



Global Platform for the Right to the City
Plataforma Global por el Derecho a la Ciudad
Plateforme Globale pour le Droit à la Ville



Habitat International Coalition (HIC) and Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C)

www.hic-net.org and www.right2city.org

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Chapeau

(Add your concise, concrete, and action-oriented language for the Chapeau)

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 1)

- The COVID emergency has made evident the crucial importance of enhancing social protection systems and putting forward approaches for defense and collective management of common goods, essential to the reproduction of human life.
- The urgent need for expanding and strengthening these mechanisms has been further reaffirmed by the affordability crisis experienced today in many realms and by the increasing privatization and financialization of essential goods and services.
- Under this framework, the response to the COVID-19 pandemic made evident the importance of defending and protecting the right to adequate housing, with State responses indicating that there is indeed room for finding alternatives and new forms of operating, through multi-actor collaboration and coordination. This period saw evictions being suspended, rents frozen, basic utilities services maintained and shelter alternatives found through measures such as the conversion of office spaces into housing.
- However, once the emergency period passed, these measures lost traction and a return to “business-as-usual” was observed. The measures implemented were not only short-lived but were in many cases insufficient, not being completely developed and many times not reaching the ones that need them most. In the end, few empty units were indeed converted into permanente affordable housing, while private-equity firms and global financial institutions seem to have taken the lead in speculating with empty units, under a scenario of reproduction of old macroeconomic recipes that rely on the real-estate and construction sectors for driving economic recovery.
- Thus not only housing seems to be less of a priority but when it is, approaches are limited and do not address the heart of the issue, particularly regarding increasing financialization and commodification of housing. Thus, a continuation and aggravation of the housing



crisis is observed around the world, touching both countries of the “global south” and the “global north”.

- This points to an urgent need to accelerate the commitments of States regarding housing rights and the right to the city, included in the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, through the promotion of approaches that actively combat the financialization of housing and foster not-for-profit and community practices such as housing cooperatives, collective tenure arrangements and the social production of habitat.
- Some of these have been explicitly acknowledged and included in the draft resolution approved in 2021 by the Third Committee on “Inclusive policies and programmes to address homelessness, including in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)”. In the text, States are encouraged to “take steps to end arbitrary evictions and the commodification of housing, through such actions as taxing empty units, requiring a certain percentage of new housing construction to include affordable housing, providing access to legal remedies, promoting housing cooperatives, promoting caps on rental costs and moderating housing costs”.

Chapter II. International peace and security

(Add your organization’s concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 2)

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

(Add your organization’s concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 3)

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

(Add your organization’s concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 4)

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

(Add your organization’s concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 5)

- There is an opportunity for harnessing the build-up and discussions during the Summit for the Future to advance a rooted trans-local governance system that is more diverse, plural, representative and counts with concrete channels to foster solidarity, coordination and autonomy between multiple sectors and actors beyond national governments.
- By “rooting the governance system” we mean better connecting the discussions and commitments from the global level to practices and actors at the local and grassroots levels, strengthening the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals and other related global agendas under reinforced accountability and reporting mechanisms, as well as diversification of existing financing mechanisms and public-community collaboration.
- Member States and UN agencies urgently need to engage with transformative, locally-led approaches such as the social and solidarity economy, the caregiving community initiatives, the



right to the city, the social production of habitat, the just transition and the collective defense and protection of commons. These approaches introduce new forms of social, political and economic organization that are centered on the collective interest, and place people and planet at the center.

- If this is to be achieved, it is key that this process of rethinking multilateral institutions also includes and is inspired by models and mechanisms being put forward by other actors, in other spaces. The right to the city and municipalist movements are claiming and experimenting with new urban social contracts for emancipating, caring, and wise communities and territories in which everyone can live with dignity and in peace.
- The global governance system should be grounded on the prioritization of marginalized groups. This entails centering actions around the protection and fulfillment of human rights obligations by States, further harnessing and supporting already existing mechanisms, in particular those relating to the Human Rights System,
- It also entails taking a strong stance regarding growing corporate capture of decision making at multiple levels and spheres, with concrete and worrying consequences in terms of democracy, trust in government, growing socio-economic and territorial inequalities, climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Initiatives of public-community partnerships can contribute to fostering social cohesion and forms of active citizenship, with organized channels for social mobilization and action both inside and outside public institutions and state mechanisms. Indeed, promoting and strengthening spaces for autonomy and collective management is as important as broadening the spaces for recognition, representation and participation.
- Examples of participatory design, regulatory innovations and mechanisms for collaboration and social control that guarantee that initiatives meet local needs and secure their long-term sustainability of commoning initiatives include “public-community partnerships”, “pacts of collaboration”, “commons accords”, “commons regulatory framework” and “chambers of the commons”, that introduce mechanisms for collective governance and for recognizing and compensating community organizing and engagement.
- Thus, equally important as affirming the need to protect the commons is to put forward a debate on the models and mechanisms for such a protection, in a manner that is aligned with the collective interest and protects their permanence through time, but also fosters community engagement, social cohesion and resource distribution. Such an approach introduces opportunities for advancing towards more democratic societies through social innovation practices committed to more horizontal, collaborative and collective decision-making frameworks.
- As we gear up towards the Summit for the Future, it is clear that without substantially widening the channels for dialogue and collaboration with relevant stakeholders and effectively supporting community-led processes and the role of women’s leadership in decision-making, we will remain on the path of inertia and considerable retrogression, with devastating social, economic, political and environmental consequences.