



**UCLG COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL
INCLUSION,
PARTICIPATORY
DEMOCRACY AND
HUMAN RIGHTS**

Call for candidacies to host an “International Seminar of Local Governments for the Right to the City”

May 2014



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TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ORGANISATION OF THE SEMINAR

The objective of this document is to provide a framework for the organization of an **International Seminar of Local Governments for the Right to the City**, which should take place in **2015**.

In this regard, it aims at setting out a general **proposal** that the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) launches **to interested cities to host the event**.

However, interested cities are welcome to make suggestions so that a comfortable agreement can be reached between both parties for the sake of the organization of the Seminar.

a. BACKGROUND

The UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights and the conurbation authority of Plaine Commune organized on 11 and 12 December 2012 the **1st World Summit of Local Governments for the Right to the City**.

The event was a real world platform of exchange of experiences among local government representatives, members of international networks of social movements and human rights experts.





The Summit was attended by around 200 participants and a total of 40 speakers from 16 countries, particularly Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, France, Mexico, Portugal, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, South Korea, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and the United States of America.

The topic under discussion was the right to the city and which local policies can contribute to implement it. Against this framework, participants discussed how to take forward the implementation of the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* and the *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City*.

The *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* is an initiative that emerged in 2006 out of the Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion and Participatory Democracy (FAL), a gathering of cities taking place in the framework of the World Social Forum.

Based on the discussions that took place there between local authorities, a group of experts from various countries wrote a first draft (2007-2008), which was then discussed and amended by elected representatives, experts and representatives of civil society from all over the world (2009-2010).

Under the leadership initially of Barcelona Provincial Council (Diputació de Barcelona) and subsequently of the city of Nantes and the Pays de la Loire Region, the Global Charter-Agenda has been collectively discussed at several international events, including the last three FALs and World Social Forums (Nairobi, 2007; Belém do Pará, 2009; and Dakar, 2011), the 1st and 2nd FALPs (Nanterre, 2006; Getafe, 2010), the 5th World Urban Forum of UN HABITAT (Rio de Janeiro, 2010), the 4th World Forum on Human Rights in Nantes (2010) and the 3rd UCLG World Congress (Mexico City, 2010). Civil society organizations and research centers, such as the Catalonia Institute for Human Rights (IDHC), Habitat International Coalition and the Social Studies Centre (CES) of Coimbra University, have also been involved in this process from the very beginning.

The **added value** of the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* is that each human right featured in the document is accompanied by an **action plan** that serves as reference for concrete steps to undertake by local governments. Signatory cities are invited to set up a local agenda with deadlines and indicators in order to assess their efficiency in implementing these rights. The Charter-Agenda comes into effect in each city after a consultation and participation process allowing





residents to discuss it and adapt it both to local reality and to the national legal framework; and upon acceptance by a qualified majority of the municipal assembly. The result of this process is the adoption of a Local Charter-Agenda in each signatory municipality.

The World Council of UCLG held in Florence **in December 2011 formally adopted the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City*** and invited all UCLG members to sign it. In the current situation of economic crisis and a possible reduction in rights, the Charter-Agenda is a tool for local governments to build more inclusive, democratic and solidarity-based societies in dialogue with urban dwellers.

The ***European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City*** (Saint Denis, 2000) is the result of the preparatory work initiated in Barcelona in 1998 in the framework of the Conference “Cities for Human Rights”, which was organised to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Hundreds of Mayors and political representatives participated in the event and united their voice to call for a stronger political acknowledgement as key actors in safeguarding human rights in a highly urbanised world.

Participating cities adopted the “**Barcelona Engagement**”, consisting of a roadmap to draft a political document aimed at fostering the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights at local level.

During the two proceeding years, the *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City* was drafted as the result of a plural dialogue between European cities, civil society representatives and human rights experts. The draft was discussed and finally adopted in Saint-Denis in 2000.

Since then, a European conference is held every two years to share the progress made by **signatory cities, more than 400** today, to implement the Charter. The following conferences have been organized to date:

- 1998, **Barcelona** (Spain)
- 2000, **Saint-Denis** (France)
- 2002, **Venice** (Italy)





- 2004, **Nuremberg** (Germany)
- 2006, **Lyon** (France)
- 2008, **Geneva** (Switzerland)
- 2010, **Tuzla** (Bosnia-Herzegovina)

After the conference in Geneva (2008), the most active cities in the network (Barcelona, Saint-Denis/Plaine Commune, Lyon, Geneva and Nantes) decided to entrust the promotion of the *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City* to the world organization of cities, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), through its **Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights**.

In view of the adoption of the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* by UCLG and the existence of other human rights charters adopted in cities such as Montreal (Canada), Mexico City (Mexico) and Gwangju (South Korea), the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights decided to move from Europe-wide conferences -focused on a single instrument, the *European Charter for the Safeguarding Human Rights in the City*- to global conferences aiming at sharing the work done by cities world over to promote human rights.

b. GENERAL PROPOSAL FOR THE 2015 SEMINAR

Albeit the 2012 Summit was a success, the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights is proposing to interested cities to host a smaller event in the format of an international seminar in 2015.

The 2012 Summit succeeded in putting the right to the city in the local government agenda and articulating a network of cities world over engaged with the promotion of human rights at local level.



Against this background, it is proposed to organize the International Seminar as follows:

Goals

1. Enhancing the **network** of cities from different regions of the world implementing local human rights policies.
2. Attracting more **cities** in this network.
3. Sharing the **work** the host city has undertaken in the field of human rights and the right to the city with other peers.
4. Exchanging **best practices** and innovative policies on how to translate human rights into local political actions.
5. Fostering the creation of new **collective knowledge** about this topic.
6. Promoting **academic research** on the right to the city and on the role of local government in the field of human rights (optional).
7. **Lobbying the international agenda** (particularly the Post-2015 and Habitat III processes) to highlight the role local government play in fostering more inclusive, democratic and egalitarian cities.

Format

1. The Seminar may last **one or two days**.
2. It is strongly suggested to organize a **technical visit** to the city's human rights services, facilities or key places so that interested participants can have the possibility to get to know in greater detail the human rights policy of this municipality.

Foreseen output

1. Strengthening the **human rights city movement** globally.
2. **International visibility** for the host city as a human rights champion.





3. **Data base** of good practices and innovative policies of human rights cities¹.
4. One **research paper** (optional).
5. **Guide or tool** about how to become a human rights city (based on the discussions during the seminar and the good practices compiled at the seminar).
6. **Final report** of the Seminar (compiling the concept note, programme, background documents, speeches or presentations, an academic paper and a report of the technical visit).

c. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOST CITY

General

- Member of UCLG or commitment to become a member.
- Member of the Committee on Social Inclusion Participatory, Democracy and Human Rights or commitment to become a member.
- Involvement in the Committee activities.
- Interest in promoting the values of local democracy, citizen participation, social inclusion and human rights.

Organisational

- Proven logistical capacity to host an event of around 40 participants, including:
 - Venue easy to access from hotels.
 - Good facilities, equipment and professionals to facilitate multilingual sessions in parallel.
 - Good international accessibility.

¹ As an eventual source of inspiration for developing this database, we encourage visiting our on line *Inclusive Cities Observatory*, a database containing around 65 study cases on inclusive cities: www.uclg-cisd.org/observatory.



- Proven organizational capacity to host a world-wide event, including:
 - Team of professionals able to work on logistics, contents and dissemination activities.
 - Capacity to mobilise and dedicate adequate resources.

d. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

The following commitments have been conceived to ensure the sound organization of the Seminar, but they are open to negotiation with the host city.

1. **Sponsoring some delegates** (number to be determined).
2. **Interpretation into three languages during the Seminar** (English, French and Spanish)
3. **Communication material** (publication in English, French and Spanish of the guide or tool, final report and research paper –optional-).
4. **Catering services.**
5. **Organizational support to the UCLG** (amount to be discussed).

e. PROCEDURE

Expression of interest by interested cities

- Email to the Coordinator of the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights to express the interest of the city to host the Seminar (the email can be sent to the following email address: m.fricaudet@uclg.org, c/o Magali Fricaudet).

Agreement between the host city and UCLG

- **Formal letter by the Mayor of the host city** accepting the Terms of Reference to host the International Seminar of Local Governments for the Right to the City.





- **Draft proposal of the Seminar** (defining the date and structure of the Seminar). Both the letter and proposal should be addressed to UCLG Secretary General, Mr. Josep Roig, and sent to the above-mentioned email address).

Signature of the cooperation agreement between UCLG and the host city

In general terms, UCLG and the host city will jointly take care of the defining the Seminar's **contents and participants**.

The **logistics** will be coordinated by the host city (flight and hotel bookings; providing practical information to participants; hiring catering, translation, interpretation or transportation services; organizing eventual technical visits; administrating the event website; etc.).



ANNEX 1. PRESS RELEASE OF THE 2012 SUMMIT

The UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights and the conurbation authority of Plaine Commune, along with the towns of Saint-Denis and Aubervilliers (France), organized on 11 and 12 December 2012 the *1st World Summit of Local Governments for*

the Right to the City. The event was a real world platform of exchange of experiences among local government representatives, members of international networks of social movements and human rights experts.



The Summit was attended by around 200 participants and a total of **40 speakers from 16 countries**, particularly Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, France, Mexico, Portugal, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, South Korea, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and the United States of America.

The topic under discussion was the right to the city and which local policies can contribute to implement it. The experiences and initiatives presented were very varied and tackled the **right to education, to adequate housing, to health, to non discrimination, to physical accessibility, to basic services and to employment**, among other issues. Participants also discussed what possible tools would allow local administrations to permeate with an action framework based on human rights, and what possible protection mechanisms could be put into practice at local level.



Besides this, it was highlighted the need to build **strategic alliances between local governments, civil society and social movements** in order to face jointly the challenges which are posed today by urbanization. In this regard, representatives from both local authorities and social movements underlined it was critical to unite efforts so that the right to the city becomes a true pillar for local public policies, making it possible to move from diagnosis to an execution phase.

With this goal, participants discussed how to take forward the implementation of the **Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City** and the **European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City**. Regarding these two tools, it has to be noted that the adoption by UCLG of the *Charter-Agenda* motivated the shift that the Summit in Saint-Denis symbolized: moving from European events – focused on the *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City* – to international Summits – having as object of discussion not only the *European Charter*, but also the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City*, as well as other municipal charters, such as the ones adopted in Montreal (Canada), Mexico City (Mexico), Gwangju (South Korea) or Vienna (Austria).

The *1st World Summit of Local Governments for the Right to the City* ended with the adoption and reading of a final declaration containing the will of participants and of the **Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)** to keep working so that the right to the city becomes a reality in our cities and metropolises. In order to attain this goal, it was agreed that it is fundamental that local authorities adopt certain public policies. However, the necessity to have the international community recognize the role cities play in safeguarding human rights and right to the city, and to have UCLG considered a privileged interlocutor regarding urban issues, was also underlined.



ANNEX 2. FINAL DECLARATION OF THE 2012 SUMMIT

Coming together in Saint-Denis and Aubervilliers on 11th and 12th December 2012, representatives from local authorities the world over, from the Council of Europe, the International Labour Organization, United Cities and Local Governments and international networks of social

movements and civil society reaffirm our determined commitment to the **respect, protection and guarantee of human rights at local level through our public policies.**



From the European Charter of Human Rights in the City (2000) signed by more than 350 towns and cities, to those of Montreal (2006), Mexico (2010), Guangzhou (2012) and Vienna (2012) and through the adoption of the Global Charter-Agenda of Human Rights in the City (2011), adopted by UCLG, we are pleased to observe that for over 12 years, human rights have been increasingly inscribed in the agendas of local authorities from all over the globe.

Nevertheless, today we believe it is imperative to pursue this process so that the right to the city, understood as the equitable usufruct of cities within the principles of sustainability, equality, solidarity and social justice, becomes tangible realities in all of our cities and metropolitan regions. Our 1st Summit of Local Authorities for the Right to the City demonstrated that it is possible to advance in this direction through the **implementation of innovative local policies concerning the management of public spaces, housing and endogenous, social and solidarity-based development.**



In this spirit, we affirm our commitment to dialogue with the social movements and all bodies of civil society that at local, national and global level, work to establish legitimacy for this new human right in a predominantly urban world.

As state frameworks are ever less guarantors of fundamental rights, our responsibility as local authorities is to face the global challenges of human rights that are heightened by the international financial crisis and the social and environmental problems it provokes, the consequences of which are suffered by our citizens making it an ever more urgent issue.

With this in view, as for other global stakes, the **recognition of the role of local authorities** is decisive. This therefore reinforces the urgency for the United Nations to acknowledge UCLG as a privileged interlocutor and as such, to allocate observer status before the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Experience shows that human rights require the participation of those primarily concerned – citizens – in the movement to re-appropriate the stakes linked to the city and their participation in the elaboration of solutions. The promotion of human rights in the city and of the right to the city goes together with the development of **participatory democracy**, and has to ensure **gender equality** and the implementation of participatory practices in all domains of life.

In the movement that characterises the urbanization dynamic currently sweeping the planet, the question of the right to the city scrutinizes the way in which we consider the city, its objectives vis-à-vis all inhabitants and its rapport with the rural sphere. This raises in more terms the question of the right to centrality, the **right to metropolis for all**, and the right of citizens to find all the services they require in these spaces, giving meaning and content to the concepts of “living together” and of society.

We are committed to defending, within the municipal movement that will soon celebrate its one hundredth anniversary, this sense of shared interests that irrigate our exchanges.





Committee on
Social Inclusion,
Participatory Democracy
and Human Rights

We therefore call for a joint reflection in order to move forward our collective action within UCLG and within our shared instrument, the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights.

Saint-Denis, 12 December 2012



United Cities and Local Governments
Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis
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