



Global Platform for the Right to the City
Plataforma Global por el Derecho a la Ciudad
Plataforma Global pelo Direito à Cidade

São Paulo, May 26th, 2015.

To Ms. Ana Moreno
Coordinator of Habitat III Secretariat

Dear Madame,

As organizations members of the Global Platform for the Right to the City, we would like to respectfully address you regarding the appointment of experts for Policy Units groups in the context of Habitat III Conference. Having in mind the importance of this process and the extensive expertise involved in the Global Platform for the Right to the City through its organizations, we are convinced that we could offer high-level contributions to the preparatory process of the Conference.

The Right to the City movement has been growing worldwide throughout the past decades, involving many different stakeholders and achieving a long-established discussion and mobilization process on the right to the city in different spaces at local, regional and international levels. Among others, the World Charter on the Right to the City – constructed within the World Social Forum and which recently completed ten years – is an important result of this process and inspired many other documents, policies and legislation around the world. Other important reference documents are the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City (Saint Denis, 2000), the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City (UCLG, 2011), the Brazilian national law City Statute (2001), Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City (2010), and the Rio de Janeiro Charter on the Right to the City (World Urban Forum, 2010).



Global Platform for the Right to the City
Plataforma Global por el Derecho a la Ciudad
Plataforma Global pelo Direito à Cidade

The most recent development of this movement is the Global Platform for the Right to the City, which emerged from the need to promote and mobilize national and local governments, international and regional organizations towards a new paradigm for development, more inclusive and democratic. It is the initiative of several organizations working on the theme around the world that promoted the International Meeting on Right to the City, held in São Paulo, Brazil, in November 2014, with special support of Ford Foundation: ActionAid; Avina Foundation; Brazilian Association of Municipalities; Cities Alliance; FMDV – Global Fund for the Cities Development; Ford Foundation; Habitat for Humanity; Habitat International Coalition (HIC); International Alliance of Inhabitants; National Front of Mayors; Pólis Institute; SDI – Shack/Slum Dwellers International; UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights; WIEGO – Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing.

The platform aims to be a space for articulation, content production and for communication and dissemination of good practices, both in the study and research on the right to the city as well as in the implementation of policies that promote the right to the city. Among others, we defend as guiding principles for urban development: the full exercise of citizenship, respecting and protecting human rights for all; the respect and fulfillment of the social function of land and property; the democratic management of the territory; the right to socially produce the habitat and economy for citizen's life; assurance of the rights of informal workers; responsible and sustainable management of common (natural, energy, historic and cultural) assets; and equal enjoyment of public spaces and community facilities. The Right to the City implementation also requires a framework for the decentralization of public administration (office, technical ability, resources) and an active role of local authorities, ensuring them democratic and participatory mechanisms in decision-making processes.

The implementation of the Right to the City through those principles is crucial to promote a shift in the current urban development paradigm, in which prevails the urban land market-value as its most important feature, the gentrification of traditional and popular neighborhoods, the privatization of collective spaces and the use of public funds to promote major infrastructure projects that, instead of improving citizen's well-being, have deepened marginalization, criminalization and expulsion of large sectors of the population.



Global Platform for the Right to the City
Plataforma Global por el Derecho a la Ciudad
Plataforma Global pelo Direito à Cidade

Based on its principles and on the background of the organizations involved, the Global Platform works with four thematic axis: Human Rights in the Cities; Democratic and Participatory Governance in the Cities; Urbanization, Sustainable Use of the Territory and Social Inclusion; and Economic Development and Social Inclusion in Cities. Therefore, we have organizations and experts from all over the world working together within these four thematic axis, producing high-quality material on those themes and discussing/sharing relevant experiences and possible alternatives in order to implement the Right to the City through public policies.

The next two years will be key to strengthen the theme and to push forward this agenda internationally, mainly because we believe that the Right to the City must be the cornerstone of the New Urban Agenda, which will result from the definition of Sustainable Development Goals in 2015 and from the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in 2016.

Since, in the preparatory process of the Habitat III Conference, the Policy Units shall bring together high-level expertise to explore state-of-the-art research and analysis; identify good practices and lessons learned; and develop independent policy recommendations on particular issues regarding sustainable urban development; we are certain that the Global Platform could point experts with a very solid background at the international level to the following policy units: 1) Right to the City and Cities for all; 2) Socio-Cultural Urban Framework; 3) National Urban Policies; 6) Urban Spatial Strategies: Land Market and Segregation; 7) Urban Economic Development Strategies; 8) Urban Ecology and Resilience; 10) Housing Policies.

It is important to highlight that we consider extremely relevant the initiative of bringing together individual experts from a variety of fields, including academia, government (having in mind the importance of involving local governments), civil society and other regional and international bodies, to those Policy Units. Therefore, the Global Platform would be committed to point experts from those different fields, as well as from different world regions and having in mind the importance of gender balance.



Global Platform for the Right to the City
Plataforma Global por el Derecho a la Ciudad
Plataforma Global pelo Direito à Cidade

We are looking forward to have the honor of contributing to this important process and to clarify any question that may arise.

Respectfully yours,

ActionAid; Avina Foundation; Habitat for Humanity; Habitat International Coalition (HIC); Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments for Post-2015 Agenda towards Habitat III; International Alliance for Inhabitants (IAI); Pólis Institute/ Brazilian Forum of Urban Reform, Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI); United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG); WIEGO – Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing.



Nelson Saule Jr.

On behalf of the Global Platform for the Right to the City

Global Platform for the Right to the city
righttothecityplatform@polis.org.br
<http://www.righttothecityplatform.org.br/>