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Creating a Legal Framework for Economic Development

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Abstract

A modernizing nation's economic prosperity requires at least a modest legal infrastructure centered on the protection of property and contract rights. The essential legal reform required to create that infrastructure may be the adoption of a system of relatively precise legal rules, as distinct from more open-ended standards or a heavy investment in upgrading the nation's judiciary. A virtuous cycle can arise in which initially modest expenditures on law reform increase the rate of economic growth, in turn generating resources that will enable more ambitious legal reforms to be undertaken in the future.

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