

Circular 110

UCLG Committees and Working Groups

Barcelona, 29 May 2017

Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights

Minutes of the Committee Meeting on Human Rights and the Right to the City

Madrid, 18 April 2017

Dear members,

On 18 April, on the occasion of [the UCLG Executive Bureau](#) held in Madrid, the [UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights](#) and the City Council of Madrid organized a [Meeting of Cities for Human Rights and the Right to the City](#). The minutes of this event, which was attended by representatives of local governments and Madrilenian civil society human rights organizations, [are available online](#).

In front of an audience of almost 100 people, representatives of local governments (from Madrid, Plaine Commune, the Departmental Council of Seine-Saint-Denis, Gwangju, Barcelona, Mexico City, Montevideo, Nanterre, Vallromanes, Toronto, Sao Leopoldo, and Lausanne, among others) presented their priorities and strategies for defending and guaranteeing human rights. On this occasion, the City of Madrid presented its [Strategic Plan for Human Rights](#), recently approved by its City Council.

The interventions and debates clearly highlighted the common challenges for the realization of human rights at the local level: xenophobic and inward-looking trends observed all over the world, austerity policies that seriously limit the capacity of local governments to implement human rights, as well as the restriction of civil liberties. In the face of all these threats, participants shared their practices to ensure universal access to rights, especially for migrants, such as the sanctuary city of Toronto, Barcelona's action plan against islamophobia or the initiatives on the social inclusion of young people and global citizenship carried out by Seine-Saint-Denis. Participants also insisted on the link between historical memory processes and rights culture. In this regard, the city of Gwangju presented its work on historical memory related to the 1980 democratic uprising, a practice shared by the associations of victims of the Francoist dictatorship attending the event.

Local government representatives also insisted on the importance of the networking efforts carried out by the Committee in the difficult period of "global pushback against human rights", in order to strengthen messages and practices promoting, guaranteeing and protecting human rights from the local to the global level.

During the meeting, the Co-Presidents of the Committee also presented the [Activity Report for 2016](#) and the [2017 Action Plan](#).

Finally, Kim SOO A, representing the Metropolitan City of Gwangju, invited all participants to take part in the 7th World Forum of Cities for Human Rights, [which will take place in Gwangju](#) from 14-17 September in partnership with the Committee.

Sincerely,

The UCLG World Secretariat

on behalf of the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights

Please click on the links below to access the following documents:

- [Minutes of the Meeting of Cities for Human Rights and the Right to the City](#)
- [List of participants of the event](#)
- [Concept note](#)
- [Activity Report 2016](#)



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