

## 2023 WHRCF Session Report

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**Date and Time:** Friday 6 October, 9:30 - 12 CET / 16:30 - 19:00 KST

**Name of Session:** Human Rights in the City - workshop for the update of the UCLG Global Charter-Agenda

**Panelists (in speaking order):**

- Mr. KIM Gwang-jin, Deputy Mayor for Culture and Economic Affairs, Gwangju Metropolitan City
- Mr. Morten Kjaerum, Director of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute
- Mr. Gyonggu Shin, Executive Director at International Human Rights Training Center of Gwangju Metropolitan City
- Mr. Mugiyanto, Human Rights Advisor at the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Indonesia
- Mr. Anatole Puiseux, Social Affairs Director, City of Marseille
- Ms. Rubi Cabrera Aguilera, Coordinator of the Office of the Ombudsman of the Municipality of San Antonio de Chile
- Ms. Caroline Agwanda, Governor's Advisor on Disability, Kisumu County Government
- Ms. Veronica Gonzalez, Director of Resilience and Ms. Xochitl Cruz, Resilience Department, City of Ciudad Juárez
- Ms. Ana Isabel Rodríguez Basanta, Director of Citizenship Rights of the City of Barcelona
- Mr. Carlos Carroza, Representative of the Observatory of Human rights in Chile
- Ms. Sneh Aurora, Human Rights Education expert and Director of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

**Moderator:** Ms. Amanda Fléty Martínez, Coordinator of the UCLG-CSIPDHR

### 1. What was the aim of the session?

The special session aimed at leveraging the update process of the [UCLG Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City](#) to outline a common international framework on Human Rights at local level, following the requests of the Local Governments participating in the UCLG-CSIPDHR Global Campaign "[10,100,1000 Human Rights Cities and Territories by 2030](#)". The session had the objective of reviewing the content of the rights included in the updated structure (which is currently [under discussion](#)) of the Charter-Agenda proposed by the Steering Group in charge of supervising the [first phase](#) of this process, by identifying specific concepts which should be reflected in the Charter-Agenda.

### 2. How does this issue relate to poverty and inequality and/or the localization of human rights?

The theme of this year's WHRCF on "Poverty and Inequality", lies at the core of Human Rights: addressing poverty and inequalities implies talking about peace, non-discrimination and respect for diversity, multilateralism and multilevel dialogue. This is at the core of the work of UCLG and its [Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights \(CSIPDHR\)](#), which recognize the importance of Human Rights instruments to ensure access to services; and call for Human Rights based local action to fight poverty and inequalities in order to enhance citizenship, dignity, decent work, social identity and freedom through

advocacy actions and international frameworks, such as the UCLG Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City.

### **3. What are the three most important messages from this session that are important for others to know?**

- The importance of common international frameworks for the protection of Human Rights and to make HR tangible at local level, especially for the achievement of the SDGs and after the COVID-19 pandemic, which stressed the importance of local actors for guaranteeing access to rights. This implies the necessity to institutionalize Human Rights to ensure that effective local actions and civil movements for HR protection – such as the ones of Indonesia and Korea - become a political legacy for a City or a Territory, fostering tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. The update of the UCLG Global Charter-Agenda represents a key opportunity in this sense, especially as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Human Rights Declaration.
- Participants highlighted the importance to reflect in the updated Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City both fundamental HR concepts such as social and cultural rights; and other dimensions specifically related to public service provisional local level. These dimensions range from right to internet; accessibility; financial inclusion and job creation; to HR education; right to a clean, healthy, sustainable environment and access to justice, among others. This has led to a discussion on the definition of basic rights and services; of “minimum standards” for citizens; on the interrelatedness between political, social and cultural rights at local level due to LRGs’ proximity to their inhabitants; as well as on the key role of LRGs for economic rights ,such as for remuneration of care work or for social security.
- Participants also shared their initiatives to stress the importance of the Human Rights cities movement and international cooperation to strengthen democracy. Fostering access to HR allows LRGs to catalyze proximity to enhance participation and social interaction, especially for marginalised groups such as migrants, women and children; preventing conflicts and fostering trust between citizens and institutions; as well as with civil society.

### **4. What are three actions that people committed to undertake after the Forum?**

- The UCLG-CSIPDHR Executive Secretariat and the Steering Group will integrate the ideas emerged in the discussion in the proposed structure. The inputs on the structure of rights were synthesized through the online tool of Mural which is attached here (Annex 1).
- The updated structure of the rights (title, formulation and re-grouping) will be finalized in the upcoming months and shared with the participants.
- The second phase of the process (2024 - 2025) will consist in the update of the content, the collection of local practices to be included as tools and policies to implement Human Rights at local level in the “Agenda” part of the document, in order to foster ownership and engagement of the new Charter by LRGs. All the participants of the session are welcome to join the process.

### **5. Memorable quotes from the discussion:**

- *"We already have a well-established approach: to respect, protect and fulfil #HumanRights. My dream is that we add a fourth one: the duty to engage people for active participation"* – Mr. Morten Kjaerum, Director of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute
- *« Nous devons lutter contre la pauvreté avec un focus sur des groupes spécifiques, tels que les migrants et les enfants »* - Mr. Anatole Puiseux, Social Affairs Director of Marseille
- *"In this update process of the Charter-Agenda, it is crucial to let people get actively engaged as participants in the #HumanRights promotion, no simply as recipients. Everybody should be an active*

*participant of this movement"* – Prof. Gyonggu Shin, Executive Director at International Human Rights Training Center of Gwangju Metropolitan City

- *"Implementing a local human rights-based approach helps us to understand the complexity of the local realities, looking at the past to prevent any kind of human rights violation to build a future based on truth, memory and reconciliation for democracy."* - Ms. Rubi Cabrera Aguilera, Coordinator of the Office of the Ombudsman Municipality of San Antonio Chile
- *"Es importante que los entes locales en red hagan presión para incidir en la importancia de la inclusión financiera para que impulsar el cumplimiento de los derechos humanos"* - Ms. Ana Isabel Rodríguez Basanta, Director of Citizenship Rights of the City of Barcelona

## 6. Inspiring local practices:

- Marseille: The second largest City of France faces challenges related to adequate housing, poor transportation system and migration, which are partly due to limited fiscal resources and competences of local authorities in these fields in France. Since 2020, the City is implementing policies to improve dignity and foster the participation of the most vulnerable people, leveraging diverse dynamic population with a strong sense of local community, grassroots movements and important opportunities of employment due to the touristic attractiveness. More specifically, the City has reinforced partnership with grassroot movements and civil servants in order to better identify the target groups - such as migrants and women - who have limited access to services and rights; promoting active outreach of these groups and making administrative procedures more open and accessible.
- San Antonio de Chile: the Municipality focuses on [access to justice](#) by promoting free (online or in person) legal support services for specific groups such as women victims of violence, persons with disabilities to address the lack of Human Rights education in the territory. The Office of the Ombudsman also undertakes training and capacity building activities on Human Rights for civil servants at local level by coordinating with the justice system; other City departments and other levels of governments; as well as information initiatives for the general public; which encourage the use of simple and accessible language.
- Kisumu County: the County has developed policies for disability, localizing the national Constitution and the UN Convention of Rights of People with Disabilities by fostering public participation and political representation of people with disabilities, with the objectives to protect their rights; to create a development fund; and to set up a County Disability Board at County level. This has translated into tangible measures for more accessible urban planning; policies to foster intersectionality (between actions for persons with disabilities but for also women, children, caregivers, etc); as well as to innovative partnership the business sector to foster inclusive digitalization and HR based public procurement, also in partnership with UCLG.
- Ciudad Juárez: the Municipality is championing bottom-up and participatory approaches (especially with children and women) to foster HR and people-based human security approaches and enhance the Right to the City, in light of Ciudad Juárez complex situation in terms of violence and migration given its position close the Mexican-US border. More specifically, the City is working on a [local Charter on the Right to the City](#) to be launched in December, for a long-term development of the city focused on Human Rights. Built in a participatory manner and ensuring its legitimacy, this strategy is both a guide for long term action and a legacy for the people of Juarez in the future. The Charter focuses on 6 pillars: prosperity and innovation; culture and education; dignity and solidarity; democracy and participation; safety and no-violence; livability and sustainability.
- Barcelona: the City has been working on the notion of "financial inclusion", to avoid that increasing digitalization of public services exacerbates marginalization and social exclusion of specific groups from service provision and access to rights – especially economic rights - due to digital divide. This includes raising awareness and training activities on financial management, which encompasses digital education and basic legal training, to address the lack of accessibility of several private and

banking instruments. The City also launched the [Cuenta de Pago Básico](#) (basic payment account) is a type of account that allows Barcelona's inhabitants to perform all the basic banking services and ensures that everyone can lead a normal economic and social life, no matter of their nationality or legal status. Furthermore, the City has been working with the private sector to promote the notion of "extraterritorial rights", warning that many local governments tend to forget the human and environmental-rights violations related to polluting industries and to global supply chains that they are part of and invest in.

#### **7. What is something that we can take forward to the next WHRCF in 2024?**

It would be important to hold another session in 2024 on the same topic; since the update of the Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City is the only ongoing international participatory process aiming at outlining a common and global framework on Human Rights at local level, inspired by the experience of Gwangju. Furthermore, the process will consist in different phases (update of the content of each right; of the general provisions and preamble; as well as a collection of practices at local level); will address several dimensions of Human Rights and it will continue until 2026 (next UCLG World Congress). Additionally, the upcoming WHRCF has the potential to play a prominent role in advancing the next stage of the "10, 100, 1000 Human Rights Cities and Territories" campaign, with a particular emphasis on the Asian region.