

## ANNEX 1

### Cities against gentrification The Barcelona Manifesto

#### **Background**

United Cities and Local Governments sees the **right to housing** as an important cornerstone of the Right to the City, which was one of the central goals of our advocacy during the debates on the **New Urban Agenda**.

Led by Co-President Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona and embedded in the debates held in the Policy Council on the Right to the City together with the **Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights** the World Organization **is undertaking different activities that are visualized together as a "Wave of Action"** on housing for 2017-2018.

**The Wave of Action on Housing** promotes a series of coordinated actions within a period of approximately six to 18 months, involving different parts of the network in advocacy, learning, monitoring and reporting.

The political document deriving from the debates held in a special session in Barcelona and the inaugural session of the Policy Council in Hangzhou have led to the development of the **Barcelona Manifesto: Cities Against Gentrification**.

Drawn up by the City of Barcelona, the Manifesto and currently in discussion with the members of the committee on Social Inclusion and others, seeks to put a different narrative on housing at the heart of the international agenda.

The Manifesto will be the backbone of the "Make The Shift" initiative of the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Leilani Farha, which calls for housing to be seen as a human right and a social good, rather than as a commodity and is the advocacy component of the Wave of Action.

#### **Next steps:**

- The content of the manifesto will be presented in the High Level Political Forum in New York as critical food for thought if SDG 11 is to be achieved.
- Cities around the world will be called to adhere to the Manifesto
- A working group of core cities will be set up in collaboration with the Committee on Social Inclusion to work towards identifying policy tools and advocacy action and technical exchange needed to implement the principles of the manifesto
- Housing will be a component of the GOLD V Report on the Localization of the Global Agendas in 2019.

# Cities against Gentrification

## Manifesto for the Right to Housing and the Right to the City

New York, 16th July 2018.

On the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Le Droit à la ville* (Henri Lefebvre, 1968) and shortly after the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III (Quito, 2016) included the need to make the right to the city effective, the signatory cities below take part in this High-Level Political Forum of the United Nations to follow up Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" by 2030), with the support of UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) and Leilani Farha, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations on Adequate Housing.

We, the local governments are the public administration that is closest to the population and the most sensitive to their everyday needs. In the contemporary world, unbridled market deregulation, the impassivity of many states and the growing power of new information and communication technologies mean that globalization is often becoming a burden on our neighbourhoods, causing serious distortions in their social fabric, and putting the right to housing and the right to the city at risk. Real estate speculation, the financialization of housing, touristification of historic neighbourhoods, socio-spatial segregation of the outskirts, forced evictions without offering alternative solutions, housing precariousness, homelessness, urban sprawl and informal urban enlargements without the necessary facilities or infrastructure, are growing phenomena that threaten the equity and sustainability of our urban model. Given this situation, cities cannot stay on the sidelines, and need to take a central role. For all these reasons, we call for the following actions.

### 1. Towards a civilized real estate market

*We demand more legal and fiscal powers to regulate the real estate market in order to fight against speculation and guarantee the social function of property.*

We, the local governments require coercive tools to drive away speculation from our neighbourhoods. Furthermore, we need to provide ourselves with a sanctioning capacity to defend the use of first residences in the face of tourism abuses or the proliferation of empty housing. We also require instruments to regulate the housing rental market, protecting tenants from speculative bubbles and mass expulsions. Likewise, we demand instruments to avoid the concentration of capital gains by the few, and to reclaim them for the common good, both in new developments and in urban renewal on consolidated urban land. Finally, we need powers to fight sub-standard housing, energy poverty and property neglect.

### 2. Towards strengthening public housing

*We demand more resources and investment to consolidate and enlarge the public housing rental stock in all of our neighbourhoods.*

We, the local governments demand more resources and investment to enlarge our public housing stocks. We must promote exceptional solutions that respond proportionally to the seriousness of the housing emergency and promote innovative, fairer, sustainable, more agile and economically efficient alternatives. We must defend public housing as a universal right, not only accessible to the disadvantaged but also to the middle class. Furthermore, we must guarantee a balanced distribution

of public housing in the city, to avoid socio-spatial segregation, the tension between centres and peripheries, or the emergence of social ghettos in marginal areas. We should promote medium and small-scale residential buildings, with shared spaces and services, enriching the spatial quality of neighbourhood and within reach of small and medium-sized construction companies.

### **3. Towards the co-production of public-private-community-driven alternative housing**

*We are committed towards boosting mixed residential solutions, which are neither solely government-driven nor purely based on commercial gain.*

We, the local governments need to be able to count on the strength and talent from our cities' productive and social fabric to co-produce mixed solutions, instead of exclusively focusing on public or business-led schemes. We must rationalize subsidies and tax exemptions to benefit those who need them the most. In addition, we must support the cooperative housing model and create public-private operators to invest capital in the promotion of affordable rental housing by readjusting their profit margins. Likewise, we must collaborate with Third Sector organisations and foster the participation, self-management and empowerment of residents, supporting good practices such as collaborative design or assisted self-construction.

### **4. Towards urban planning that combines the right to housing with the right to the city**

*We are committed towards planning mixed, compact and polycentric cities where housing benefits from a balanced context and contributes to the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the urban fabric.*

We, the local governments must promote the compactness of urban fabrics to combat urban sprawl. We need urban planning practices that avoid the dependence on the private vehicle and return to the model of accessible, walkable and cyclable cities that are provided with efficient public transport networks. We must prioritize recycling existing urban fabrics over new developments, and overcome the logic of functional zoning by promoting mixed uses in all of our neighbourhoods. We must promote interaction and mixing between different social strata. Urban improvement actions must be accompanied by preventive measures to avoid the expulsion of neighbours. We should also provide alternatives to the extension of new informal settlements by focusing on the causes that lead to them and not on their victims.

### **5. Towards municipalist solidarity in residential strategies**

*We want to enhance solidarity within municipal networks that defend the right to housing and the right to the city by boosting long-term strategies on a metropolitan scale.*

We, the local governments are committed towards cooperation and knowledge exchange in urban and residential policies. We also propose joining forces to call for more resources and powers from both national and international supra-municipal bodies. We need the principle of subsidiarity to be applied to housing and urban policies. Furthermore, we call upon the cities to form a joint front when negotiating with global actors or digital platforms. In addition, we commit ourselves towards practising metropolitan solidarity so as to overcome competitive localisms, centre-peripheral tensions and territorial imbalances. Finally, we commit ourselves to reaching city agreements that transcend governmental terms of office and guarantee the coherence and continuity of long-term strategies.