1. Background

The causes of instability in the Horn of Africa are multi-dimensional. Deficits in the rule of law combined with developmental challenges such as demographic pressure, ethnic rifts and the adverse effects of climate change contribute to social instability and poor state-citizen relations. Land is central to Africa's social and economic development, as the majority of the population depend on land and land-based resources for their livelihoods, as well as for its importance to culture and identity. Capacities for management of competition over increasingly scarce land and natural resources are limited, aggravating the region's volatility. Securing land rights and improving inclusive governance of land can mitigate a key driver of violent conflict.

Securing land rights is also essential to the realization of the Horn of Africa's Agenda 2030 goals, since tenure security supports sustainable economic development, allowing for productive land investments, improved agricultural production and reduced food insecurity. Women with rights to land are in a better position to secure livelihoods for their families. Securing land rights and improving inclusive land governance are also important to climate adaptation and soil conservation.

Inclusive governance and the rule of law are key to preventing and mitigating land conflict. This involves adequate and inclusive land law and policy frameworks, capable and legitimate institutions for allocating land and resolving disputes, legal empowerment of those seeking to protect their land rights, access to justice for communities and justice seekers, and spaces for dialogue allowing civil society and other stakeholders to voice their perspectives and concerns.

2. Objectives

Acting on their respective mandates, the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the International Land Coalition (ILC) and Supporting Pastoralism and Agriculture in Recurrent and Protracted Crises (SPARC) are organizing, with the Government of Uganda, a High-Level Regional Conference on Land and Conflict in the East and Horn of Africa. This Conference will explore the linkages between access to justice and the rule of law, peace, sustainable development and climate action. The Conference will focus on the interrelation between land governance and conflict, both in terms of prevention and management, with the aim of investigating causes of conflict and ameliorative actions to minimize their impact using a people-centered justice approach.

The High-Level Conference will include a **Regional Policy Conference** on Land and Conflict in the Horn of Africa. The overall purpose of the Regional Policy Conference is to familiarize participants with new developments, trends and challenges related to land governance and conflict management, and to foster a broad exchange of information at regional level. Specific aims of the Regional Policy Conference will include:

1) Increase the body of available evidence and facilitate the exchange of views on the prevalence, causes, impacts and ways of addressing land governance and conflict in the IGAD region, and to mobilize action and raise awareness around the importance of Sustainable Development Goal 16 in addressing these in a comprehensive manner.
2) Issue concrete and evidence-based recommendations to high-level policymakers for better management of land governance and conflict, to enhance prospects of achieving peace, sustainable development, gender equality and climate action.

3. Topics

The **Regional Policy Conference** will address the following four themes:

Theme 1: Access to justice and responsible land governance, in the following sessions:

1.a. Emerging best practices in managing land conflict through legislative and policy reform
1.b. Resolving land conflict in settings characterized by legal pluralism
1.c. Securing land rights in settings affected by conflict

Theme 2: Land conflict, peace and security, in the following sessions:

2.a. Transboundary and cross-border conflicts in the Horn of Africa – dealing with the war economy
2.b. Addressing inter-community land conflict
2.c. Protecting communities and vulnerable populations from land grabbing

Theme 3: Land rights, climate change and food systems, in the following sessions:

3.a. Building institutional preparedness for managing the impact of climate change and conflict
3.b. Improving land governance for food system transformation
3.c. Gauging the impact of weak tenure rights on food security and nutrition

Theme 4: Realizing the rights to land of women and girls, in the following sessions:

4.a. Emerging best practices in strengthening access to justice to realize women's rights to land
4.b. Securing women's interests in land in the aftermath of conflict
4.c. Women, land, and climate justice

4. Format

The **Regional Policy Conference** will be a three-day hybrid (on-site in Uganda and virtual) meeting consisting of:
- Plenary sessions, with interventions from high-level panelists followed by a moderated discussion.
- Parallel sessions, with interventions from panelists followed by moderated discussion.

The structure of the conference will be based on thematic sessions with contributions in the form of oral presentations, as well as panel discussions.

5. Target audience

Experts from governments, the African Union, the UN system and other international organizations, think tanks, academia, civil society organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders will participate in the Regional Policy Conference. The organizers will strive to ensure strong representation of women and youth.

6. Session proposal

IGAD and IDLO invite the submission from individuals, organizations, universities and think tanks of (i) proposals for papers, in English, for each session of the Regional Policy Conference, and (ii) abstracts recommending a session structure and ideal panel composition.

Submissions for papers should be unpublished proposals aligned with one of the thematic areas listed under Section C (e.g., 1.a.). The proposal should clearly state the objectives of the session, provide a contextual analysis of the selected thematic area within the IGAD region, identify comparable best practices and recommend evidence-based practical approaches that are adaptable to the different IGAD Member States.

Ideally, the papers proposed should be accompanied by an abstract with a concept on how the specific session for the relevant thematic area can be executed by recommending the session structure and panel composition reflecting disciplinary, geographic and gender diversity. While it is highly recommended that submissions be made for both abstracts of panel composition and the corresponding proposal of papers, IDLO and IGAD also welcome stand-alone submissions.

Proposals should not exceed two pages or 1000 words. The abstracts for panel composition should be limited to a maximum four speakers and one moderator. A total of 90 minutes will be allotted per session including 30 minutes to Q&A interaction with the audience.

IGAD and IDLO reserve the right to suggest adjustments to either the panel composition or the proposed papers. Due to the time limitation for oral presentations, only a select number of proposals and innovative concepts for the delivery of the papers and panel composition will be accepted.

7. Working language

The working language of the conference will be English. All communications and proposals must be sent in English.

8. Important Dates

Deadline for submission of papers and proposals for sessions: **16th September 2022**

Notification of acceptance of papers and proposals: **30th September 2022**

Confirmation of participation: **7th October 2022**

Deadline for final submission of presentations: **12th October 2022**

Deadline for power point presentation: **14th October 2022**

9. Proposal Submission

Please send your proposals and abstracts to the following three email addresses:
Muhyadin.Ahmed@igad.int; omar.siraji@igad.int; and callforpapers@idlo.int before 16th September 2022

For more information visit: https://igad.int/ and https://www.idlo.int/