

Program

Overview

- **Session name:** “*Promoting the Right to Adequate Housing in Asia and beyond*”
- **Theme:** Exploring ways by which local governments – in cooperation with other stakeholders and following innovative methodologies – can promote the right to adequate housing and the human rights based-approach (HRBA) in habitat policies. The session will focus on the Asian context, and propose tools such as the “Cities for Adequate Housing” Declaration as concrete roadmaps for local governments to advance the right to housing. It will welcome inputs from civil society organizations.
- **Preferred Date:** October 1st, 12:00 am to 15:30pm
- **Time:** 3 hours
- **Organizers:** UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights, the Asia Europe People’s Forum and the International Alliance of Inhabitants.

Proposed program Schedule

Time	Program	Contents
1 st part 60’	Opening (5’)	Introduction by Amanda Flety, coordinator of <i>UCLG Committee on Social inclusion, Participatory democracy and Human rights</i>
	Presentation (10’)	“The Shift campaign and the global housing crisis” presentation by Julieta Perucca, advisor to the <i>UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing</i>
	Presentation (35’)	“The Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration: An opportunity for local governments to advance the Right to Housing agenda” Shams Asadi, City of Vienna , Baigalmaa Tsagaan, City of Ulaanbaatar , and the City of Taipei
	Debate/Q&A (10’)	
Lunch Break (30’)		

2nd part 60'	Presentation (15')	“Urbanization, housing context and community-led initiatives in the Asian region” by Brenda Perez, <i>Asian Coalition for Housing Rights</i>
	Presentation (35')	Bridging local governments and civil society: AEPF/IAI presentation of the Global Charter for Social Protection Rights and the Zero Evictions Campaign by Francine Mestrum, Cesare Ottolini and Erik Villanueva (20') Buzz Group presentation on the right to housing in Gwangju by Jiyeon Jeong and 9 students (15')
	Debate/Q&A (10')	With the following discussants: Michael Beltran (Philippines), Varghese Theckanath (Montfort Social Institute, India) and Hong Jeonghoon (People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy)
3rd part 60'	Interactive session (55')	“From words to action: Interactive session and workshop on the Right to Housing in Asia” moderated by Catalina Ortiz, University College of London and Jaume Puigpinos, UCLG-CSIPDHR
	Closing remarks (5')	

Requests

A room with tables, chairs, microphones and a projector

Concept Note

Background

Asia has experienced a rapid process of urbanization in the last decades. Take for instance the case of Korea, which over the last 50 years passed from a 33% or urban population to a current 81%. Countries like China, Indonesia or Bangladesh – which are among the world’s most populated ones too – have almost doubled their urban population over the last 20 years.

The development of Asian cities according to standards of social inclusion, spatial justice and sustainability becomes thus a key challenge for securing the collective welfare and fulfilment of the Right to the City of millions. Housing, of course, has been at the center of this struggle, becoming a catalyzer for social development or widened inequalities depending on the context.

Housing-related challenges have not only impacted cities in Asia due to its rapid urbanization process. Indeed, cities worldwide are suffering what is already known as the “global housing crisis”: A phenomenon caused by an accelerated process of real estate financialization and the poor or undeveloped regulatory capacities of governments. It is calculated that the housing crisis is currently reaching an estimate 15% of the world’s population – or 330 million households unable to find a decent or affordable home. Citizens from all walks of life are paying its consequences: From urban poor living in slums or sub-standard conditions to middle classes expelled from central city areas after being unable to pay increasing housing costs.

Local governments are already leading daring policy responses to the housing crisis. Through inclusive and participatory urban planning, they have devised cities for all that are compact, foster social mix and protect community life. In spite of limited regulatory and financial capacities, they have carried out sound social housing strategies and even raised their voice against speculators and global investment funds that consider cities only as commodities. Civil society and grassroots movements have also played an essential role in advancing this agenda through campaigning and innovation in community-led housing co-production.

Through the “Cities for Adequate Housing” Declaration, more than 40 local governments in the framework of UCLG have adopted a pioneer commitment to fight financialization and favor policies that advance the right to housing. The path towards the Declaration was initiated in 2016 after the launch of “The Shift”: A global campaign for the Right to Housing led by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing. Adopted in 2018, the Declaration proposes a roadmap for campaigning and action structured around five areas: More powers for cities to better regulate the real estate market; more funds to improve public housing stocks; more tools to co-produce community-driven housing; urban planning that combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighborhoods; and enhanced municipal cooperation.

The **2019 WHRCF** offers a perfect occasion for discussing the implications of the right to housing in Asia, exploring the approaches by which local governments can lead or are already leading policies harnessing the potential of housing as a social inclusion catalyzer.

This session will be a good occasion for raising awareness on the “Cities for Adequate Housing” Declaration and “The Shift” campaign (promoted by UCLG and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing), but also to listen to civil society-led initiatives, such as the innovative approaches led by of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights or the “Global Charter for Social Protection Rights” promoted by the Asian-Europe People’s Forum (AEPF).

The valuable contribution of UN Habitat will provide a meaningful global framework for developing renewed housing strategies that embrace the human rights-based approach.

Finally, and due to the diversity of approaches explored, this session will conclude with a “urban storytelling” exercise, allowing to take stock of all contributions made. By this exercise, new bridges between different stakeholders will be established, focusing on exploring the similarities between approaches by which they carry out their initiatives on housing and how can this translate into a consolidated roadmap for the Right to Housing in Asia.

Objectives

- Assessing the potential of the Right to Housing and the HRBA for promoting renewed housing strategies in the Asian region and beyond;
- Mapping different methodologies, approaches and initiatives that are already transforming the way to carry out housing strategies;
- Fostering dialogue and partnership between different stakeholders (local governments, civil society organizations and UN agencies) on the Right to Housing;



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Responsibility for the information and views set out
in this publication lies entirely with the authors.