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The Right to Land: To Whom Belongs after a Reconciliation Law in Egypt

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ABSTRACT

A revolutionary book by De Soto to formalize land tenure by changing “dead capital” to “life capital” has become the trademark in Egypt of issuing a temporary reconciliation law of 2019 and its amendment to approve a legal certificate to the violators against a certain fee. The question is does this law legalize informal housing? Is it enough to introduce a legal certificate to secure land tenure for the violators? How would this law apply on the ground? Depending on the deductive methodology, this paper traces sociotechnical transitions concerning legalizing the status quo of building/land, tenure security, real-estate markets (formal/informal) caused by laws on buildings violations reconciliation. The idea is to take a step back and look at a wide angle of the problem in the future to arrive at a clear picture of the influences of the introduction of a new law on the land market, before making a decision. The paper assumes that the temporary reconciliation law in Egypt is opening the debate on the alteration of land management to govern the status quo of the chaos of the right to land. It concludes this temporary reconciliation law has created a state of decayed/wealth, social inclusion/exclusion of the bottom of the social pyramid nevertheless to whom the justification is affected.

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1. Introduction

Land is the main component of urban development, and it is also the source of individual and communal identity, the basis for shelter, and it is considered as financing for transit-oriented development (Home, 2020; Suzuki et al., 2015). It displays and measures the level of improvements and the degree of the quality of the built environment subsequently, determining the level of both poverty reduction and the quality of urban infrastructure. Therefore, urban

expansion, infrastructure development, and resilience of cities have to be controlled by a proper land management system. Rapid population growth combined with informal spatial growth and the spreading of the shadow economy in Egypt has created a chaos-built

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