

Final Declaration



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 Meeting 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.

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.