)
13. Ms. Helisabeta Caco, Executive Director, Greek Business Association in Albania
14. Ms. Marjeta Xhabrahimi (Kodra), Head of Office, Advantage Austria
15. Ms. Tiziana Domi, Coordinator, SWISSA
16. Ms. Ema Kasapi, British Chamber of Commerce in Albania
17. Ms. Anita Shushku, Representative, AREA Association
18. Ms. Detiona Troka, Policy and Advocacy Manager, AmCham
19. Ms. Endrita Xhaferaj, Senior Advisor, EBRD
20. Mr. Peter Danis, EU Delegation
21. Ms. Ledia Muço, Advisor, EU Delegation
22. Ms. Ana Sekulic Pribicevic, Senior Project Manager, UNOPS
23. Ms. Sigita Stafa, Programme Officer, Embassy of Switzerland
24. Ms. Erinda Fino, National Economic Council (NEC)
25. Ms. Aida Hoxha, Public Oversight Board (BMP)