

PROCLAMATION No. 47 OF 1975
A PROCLAMATION TO PROVIDE FOR GOVERNMENT
OWNERSHIP OF URBAN LANDS AND
EXTRA URBAN HOUSES

"ETHIOPIA TIKDEM"

WHEREAS, the standard of living, rights, honour and status of workers and toiling masses working in factories, industries and other fields of activity are determined by the extent to which the urban areas in which they live afford opportunities of work and shelter;

WHEREAS, extensive areas of urban land and numerous houses are in the hands of an insignificant number of feudal lords, aristocrats, high Government officials and capitalists, who, by abusing their political and economic power, have created artificial shortages in the supply of urban land, thereby inflating its value and obstructing the improvement of urban areas and of the quality of life of urban dwellers in their effort to perpetuate the system of exploitation;

WHEREAS, the concentration of urban houses suitable both for dwelling and business purposes in the hands of a few individuals has not only enabled such people to carry on their exploitation of the many through house rent but has also led them to place themselves above the law and to evade their duty to pay taxes for a long time;

WHEREAS, the urban-dwelling workers and other toiling masses, forced to languish for a long time under the yoke of subjugation and oppression and used as mere instruments for the furtherance of the comfort and luxury of the ruling class, can regain their rights as Ethiopians, that is, their economic, political and social rights which should have been made equally available to them by their country but which were denied them for a long time, only when all the opportunities afforded by the urban center in which they live are open to them on the basis of equa-

WHEREAS, the absence of control on rent of houses and the consequent soaring up of rents has rendered the lives of the masses of urban dwellers miserable;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to survey and plan our cities with the need for dwelling and working purposes of the majority of city dwellers as the prime factor;

WHEREAS, until now, only that class of people who could produce as security their ownership title of urban land or house benefited from the facilities afforded by banks and insurance companies which the broad urban dwellers were denied, and it is now necessary to make such credit facilities available to such broad masses;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to lighten the burden of paying high house rents of the broad urban dwelling masses, provide them with the necessary credit facilities, and make available to them urban lands for the construction of both dwelling and business houses, thereby improving their standard of living and creating for them the conditions to fruitfully work in confidence for their country, their families and themselves;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to build our urban areas on the basis of careful planning and study in order to utilize our resources in an economical manner, to improve the conditions of cities, to protect urban dwellers from diseases and prevent illegal activities now prevalent in urban areas;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to do away with the inexhaustible court cases involving urban lands and houses thereby saving valuable financial and human resources from wastage;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to provide help to those people in urban areas who cannot afford to have shelters of their own;

WHEREAS, in order to bridge the wide gap in the standard of living of urban dwellers by appropriate allocation of disproportionately-held wealth and income as well as the inequitable provision of services among urban dwellers and to eliminate the exploitation of the many by the few, it is necessary to bring under Government ownership and control urban lands and extra urban houses;

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with Article 6 of the Definition of Powers of the Provisional Military Administration Council and its Chairman Proclamation No. 2/1974, it is hereby proclaimed as follows:

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. *Short Title*

This Proclamation may be cited as the "Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Houses Proclamation No. 47/1975".

2. *Definitions*

In this Proclamation, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 1/ "urban lands" shall mean all lands within the boundaries of a municipality or a town;
- 2/ "urban house" shall mean any house whether fully constructed or under construction intended for dwelling or business or other purposes.
- 3/ "extra house" shall mean an urban house whether rented or used or otherwise owned, other than:
 - a) a single house required or occupied as a dwelling place by a person or family;

- b) houses required or occupied by an organization as dwelling places for its employees or persons under its responsibility;
 - c) houses required for running the business of a person, family or an organization.
- 4/ "dwelling house" shall mean an urban house used for dwelling by a person or family or the employees of an organization or persons under its responsibility.
 - 5/ "business house" shall mean an urban house or space used for running the business of a person or family or an organization.
 - 6/ "lessor" shall mean a person who or a family or an organization which rents out an urban land or house.
 - 7/ "lessee" shall mean a person who or a family or an organization which pays rent for the use of an urban land or house.
 - 8/ "co-dweller" shall mean a person who or a family which dwells with a lessor or lessee in the same dwelling house and pays rent to the lessor or lessee.
 - 9/ "tenant" shall mean a person who or a family or an organization which pays rent gives any other consideration for the use of urban land, for a limited or unlimited time, irrespective of the use to which such land is put.
 - 10/ "rent" shall mean the money or other consideration paid to a lessor for the use of an urban land or house.
 - 11/ "holding in antichresis" shall mean an urban land or house held by the lender or other person agreed to in the contract as security for a debt.
 - 12/ "use-right" shall mean the right to personal use, but in respect of urban land, shall not include the right to transfer it by will, donation, mortgage or sale.
 - 13/ "organization" shall mean any organization or association provided for in the Commercial Code or Civil Code and shall include the body referred to in Art. 398 of the latter.
 - 14/ "co-operative society of urban dwellers" shall mean a co-operative society to be established under Chapter V of this Proclamation.
 - 15/ "Minister" shall mean the Minister of Public Works and Housing.
 - 16/ "Ministry" shall mean the Ministry of Public Works and Housing.
 - 17/ "dispute involving urban land and house" shall mean a dispute over the ownership, succession, possession, lease or use of urban house and shall include disputes over the possession of urban land.

CHAPTER II
URBAN LANDS

Government Ownership of Urban Lands

- 1/ As of the effective date of this Proclamation, all urban lands shall be the property of the Government.
- 2/ No person, family or organization shall hold urban land in private ownership.
- 3/ No compensation shall be paid in respect of urban lands.

4. *Prohibition of Transfer of Urban Land*

- 1/ No urban land may be transferred by sale, antichresis, mortgage, succession or otherwise.
- 2/ Any transfer of urban land by donation, succession, lease, sale or otherwise made as of Tahsas 11, 1967 shall be null and void.

5. *Size of Holding*

- 1/ Any person or family may, in accordance with directives issued by the Ministry, be granted the possession of urban land upto 500 square meters for the purpose of building a dwelling house. Upon the death of the holder the wife or husband or children shall have the right to use the land.
- 2/ Where an organization applies to the Ministry to be granted urban land for building a dwelling or business house the Ministry may, on being satisfied of the need, grant such land in sizes to be determined by it.
- 3/ The Ministry shall determine the size of urban land held before the effective date of this Proclamation by a person, family or an organization for the purpose of building dwelling houses for his or its employees or for building business houses.

6. *Urban Tenant's Holding*

- 1/ The relationship between landowners and tenants on urban land is hereby abolished. The tenant shall be free from payment to the landowner of rent, debt or any other obligation.
- 2/ Subject to Article 4 (2) and within the limit of the size mentioned in Article 5 (1), the tenant shall have possessory right over the land he holds.

7. *Granting of Rights of Possession or Priority*

- 1/ Subject to Article 4 (2) and within the limit of the size mentioned in Article 5 (1) any person who or family which does not own a dwelling house shall have possessory right over the land which he or it holds before the effective date of this Proclamation.

- 2/ Subject to Article 4 (2) and within the limit of the size mentioned in Article 5 (1), any person who or family which has paid in full or in part before the effective date of this Proclamation the purchase price of an urban land but does not own a dwelling house shall have priority over the possession of such land.
- 3/ Subject to Articles 4 (2) and 5 (2), an organization which owns urban land before the effective date of this Proclamation shall have possessory right over such land. Where such organization has paid in full or in part the purchase price of urban land, it shall have priority over the possession of such land.

8. *Power of Taking and Expropriation*

- 1/ Where a person, family or an organization fails to utilize his or its urban land within the period to be specified by the Ministry, the Ministry may take back such land and put it to appropriate use.
- 2/ The Ministry shall, by giving compensation in kind, appropriate for public purpose urban land held by a person, family or an organization.

9. *Urban Land Rent*

Any person who or family or organization which holds urban land shall pay rent to be fixed by the Government.

10. *Ownership of Trees in Urban Areas*

Trees on urban lands other than those on lands within the limit of the size mentioned under Article 5 shall be Government property.

CHAPTER III

URBAN HOUSES

11. *Dwelling and Business Houses*

- 1/ Any person or family may own only a single dwelling house in any urban area of his choice.
- 2/ Any organization may own houses for the purpose of housing its employees or persons under its responsibility, the number and size of which shall be determined by the Government.
- 3/ Any person, family or organization may own business houses the number and size of which shall be determined by the Government taking into account the condition and type of business.
- 4/ Any person, family or organization shall pay taxes on his or its dwelling or business houses at rates to be determined by the Government.

12. *Transfer of Urban Houses*

- 1/ Any person, family or organization may use his or its own house or transfer such house by succession, sale or barter. However, in case of sale the Government shall have right of pre-emption.

- 2/ No right in ownership of urban houses acquired as of Tahsas 11, 1967 shall be effective unless validate by the Ministry. In validating such right the Ministry shall ascertain that the acquisition does not contradict the purposes of this Proclamation.

13. *Government Ownership of Extra Houses*

- 1/ Subject to Article 11 (1), (2) and (3), all extra houses within the boundaries of a municipality or town shall, on the effective date of this Proclamation, be Government property.
- 2/ Any person who or family or organization which owns an extra house shall have the obligation to notify, register with and hand over to the Ministry such extra house within 30 days from the effective date of this Proclamation.

14. *Houses Taken from the Government*

- 1/ Urban houses which belonged to the Government or which were enemy property or houses built with funds raised by the public or obtained from the Government and were donated, sold at depressed prices or transferred to a person, family or an organization under similar circumstances shall, on the effective date of this Proclamation, be Government property. The foregoing provision shall also apply to said houses which have since been transferred to third parties.
- 2/ Where the house mentioned in the above sub-article has been transferred to another and where the purchase price paid for it is unreasonably low compared to the actual price, the Minister may permit the transferee having no extra house to retain the ownership of such house upon payment of the difference.
- 3/ Where the house mentioned in sub-article (1) of this Article has been transferred to another and where the purchase price paid for the house is roughly equal to the actual price, the Minister may permit the transferee having no extra house to retain the house.
- 4/ Where a person who had acquired a house belonging to the Government by donation or by paying a depressed price and has sold such house and the house is not taken by the Government under sub-articles (2) and (3) of this Article, such person shall pay to the Ministry an amount equal to the price he obtained from the transaction.

15. *Houses Owned by Minors*

Any urban house which a minor living with his parent; guardian or tutor has leased out or which is capable of being leased shall be Government property. However, where the parent does not own an urban house, the minor may exercise the right given under Article 11 (1).

6. *Right to Repossess Own House*

- 1/ Where a person has his own urban house but resides under any arrangement in an urban house that of another, such person may repossess his house. Likewise, a person who owns more than one urban house may repossess the house of his choice. However, where the Ministry ascertains that the house is necessary for business purposes or that the house is capable of accommodating more than one family, this sub-article shall have no application and such house shall be Government property.
- 2/ Any person who has one or more business houses held in antichresis by another may, where he has no other business house, repossess the house of his choice upon producing a licence for the business he wishes to undertake. However, where the Ministry ascertains that such house cannot be used as a business house, this sub-article shall have no application and such house shall be Government property.
- 3/ Any person or family shall have the right to evict his or its co-dweller by giving the notice mentioned in sub-article (4) of this Article.

Any person who decides to exercise his right under sub-article (1) or (2) of this Article shall give 6 months' notice to the person occupying the house.
- 5/ Subject to Article (20) (4) and Article 21 (2), (3), and (4), the lessee shall continue to pay rent to the Government or to the co-operative society of urban dwellers pending the handing over of the house
- 6/ Where a person or family leaves for business purposes the urban area of his or its habitual residence and if such person or family has a dwelling house of his or its own in such urban area, the Ministry or the co-operative society of urban dwellers shall, where the person or family so requests, provide such person or family with a comparable dwelling house or commensurate housing allowance. The Ministry shall take over the administration of the dwelling house of said person or family and upon the return of the person or family to the place of his or its habitual residence hand it over to its owner.

Houses Held in Antichresis

- 1/ Upon the effective date of this Proclamation, all contracts of antichresis involving urban houses are hereby abolished.
- 2/ Where the lender in a contract of antichresis has, by the use to which he had put the house or by the rent which he has received, obtained an amount equivalent to or more than the amount of the loan, the borrower shall be free from his debt.
- 3/ Where the lender in a contract of antichresis involving an urban dwelling or business house which is revertible to the owner or is liable to be Government property under sub-article (1) or (2) of Article 16 has not obtained from such house an amount or service equivalent to or more than the amount of the loan, such lender shall be entitled to claim the difference from the borrower.

8. *Payment of Compensation for Extra Houses*

- 1/ The Government shall pay fair compensation in respect of houses transferred to Government ownership under this Proclamation.
- 2/ Where advance rent for the period after Nehasie 1, 1967 has been paid before the effective date of this Proclamation, the amount of such rent shall be subtracted from the compensation payable under sub-article (1) of this Article.
- 3/ No compensation or damage shall be due in respect of houses transferred to Government ownership under Article 14 (1).

19. *Expropriation of Houses*

The Government may, by paying compensation, expropriate for public purpose an urban house held by any person, family or organization.

CHAPTER IV

RENT

20. *House Rent*

- 1/ No person, family or organization except the Ministry or co operate societies of urban dwellers may, as of the effective date of this Proclamation, obtain income from urban land or house rent.
- 2/ The relationship between lessor and lessee is hereby abolished as of the effective date of this Proclamation. However, the lessee --- lessor relationship shall continue with the Ministry or with the co-operative society of urban dwellers in accordance with sub-article (5) of this Article.
- 3/ Where a contract of lease made before the effective date of this Proclamation expires before Tahsas 22, 1968, the Ministry or the co-operative society of urban dwellers may renegotiate the lease with the lessee.
- 4/ Until a rent control regulation is issued the rent of urban dwelling and business houses not exceeding \$ 300 shall as of Nehasie 1, 1967, be reduced by the following percentages:-
 - a) monthly rent of upto \$ 2550%
 - b) monthly rent of above \$ 25
but not exceeding \$ 5040%
 - c) monthly rent of above \$ 50
but not exceeding \$ 10030%
 - d) monthly rent of above \$ 100
but not exceeding \$ 15025%
 - e) monthly rent of above \$ 150
but not exceeding \$ 20020%
 - f) monthly rent of above \$ 200
but not exceeding \$ 30015%
- 5/ The rent and the administration of urban dwelling and business houses which under sub-article (4) of this Article rent at the rate of:
 - a) upto \$ 100 per month shali be the responsibility of co-perative societies of urban dwellers.

b) above \$ 100 per month shall be the responsibility of the Ministry.

- 6/ The rents collected by co-operative societies of urban dwellers shall be utilized for purposes beneficial to the dwellers.
- 7/ The rents collected by the Ministry shall be utilized for the improvement of the lives of all urban dwellers and of urban areas.

21. *Organizations and Families under Special Consideration*

- 1/ The Government shall, where it considers it necessary, Provide budgets to religious, educational or health or similar organizations whose urban house has been transferred to the Government.
- 2/ Where the Ministry ascertains that a person or family has no income other than the rent he or it used to collect from his or its extra house which has been transferred to the Government under this Proclamation, the Ministry or the co-operative society of urban dwellers shall, until the person or family earns income by working, pay such person or family an amount upto Two Hundred and Fifty (250) Dollars per month.
- 3 Where the Ministry ascertains that a minor or his parent has no income other than the rent which the minor used to collect from his extra house which has been transferred to the Government under this Proclamation, the Ministry or the co-operative society of urban dwellers shall, until the minor attains majority or earns income by working, pay such person an amount upto Two Hundred and Fifty (250) Dollars per month.
- 4/ Where the Ministry ascertains that the monthly net income from work, pension and from other sources of a person or family whose extra house has been transferred to the Government under this Proclamation does not exceed Two Hundred (200) Dollars the Ministry or the co-operative society of urban dwellers shall pay him or it an amount up to One Hundred (100) Dollars per month.
- 5/ Payments under sub-articles (1), (2), (3) and (4) of this Article shall be made by the Ministry and the co-operative society of urban dwellers from the rent which is collected under their respective responsibilities. The payment to which a person, family or an organization is entitled under this Article shall not exceed the amount of income from rent.
- 6/ Payments made under this Article shall be deducted from the compensation to be paid by the Government for extra houses taken by it. The total of payments made under this Article may not exceed the amount of compensation.
- 7/ Where advance rent has been collected before the effective date of this Proclamation, such rent shall be deducted from the amount payable under sub-articles (1), (2), (3) and (4) of this Article.

CHAPTER V

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES OF URBAN DWELLERS

22. *Establishment of Co-operative Societies of Urban Dwellers*

There shall be established a co-operative society of urban dwellers in each unit of urban area as determined by the Ministry.

23. *Membership of Co-operative Society of Urban Dwellers*

Any urban dweller may become a member of a co-operative society of urban dwellers. However, a person who was a lessor before the effective date of this Proclamation may not have the right for the first one year period to elect officials of the co-operative society of urban dwellers and to be a member of the judicial tribunal, executive committee or public welfare committee of the society.

24. *Functions of Co-operative Societies of Urban Dwellers*

The functions of a co-operative society of urban dwellers shall be the following:

- 1/ to follow and execute land use and building directives to be issued by the Ministry;
- 2/ establish a judicial tribunal composed of three members;
- 3/ to set up, with the co-operation of the Government, educational, health, market, road and similar services necessary for the area;
- 4/ to collect urban land and house rent amounting upto \$ 100 per month per house or per piece of land using the receipt form issued by the Ministry and to undertake the administration and repairs of such houses;
- 5/ to deposit the rents it collect with a Peoples' Housing and Savings Bank in an account opened by the Ministry;
- 6/ to preserve, by establishing a public welfare committee, all public and Government property within the area and in particular to ensure, with the co-operation of Government authorities, the protection of the welfare and lives of the people in the area;
- 7/ to expend, in accordance with directives issued by the Ministry, the rents it collects and the subsidy it obtains from the Government for the building of economical houses and the improvement of the quality of life of urban dwellers in the area;
- 8/ to draw up its internal regulations consistent with the requirements of this Proclamation, which shall be effective upon the approval of the Minister.

25. *Establishment of Higher Co-operative Societies of Urban Dwellers.*

- 1/ There shall be established, depending on the size and population of the urban area, a higher co-operative society of urban dwellers.

- 2/ The functions of a higher co-operative society of urban dwellers shall be:
- a) to co-ordinate the functions of co-operative societies of urban dwellers mentioned in Article 24, (1), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) and (8);
 - b) to assist the Ministry in changing the boundaries of areas so that co-operative societies of urban dwellers within the jurisdiction of the higher co-operative society have as far as possible equal holdings;
 - c) to co-operate with and assist the Ministry in processing applications submitted to the Ministry by any person who or family or organization which has no urban land and seeks to obtain such land for dwelling or business purposes;
 - d) establish a higher judicial tribunal composed of three members.

26. *Establishment of Central Co-operative Societies of Urban Dwellers*

- 1/ There shall be established, depending on the size and population of the urban area, a central co-operative society of urban dwellers which shall be composed of delegates of higher co-operative societies of urban dwellers.
- 2/ The functions of central co-operative societies of urban dwellers shall be:
 - a) to co-ordinate the functions of higher co-operative societies of urban dwellers; and
 - b) to establish a central judicial tribunal composed of three members.

27. *Judicial Tribunals*

- 1/ The judicial tribunal to be established under Article 24 (2) shall,
 - a) have first instance jurisdiction to hear and decide disputes involving urban land or house arising between urban dwellers.
 - b) not have jurisdiction to hear criminal cases and disputes arising between the co-operative society and urban dwellers.
- 2/ The higher judicial tribunal to be established under Article 25 (2) (d) shall:
 - a) hear and decide on appeals from judicial tribunals and such decision shall be final.
 - b) have first instance jurisdiction to hear and decide disputes involving urban land or house arising between co-operative societies of urban dwellers, and between co-operative societies of urban dwellers and urban dwellers.
 - c) not have jurisdiction to hear criminal cases.
- 3/ The central judicial tribunal to be established under Article 26 (2) (b) shall:
 - a) hear and decide on appeals from decisions of a higher judicial tribunal in its first instance jurisdiction and such appellate decision shall be final.

- b) have first instance jurisdiction to hear and decide disputes involving urban land or house arising between higher co-operative societies of urban dwellers, provided that such decision shall be appealable to the Minister whose decision shall be final.
 - c) not have jurisdiction to hear criminal cases.
- 4/ In urban areas which do not have higher and central co-operative societies of urban dwellers, persons and organizations appointed by the Minister shall act as higher and central judicial tribunals until such time as they are replaced by such tribunals.

28. *Procedure of Judicial Tribunals*

- 1/ Judicial tribunals established under this Proclamation shall follow the rules of procedure issued by the Minister.
- 2/ The decision of a judicial tribunal shall be effective fifteen days after the date of decision unless barred on appeal.
- 3/ An appeal from a decision or order of a judicial tribunal shall be made within fifteen days of the date of decision.
- 4/ The decision or order of a judicial tribunal shall be executed by the executive committee of the corresponding co-operative society. Where the executive committee is unable to execute the judicial decision or order, the judicial tribunal shall execute said decision or order by directly ordering the Police.

29. *Contempt of Judicial Tribunal*

Where a person, in the course of a judicial tribunal proceeding, insults, threatens, holds up to ridicule or in any manner disturbs the tribunal, the tribunal may summarily punish such person with imprisonment upto 30 days or fine upto Two Hundred Fifty (250) Dollars.

30. *Ultra vires Decisions of Judicial Tribunals*

No person who has exhausted his right of appeal at the judicial tribunals may lodge an appeal to the ordinary courts of law. However, where the Minister ascertains from an application submitted to him that the judicial tribunal's decision is *ultra vires*, the Minister shall review the case and decide it under this Proclamation. The decision of the Minister shall not be subject to appeal.

CHAPTER VI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE MINISTRY

31. *Implementation of this Proclamation*

The Ministry shall have the power to implement to provisions of this Proclamation.

32. *Establishment of Co-operative Societies of Urban Dwellers*

- 1/ The Ministry shall, in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior and other concerned Public Authorities, establish at all levels co-operative societies of urban dwellers under conditions which facilitate urban development and conform with the needs of urban dwellers.
- 2/ The Minister shall, at least at the level of higher co-operative society of urban dwellers, designate one person who shall advise and otherwise assist co-operative societies of urban dwellers.

33. *Publicizing of the Proclamation*

- 1/ The Minister shall notify and explain to the public the provisions and purposes of this Proclamation through the mass media.
- 2/ In particular, the Minister shall notify the public of the termination of the relationship between lessor and lessee and of the contract of antichresis, and of the continuation of the lessee — lessor relationship with the Ministry or the co-operative society of urban dwellers and shall explain the conditions under which such societies shall be established.
- 3/ The person designated by the Minister shall help in the establishment of co-operative societies of urban dwellers by calling assemblies of urban dwellers and explaining the purposes and intentions of this Proclamation.

34. *Temporary Power of the Ministry to Preside over Judicial Tribunals*

- 1/ The persons designated by the Ministry shall preside over the judicial tribunals until such time as the judicial tribunals are well organized and fully operational. However, no such person who has presided over a case heard at a lower judicial tribunal may do the same at a higher level.
- 2/ The said persons shall establish the offices of judicial tribunals and shall assist in organizing the records of the offices.

35. *Establishment of Registers and Delimitation of Urban Boundaries*

- 1/ The Ministry shall establish at all levels registers showing the list of urban dwellers, number and condition of houses.
- 2/ The Minister shall have the power to widen, narrow and demarcate urban boundaries in co-operation with the Minister of Interior and other concerned Public Authorities.

36. *Improving the Lives of Urban Dwellers*

- 1/ The Minister shall, in co-operation with the Minister of Finance, Planning Commission, National Bank and other concerned Public Authorities, assist urban dwellers to procure loans for the purpose of building or buying their own dwelling houses.
- 2/ The rents collected by the Ministry shall, in accordance with comprehensive urban development plans and directives issued by the Government, be utilized for providing services to urban dwellers.

- 3/ The Ministry shall ensure that the rents collected by a co-operative society are utilized for providing services to the urban dwellers in accordance with comprehensive urban development plans and directives issued by the Government.
- 4/ The Ministry shall be responsible for the overall administration of urban lands and urban houses belonging to the Government.
- 5/ The Ministry shall, by issuing urban development plans and building economical houses, provide essential services to urban dwellers.
- 6/ The Ministry shall, in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior and co-operative societies of urban dwellers, provide landless urban dwellers with urban land for building dwelling houses.
- 7/ The Ministry shall issue standards relating to urban houses and enforce the same.
- 8/ The Minister or the person or organization delegated by him shall fix the rents of houses not rented at the effective date of this Proclamation.

37. *Rights of Inquiry*

The person designated by the Ministry shall have the right to inquire into and obtain contract documents and other information from Government offices, private, commercial and co-operative organizations and persons.

CHAPTER VII

GENERAL PROVISIONS

38. *Juridical Personality of Co-operative Societies*

Each co-operative society of urban dwellers established at any level under this Proclamation shall have its own juridical personality.

39. *Jurisdiction of Ordinary Courts of Law*

Disputes under Article 17 (3) and disputes involving urban houses pending in ordinary courts of law on the effective date hereof shall be heard in such courts.

40. *Prohibition of Court Action*

- 1/ All cases involving urban land pending in the ordinary courts of law on the effective date hereof are hereby annulled
- 2/ No suit may be brought challenging the legality of any action taken pursuant to the provisions of this Proclamation.

41. *Offences*

Any person who, as of the date of the promulgation of this Proclamation, burns, damages, destroys, tampers with or puts out of use any house or property, or disturbs the peace or obstructs the execution of this Proclamation or attempts to commit any of these offences and any Government official or public servant who misuses or attempts to misuse the authority vested in him under the provisions of this Proclamation shall be punished under the provisions of the Special Penal Code Proclamation No. 8/1974, as amended.

42. *Conflict with Other Laws*

No law, regulation, practice or procedure, whether written or customary, shall, in so far as it is inconsistent with the provisions of this Proclamation, have force and effect in respect of situations provided for by this Proclamation.

43. *Diplomatic Holdings*

The status of urban lands held and urban houses owned by diplomatic and consular representatives and international organizations shall be determined in the future.

44. *Houses to which this Proclamation is not Applicable*

This Proclamation shall not apply to urban houses owned by religious organizations which are used for conducting religious services.

45. *Power to Issue Regulations*

The Minister may issue regulations to give effect to the purposes and provisions of this Proclamation.

46. *Effective date*

This Proclamation shall enter into force as of 7th August, 1975.

Done at Addis Ababa, this 26th day of July, 1975.

**THE PROVISIONAL MILITARY
ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL**