



SERIES GOVERNANCE AND CITIZENSHIP

Thinking the city of tomorrow: the words of their inhabitants

PROPOSAL PAPERS FOR THE XXIST CENTURY - CHARLES LEOPOLD MAYER EDITIONS

Proposal papers for the 21th century

The proposal papers are a collection of short books on each decisive area of our future, which assemble those proposals that appear the most capable of bringing about the changes and transformations needed for the construction of a more just and sustainable 20th century. They aim to inspire debate over these issues at both local and global levels.

The term 'globalisation' corresponds to major transformations that represent both opportunities for progress and risks of aggravating social disparities and ecological imbalances. It is important that those with political and economic power do not alone have control over these transformations as, trapped within their own short-term logic, they can only lead us to a permanent global crisis, all too apparent since the September 11th attacks on the United States.

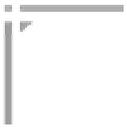
This is why the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World (see appendix) initiated, in 2000-2001, a process of assembling and pinpointing proposals from different movements and organisations, different actors in society and regions around the world. This process began with electronic forums, followed by a series of international workshops and meetings, and resulted in some sixty proposal texts, presented at the World Citizen Assembly held in Lille (France) in December 2001.

These texts, some of which have been completed and updated, are now in the process of being published by a network of associative and institutional publishers in 6 languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Arabic and Chinese) in 7 countries (Peru, Brazil, Zimbabwe, France, Lebanon, India, China). These publishers work together in order to adapt the texts to their different cultural and geopolitical contexts. The aim is that the proposal papers stimulate the largest possible debate in each of these regions of the world and that they reach their target publics whether they be decision-makers, journalists, young people or social movements.

Presentation of the proposals paper « Thinking the city of tomorrow: the words of their inhabitants »

This document is a synthesis of the works done by the World Conference of Inhabitants held in Mexico in October 2000, which was the result of several years work on every continent aimed at giving a voice to ordinary inhabitants, especially those of poor districts, concerning the problems affecting life in cities in the 21st century. Cities are the creations of their inhabitants. However, they have been kept away from the decision-making process in every field of urban life. The dominant economic system and economic globalisation have deprived society of its know-how, aggravated urban poverty, devastated the environment and broken the social fabric.

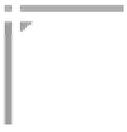
The inhabitants gathered at Mexico attempted to answer the question, "What city do we want for the 21st century?" The resulting proposals highlight the assertion of values and principles and the formulation of strategies for change, they recall the non-application of rights and proposals for the organisation of inhabitants. They aim at building a collective ideal and a city that is democratic, educational, inclusive, liveable, sustainable, productive and safe.



Thinking the city of tomorrow: the words of their inhabitants

*World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants
Making our voices heard*

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Summary

I - INTRODUCTION	9
1) BACKGROUND	9
2) RETHINKING THE CITY FROM THE PEOPLE	10
3) OBJECTIVES OF THE INHABITANTS WORKGROUP	12
4) ON THE ISSUES OF THE ASSEMBLY	12
5) THE METHOD: A MOBILIZING FORCE	14
<i>Exchanges</i>	15
6) PERSPECTIVES	16
II - PROPOSALS AND PRINCIPLES FROM THE URBAN INHABITANTS ORGANIZATIONS	18
INTRODUCTION	18
1) VALUES AND PRINCIPLES	18
2) TRANSFORM	19
3) APPLY RIGHTS	20
4) ORGANIZE	21
PROPOSALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COLLECTIVE IDEAL	22
PROPOSALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CITY	23
PROPOSALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EDUCATIVE CITY	24
PROPOSALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE INCLUSIVE CITY	26
PROPOSALS FOR A LIVABLE, SUSTAINABLE, PRODUCTIVE AND SAFE CITY	28
ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHENING AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION STRATEGIES	31
COLLECTIVE PREPARATORY DOCUMENTS	33
AFRICAN CHARTER OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN INHABITANTS AND LOCAL COLLECTIVITIES	33
<i>PREAMBLE</i>	33
A. MUTUAL RECOGNITION	33
B. ORGANISATION OF LOCAL COLLECTIVITIES AND PARTNERSHIP	34
C. BUILDING THE PARTNERSHIP	35
D. FINANCING OF PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS	35
E. GLOBAL	36
FOR JUST AND DEMOCRATIC CITIES	37
LOCAL HEROES 21 - FINAL RESOLUTION	39
XALAPA DECLARATION	41
LATIN AMERICA HABITAT 2000 FORUM "SALVADOR CHARTER"	43
THE CAPITAL OF THE PEOPLE VERSUS THE MISERY OF CAPITAL	47
MONTEVIDEO DECLARATION	47
NOTES	50

CREDITS	51
THE ALLIANCE FOR A RESPONSIBLE, PLURAL AND UNITED WORLD.....	53
THE PROPOSAL PAPERS ON THE INTERNET	55
PARTNER PUBLISHERS	57

I - Introduction

1) Background

The World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants, held in October 2000 in Mexico City, was the result of a lengthy process which began in Istanbul, Turkey in June 1996 with the Inhabitants Forum convoked by the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the Progress of Humanity (FPH), within the events held parallel to the second UN Conference on Human Settlements, Habitat II. That Forum provided the opportunity for representatives from social organizations from Venezuela, Mexico, Brazil, Senegal and France to debate urban issues and to discuss the need for their own voice within international forums.

The Habitat II regional preparatory processes stimulated the active participation of hundreds of social organizations from around the world, many of whom were also able to participate personally in events in Istanbul organized by Habitat International Coalition (HIC), the African networks, the Latin American Table, and the Asian Tent. The Latin American Meeting of Women Neighborhood Leaders, held in Bolivia in 1997, and diverse international activities of the HIC Women and Shelter Network, also helped open spaces specifically for participation specifically by women from the base organizations.

Diverse regional initiatives stand out in their efforts to build networks of inhabitants. Shack Dwellers International (SDI) coordinates collaboration among inhabitants of precarious settlements in Asia and Africa. The Continental Front of Popular Organizations, FCOP, brings together movements and social organizations from throughout the Americas. The Latin American Secretariat for Popular Housing, SELVIP, links popular organizations in South America who struggle for the right to the city and to housing and who work in self-production of popular housing. The European section of HIC, based at Unione Inquilini in Italy, began the construction of a European network of inhabitants through an event held in Venice in 1998 on "popular strategies to stay in historic downtown centers". An initiative emerged in February 1998 at an event held in Dakar, Senegal to provide continuity to the Istanbul Inhabitants Forum through the stimulation of a network of inhabitants from various Western African countries, known as the Inter-African Inhabitants Collective.

The preparatory process itself of the World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants included the following regional events:

* The Inter-African Inhabitants Forum (Africités), held in Windhoek, Namibia from 12-21 May 2000, brought together representatives from 15 African countries (7 Anglophone and 8 Francophone). From this event emerged the AFRICAN CHARTER FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND INHABITANTS (see III). The member organizations of the Inter-African Inhabitants Collective were involved in the preparation of this Forum which was an opportunity for the inhabitants organizations to come together in Africa and prepare as a group for the Assembly in Mexico. The Collective, which

coordinates the West African organizations, initiated an Inter-African reflection process on governance, decentralization and integration in Africa.

* In Europe, the preparatory process was activated by the Berlin Habitat Forum and Unione Inquilini. Between 3-6 June 2000 inhabitants organizations from several European Union and Eastern European countries met in Berlin. This event, called "Local Heroes", had the purpose to facilitate exchange and the establishment of networks among the different neighborhood movements, housing cooperatives, homeless groups and environmental organizations. A set of Final Resolutions was emitted at the closure of the event (see III).

* In Brazil, a preparatory meeting towards the World Assembly was held on 7-9 June 2000 in Belo Horizonte, organized by SELVIP. Several Brazilian inhabitants organizations and FUCVAM of Uruguay participated in this event, which produced the Belo Horizonte Declaration, "For Just and Democratic Cities" (see III).

* Various preparatory events were organized in Mexico, the first of which brought together close to 400 representatives of the Mexican Urban Popular Movement in Xalapa, Veracruz on 22-23 July 2000. After a broad debate, the representatives drafted the Xalapa Declaration, signed by 50 social organizations (see annex). Various national thematic assemblies were subsequently held in different locations: Netzahualcóyotl (the democratic city, 6 August), Iztapalapa (the sustainable and healthy city, 19 August), El Molino, Mexico City (the educative city), Zacatecas (the livable city, 26-27 August), and Querétaro (the productive city, 23-24 September).

This international process culminated with the Mexico City Assembly, which united 300 representatives, including 160 international participants and 140 Mexicans, from 91 and 75 social organizations respectively. Thirty-five countries were represented: 3 from Asia, 13 from Africa, 5 from Europe, 2 from North America, and 12 from Latin America.

2) Rethinking the city from the people

For the first time, 300 urban inhabitants from throughout the world came together to discuss strategies and share collective ideals. Themes and issues usually reserved to the "experts", urban developers, architects and other specialists, were discussed. Historically, cities were founded by communities, and then transformed by experts on the one hand and the people themselves, immigrants and inhabitants. In many cities of the world, the majority of the housing has been produced by the people themselves without assistance from urban developers or architects. Cities are the creation of inhabitants, men and women. Nevertheless, they have been distanced from the decision-making processes in all urban fields. The dominant economic model and the economic globalization process have stripped society of its skills, deepened urban poverty, devastated the environment, and torn the social fibers.

For the first time at this scale, the associations and neighborhood committees, social organizations, and organized inhabitants came together to rethink, from their own perspective, the city that they want for the 21st Century and the strategies to achieve it. Also for the first time, the inhabitants, men and

women, did not remain silent listening to the experts' speeches, but rather, it was the urban developers and professionals who heard the voice of the inhabitants.

At the turn of the third millennium, populations are urbanizing to the point of encompassing as much as 70% of the total population in some countries. This phenomenon is accompanied by urban fragmentation, exclusion and segregation. While the middle and upper income groups concentrate in self-sufficient zones in terms of housing and services, the poorest sectors are concentrated in informal settlements, victims of inexistent housing policies and lacking adequate services and facilities.

In his closing address to the World Assembly, Superbarrio, Mexico City's mythical urban hero, underlined the role of the inhabitants: "In the neighborhoods, villas, favelas, ghettos and other settlements, we build the city, day in and day out. We build it as we imagine it, respecting life, side-by-side and collectively with those of us who want our piece of the city, to make it better, from the ground up and between all of us. To care for it, dress it up, and enjoy it like we enjoy our children and our grandparents; a people who struggle are a free people, our struggle is for the free, tolerant, living city, ours, all of ours."

In the Xalapa Declaration, the possibility to rethink the city from the people is proposed: "Cities have been built by their inhabitants themselves, but those inhabitants have been unable to enjoy the product of this effort. We reclaim the cities for those who live them. And we demand that the cities be rethought as democratic, safe, inclusive, equitable, educative, sustainable, healthy and productive cities."

In Africa, the Dakar Declaration emphasizes the following points as a new way to "rethink the city from the people":

- * Mutual recognition among local authorities and base organizations.
- * Organize local governments towards association.
- * Build collaboration among local governments and civil society.

In Berlin, the participants in "Local Heroes 21" reiterated that governments have made no effort since the Habitat II Conference to install mechanisms to stimulate popular participation or to allow decision-making from the down-up, in accordance with citizen wishes. Strategies were established to return power to the communities as a form of struggle against exclusion.

In Belo Horizonte, Brazil, the organizations members of SELVIP proposed profound structural changes in public policies to achieve livable cities and to redistribute wealth. The proposals revolve around popular participation at all levels, with mechanisms for social management and control of public policy, through councils, democratic budgets, and fiscal and decision-making channels for the designation of the use of public resources that prioritize citizens and impede corruption.

Each region proposed its own strategies, different among themselves, but all pointing towards common objectives: social participation in decision-making. It appears that one voice emerged from the World Assembly: enough neo-

liberalism, concentration of wealth, and exclusion of broad sectors of the population: land and the city for all!

3) Objectives of the inhabitants workgroup

The objectives of the inhabitants workgroup are the objectives of the World Assembly of Inhabitants:

- * Reflect on the city we want and advance in the construction of a collective ideal.
- * Present strategic fields to undertake innovative and mobilizing social experiences that achieve and advance the transformation processes that we support.
- * Establish the bases for the promotion of strategic alliances, and build exchange networks, fronts and coalitions at all levels to disseminate our proposals and experiences, and to promote our recognition as legitimate agents of dialogue with governments, international bodies, multilateral funds and other actors who influence urban policies.
- * Establish strategies and coordination mechanisms in order to present unified fronts in lobby actions, negotiations, and pressures needed to defend, promote and achieve our right to the city and to guarantee the full implementation of our human rights.
- * Strengthen an international inhabitants network.

4) On the issues of the Assembly

The first central theme proposed within the Assembly is the construction of a collective ideal. One of the collective ideals is the creation of a responsible, plural and solidary world based on complementarity and productive exchange for life. In the Assembly workshop on “Building a collective ideal”, the following values were identified, which give insight into the collective ideal in the perspective of the inhabitants:

- * We want a world with unity and solidarity, rich in diversity.
- * We want a world founded on social justice, dignity and mutual respect.
- * We want to build a world that associates freedom, autonomy and responsibility.
- * We want to build a world in which material development is at the service of real integral development of people and societies.
- * We want to build a world capable of evaluating, deciding and transforming through its own cultural heritage.

The second central theme encompasses the fields of transforming innovation and action.

The democratic city, is not only a city where all the inhabitants have the right to vote, but rather it is a city with democratic organizations built from the neighborhood “the base” up. The democracy that the inhabitants aspire to reaches down to the deep roots of the people, respecting cultural diversity and gender equity. The concepts of democracy and equity go together. The

building of a democratic state starts from the smallest spaces: the municipality, the neighborhood, and finally the city.

The educative city is framed within the principles of solidarity, harmonious and democratic community living, respect for diversity, and humanism, as found within the Charter of the International Association of Educative Cities. In the Assembly, the inhabitant organizations revealed various educative projects in different fields: on urban formation (citizenship education); on habitat (integral housing and environmental protection projects); health (popular health and children's community center projects); culture (traditional neighborhood rescue projects). The educative city must be assumed as the educative agent par excellence through all the educative experiences and impacts found within it, and, through this recognition, promote education for democratic, integral and profound community living.

The inclusive city is a city for everyone, including the indigenous, street children, the disabled, etc. And also for the millions of people who lack access to housing, public services, work, education, health, etc. In order for a city to be truly inclusive, all of the economic, social and cultural rights must be recognized, defended and implemented. Nevertheless, the struggle for the inclusive city must take into account its position in the globalized world economic system, that excludes millions of people. Globalization has generated negative impacts in the local productive structures, with the local poor as its main victims.

The livable city is a city where all the inhabitants have a place to live with dignity. The sustainable city requires a balance between human development and the use of the natural resources. The healthy city implies the co-relation between nutrition, health preservation and the improvement of living conditions. The productive city implies harmony between individual and collective productivity-creativity. The safe city implies relations of respect and social protection, as well as prevention measures that guarantee an equilibrium between physical and natural space.

The third theme encompasses organizational strengthening, and the fourth, international action strategies.

The objectives inherent to the process of struggle of the popular organizations are, (1) to advance in the occupation of political decision-making spaces, (2) to promote proposals for the transformation of the legal and normative frameworks from a popular perspective, and (3) to develop participative planning and management proposals.

One of the international action strategies is to implement a process for the establishment of a global alliance based on the organizations of the World Assembly of Inhabitants.

Through these themes, the World Assembly developed various resolutions. Each of the resolutions integrates collective proposals and was drafted by the participants in the respective workshop:

- * Ideal Collective Workshop
- * Democratic City Workshop
- * Educative City Workshop

- * Inclusive City Workshop
- * Livable, Sustainable, Healthy, Productive and Safe City Workshops
- * Safe City (RE Disaster Prevention and Management) Workshop
- * Safe City (RE Urban Violence) Workshop
- * Organizational Strengthening and International Action Strategies Workshop
- * Resolutions of the Women Inhabitants meetings

5) The method: a mobilizing force

The following is based in part on the text by Enrique Ortiz, “Building future: reflections on the organizational process of the World Assembly of Inhabitants”, November 2000.

The organizational process that led up to the World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants, as a first attempt to build a true “college of inhabitants”, was in itself a hope-filled experience in how to face challenges, from the organized people.

The original idea to organize an international event exclusively for inhabitants emerged over coffee between Teolinda Bolivar and Pierre Calame. That idea, enriched by previous experiences and by the inhabitant colleagues in Venezuela, was transformed into a proposal placed before the HIC office in Mexico (1). The long history of the Popular Urban Movement (MUP) in Mexico, the presence of the first democratically elected government in Mexico City, and the experience of the office at the international scale, were motives for its selection for this task.

The task was enthusiastically assumed, and the MUP colleagues were immediately invited to join and take the initiative into their own hands. A group that began with five people gradually attracted organizations, wills, ideas and commitments until a very creative and dynamic organizing committee of close to forty people was assembled.

At the international level, the idea also mobilized many social and non-governmental organizations interested in convoking and supporting the process. Twenty-five social organizations from different regions of the world, twenty-six Mexican organizations, and a similar number of networks and NGOs subscribed to the convocation.

The preparatory process began in earnest in January 2000. National and regional processes were initiated: movements, organizations and inhabitants groups were invited to organize local and national processes to discuss the proposed themes and to define their participation, establish their coordination mechanisms, and finally to select their representatives or delegates to participate in the Assembly in Mexico.

The organizations in the different countries and their networks were also encouraged to use their own programmed activities to stimulate and prepare the participation of their members; to identify the themes among those of the Assembly which were most strategic for their own international work, and to

develop their own proposals for organizational strengthening and mobilization.

The preparatory processes generated at the national and regional level up to September 2000 defined the final set of themes and the structure of the debates. In order to fulfill the objectives of the Assembly and organize the workshops, the participants had been asked to decide and inform the Assembly Secretariat in Mexico as to the themes in which they wished to participate. Some offered to coordinate the individual workshops and prepared and submitted introductory texts. The coordinators were requested to locate their workshop within one of the four central themes and to focus in their introductory texts on the proposals to be debated, to orient and provoke discussion, rather than on diagnoses and case descriptions.

Some rules were also established in order to structure the debates and assure that it would be truly an Inhabitants Assembly in which they could express themselves:

- * The specific proposals should be located within the four central themes.
- * The themes that did not have workshop coordinators would be discarded from the agenda.
- * Those who prepared the introductory texts would be responsible to introduce and stimulate participation in the workshops.
- * The NGOs and academic advisors could only participate as observers and facilitators both in the preparatory process and in the Assembly itself.

Some 25 introductory texts were submitted, constituting an important effort of the social organizations to systematize their vision and their proposals in regards to the city. In this way, most of the participants reached the World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants very well prepared.

Exchanges

Another important element of the World Assembly of Inhabitants was the exchange generated by visits to some of the most successful experiences of the Mexican popular organizations in diverse fields of action (production, education, health, ecology, etc.) in neighborhoods in Mexico City and nearby populations. Nine different tours, all organized by the Mexican Popular Urban Movement, were carried out by the international participants.

An exhibit of 49 panels provided the opportunity for another kind of exchange. The panels illustrated the experiences of 41 organizations in 12 countries who brought the panels from their places of origin.

An additional form of exchange was obtained through more than 20 interviews collected from various participants. These experiences are available in the form of abstracts within the DPH Network (Dialogues for the Progress of Humanity), and are included here as an annex.

6) Perspectives

a) *Struggle for demands recognized as essential.*

These demands are outlined in the international solidarity platform drafted in the workshop on “Organizational strengthening and international action strategies”:

Against:

- * The payment of foreign debt,
- * The privatization processes in relation to natural and energy resources, social housing, services, communication systems, and all strategic areas;
- * The dominant culture that promotes racism, exclusion, repression, intolerance, xenophobia, etc.;
- * The use of the armed and police forces as instruments for the application of repressive policies against the actions developed by the social organizations.

In favor of:

- * Security of tenure of land and housing;
- * Agrarian reform and urban reform from a collective optic for and of the workers, inhabitants, and their self-organization;
- * The recognition and support of the governments to the habitat creation and improvement processes, prioritizing self-management in its broadest sense as the method;
- * Build democratic social organizations, with alternative and sustainable projects;
- * Tax large capital movements (Tobin Tax) and unused land and housing;
- * Establish unemployment insurance and work training programs;
- * Develop legislation, public policies, tools and resources dedicated to revert inequalities based on age, gender, sexual option, ethnic group, religion, etc.

b) *Unite with other struggles and opposition movements to globalization* (the Alliance for a Responsible and Solidary World, the World Social Forum, the Cry of the Excluded, ATTAC, etc.).

* The Assembly agreed that the follow-up process would be coordinated and monitored by Habitat International Coalition (HIC) and the Alliance for a Responsible and Solidary World (decision of the workshop on International Action Strategies).

* Several representatives of social organization participants in the World Inhabitants Assembly participated in the World Social Forum held in January 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, where they presented the conclusions on *the democratic city* from the Assembly.

* Representatives from the Cry of the Excluded were present at the Assembly to strengthen their contacts.

c) *establish alliance with other labor, rural, indigenous, ecologist, and women’s organizations, including specifically FCOP, SELVIP, CIAH, etc.*

* SELVIP (the Latin American Secretariat for Popular Housing) held an international seminar on 1-5 October 2001 in Montevideo, on “Social Production of Habitat: the capital of the people versus the misery of capital”. The seminar proposed to examine the status of the social production experiences of the popular resistance struggles in the light of the neoliberal prescriptions of exclusion and increased poverty developed over recent decades throughout the continent.

d) *Take full advantage of the international spaces within the United Nations and other international institutions (internet, forums, etc.).*

e) *Promote the conclusions of the Assembly at the local, national and international scales.*

II - Proposals and principles from the urban inhabitants organizations

Introduction

From 2 -6 October 2000, 300 participants from 35 countries came together in Mexico City to discuss action strategies towards the city we want and to formulate proposals directed towards local and national governments and international bodies (United Nations, World Bank, World Trade Organization, etc.). Each of the participants represented neighborhood or social organizations and urban inhabitants.

Six general themes were addressed:

- Building a collective ideal
- Building the democratic city
- Building the educative city
- Building the inclusive city
- The livable, sustainable, productive and safe city
- Organizational strengthening and international action strategies

Over the course of two days the participants met in 20 workshops. The proposals developed within each of the themes were collected and classified into four types:

- VALUES and PRINCIPLES
- TRANSFORMATION proposals
- Proposals for the APPLICATION OF RIGHTS
- ORGANIZATIONAL proposals

1) VALUES and PRINCIPLES

The values shared by the inhabitants for the building of a collective ideal are radically different from the market values and those implied by globalization.

While the inhabitants speak of inclusion, the market implies exclusion (of those who can't pay). When the inhabitants speak of liberty and autonomy, globalization speaks of dependence (social and economic). When the inhabitants talk about social justice, dignity and mutual respect, the market speaks of injustice. When the inhabitants speak of building a united, solidary, and diverse world, globalization calls for one way of thinking (ex. I am thirsty: Coke).

The values shared by the inhabitants for the construction of the democratic city are opposed to the principles of an authoritative city. When the inhabitants refer to a democratic city, it is not only a city with a democratically elected government, but rather a city that embodies solidarity, trust, reciprocity, equity, the sense of community life, and the autonomy of the social

organizations. The value of solidarity is found throughout all of the themes of the Assembly.

The inhabitants' values for the construction of the educative city are opposed to those for a private and exclusive education, as is the trend today. Education can not be just a business. The inhabitants defend the respect for diversity, recognizing the principle of equality for all women and men, boys and girls, and respecting cultural identities. They defend public, lay, scientific and free education.

The inhabitants also defend the values of solidarity, equity and unity for the building of the inclusive city. The city of exclusion is precisely the city of the market and the transnationals that opposes these values.

For the livable, sustainable, productive and safe city, the inhabitants promote new human values and a distinct popular ethic from the dominant "liberal ethic": an ethic of solidarity at all levels. We also must become aware that the safe city can not be based on discrimination of any kind.

The values and principles for organizational strengthening characterize the social organizations that should be plural, collective, autonomous, democratic, self-managed and non-dogmatic.

2) TRANSFORM

Throughout all of the themes, the inhabitants demonstrated a will to transform not only society but also thought. Building a collective ideal implies valuing capacities and mobilizing their potentials. The potentials of the inhabitants are in fact little appreciated by a consumer and market society that considers the inhabitants only as potential consumers. The collective ideal is not for a consumer mentality but rather to evaluate-decide-transform through peoples' own cultural heritage.

The inhabitants' proposals for the transformation of today's city into a democratic city revolve around the building of a democratic state, the reconstruction of popular power, and the strengthening of the local spaces, ie the municipalities. The inhabitants emphasize the real collaboration among inhabitants and local governments, in Latin America as well as in Africa.

The transformation of a city into an educative city implies the promotion and application of various projects: self-managed projects in different fields (housing, small businesses, self-employment, etc.) and the development of alternative educational proposals, whose goal is not financial gain but the education of all. Collective projects should be promoted for the reconstruction of the social fibers which have been destroyed by the neoliberal policies. Schools being created in the popular neighborhoods appear to be the beginning of an alternative education.

In order to transform an exclusive city into an inclusive city, the means should be provided so that people, independent of their origin, have access to work, education, health services, and housing. The proposal is to build the city from the bottom up and from the family.

The transformation proposals for the livable, sustainable and productive city revolve around urban agriculture, health, social-productive projects and cooperatives. Inhabitants organizations have developed and promoted very specific alternative proposals for environmental protection for more than 20 years. In reference to the safe city, the inhabitants' proposals revolve around the promotion of organizational processes that include risk prevention and disaster mitigation with the broad participation of social organizations, academics, and civil and non-governmental organizations.

The transformation proposals for organizational strengthening and international strategies presented by the inhabitants call for the occupation of public policy decision-making spaces. Few spaces now exist in which the inhabitants' organizations can express themselves and influence policies. Where these spaces exist, they are not occupied by the social organizations and the private sector groups take advantage of them in order to assume a relevant role. Another proposal is to participate in the international spaces opened by the UN such as ECOSOC and Habitat II, and if not possible due to local or international conditions, participation in an alternative way is considered.

3) APPLY RIGHTS

In reference to the collective ideal, information and conscience-building on the rights of the inhabitants is proposed. The authorities rarely forget to apply the law, but peoples' rights are omitted especially if the people are not aware of them.

The construction of the democratic city should not overlook the defense and broadening of the rights already won. The inhabitants must continuously demand that the government guarantee the fulfillment of the constitutional rights of all the people (in relation to education, health, housing, work, etc.).

An educative city implies the promotion of the right to information and participation in decision-making on public issues.

The inclusive city implies respect for the rights of the disabled, indigenous peoples, as well as the right to life of all men and women who live there but who for one reason or another are excluded from the city.

The inhabitants' proposals for the livable city that relate to rights revolve around the collectivization and socialization of this right: for example, the right to health can be rescued through community experiences developed by the inhabitants. A new legality must be sought for the activities within the informal economy that consider popular interests. New legislation is always being created to defend the interests of the financial markets and businesses, and the same is required for the popular economy. In regards to the environment, the application of national and international legislations by governments must be enforced.

As an international action strategy, the inhabitants agree to promote proposals for the transformation of the legal international frameworks and norms from a

popular perspective. For example, the promotion of international agreements and conventions against forced evictions, that were signed by some 144 countries in ECOSOC in Geneva, or the struggle for the application of the Habitat Agenda since Habitat II. The African Inhabitants Charter and the Belo Horizonte Declaration are steps in this direction.

4) ORGANIZE

From the perspective of the collective ideal, community organization is prioritized with the promotion of development projects that fix concrete goals for the achievement of a greater objective.

The building of democratic organizations contributes to the construction of the democratic city. But we also must contribute to organizing local governments that link with peoples' organizations.

The organizational proposals for the educative city call for the undertaking of cultural, social and leisure activities and the rescue of neighborhood traditions by the social organizations, in order to value and care for the local history and surroundings. Proposals must also be organized for youth, for popular health education, and for participative education in general as a popular alternative.

The organizational proposals for the livable city include the creation of networks, the decentralization of public services, participative plans for emergency management, the linking of experiences and organizational strengthening.

The organizational proposals for international action begin by recognizing all the forms of the world's organizations and struggles and call for strengthening the international links with existing inhabitants_ organizations such as the Continental Front of Community Organizations (FCOC), the Latin American Secretariat for Popular Housing (SELVIP), the Cry of the Excluded, etc. They also call for the implementation of a process to establish a global alliance based on the organizations of the World Assembly of Inhabitants. It is also proposed to broaden the alliances with labor organizations, peasant farmers, indigenous, ecologist and women's organizations, democratic governments and local powers, etc.

Proposals for the construction of the collective ideal

VALUES

- Equity, inclusion, community living
- Solidarity
- Ethics and responsibility
- Freedom and autonomy
- Social justice, dignity and mutual respect
- Build a unified, solidary and diverse world

TRANSFORM

- Transformation of thought
- Valuing our abilities and mobilizing our potentials
- Develop material at the service of the integral development of people and societies
- Build a world capable of evaluation-decision-transformation through its own cultural heritage
- Training and education
- Preparation of social promoters
- Creation/ promotion of spaces for reflection
- Promotion of popular participation to eliminate the dominance of the leaders
- The elaboration of decision-making instruments

APPLY RIGHTS

- Socialize information
- Build awareness of our rights

ORGANIZE

- Community organization promoted by development projects
- Establish and prioritize concrete goals for the realization of a greater objective

Proposals for the construction of the democratic city

VALUES

- Solidarity, trust, friendship
- Democratic principle
- Reciprocity, equity
- Community sense and life
- Autonomy of the social organizations

TRANSFORM

- Practice the democratic principle
- Fight corruption and de-politization
- Strengthen the processes of education, political formation and communication among the base population
- Influence decisions
- Build a democratic state
- Rebuild local peoples' power
- Strengthen the local spaces (municipalities)
- Confront urban poverty
- Institutionalize democratic practice
- Fight against the privatization of services
- Build real collaboration between inhabitants and local governments

APPLY RIGHTS

- Defend and broaden acquired rights
- Demand the fulfillment by the state of the constitutional rights of all (education, health, housing, work)
- Advance the struggle for urban reform

ORGANIZE

- Build democratic organizations
- Work towards popular organization
- Organize local governments towards association with inhabitants

Proposals for the construction of an educative city

The educative city should be assumed as the primary educative agent through all the educative experiences and impacts lived there, and through this recognition, promote education for democratic, integral and profound community living.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- Solidarity
- Harmonic and democratic community living
- Respect for diversity
- Humanism
- Recognize the principle of equality for all women and men
- Respect the cultural identities (values, traditions, skills, trades), strengthen and enrich them
- Defend public, free, scientific and lay education

TRANSFORM

- Link formal and informal education for the instrumentation of bilateral and multilateral actions in support of alternative projects such as schools formed in settlements and neighborhoods in the perspective of popular education.
- Promote a culture of physical education through sports as a substantive element of integral formation.
- Promote and generate self-managed projects (housing, small businesses, self-employment), etc.) from the communities, towards the goal of work and a dignified and fair salary for all men and women.
- Work towards a healthy environment and environmental education.
- Promote collective projects for the reconstruction of the social fiber destroyed by the neoliberal policies applied in our countries.
- Develop an alternative educational project as opposed to the neoliberal model
- Promote education for tolerance.

APPLY RIGHTS

- Promote the right to information and participation in decision-making on public issues

ORGANIZE

- Increase citizen participation through the promotion of independent candidatures
- Re-link the urban movement with unions, peasant organizations, student and academic movements.
- Promote the organization by social organizations of cultural, social and leisure activities, rescuing neighborhood traditions in order to appreciate and care for our history and surroundings.

- Promote educational proposals for youth, especially indigenous youth inhabitants.
- Promote education for popular health
- Promote participative education as a popular alternative

Proposals for the construction of the inclusive city

The exclusion of the world economic system, called neoliberalism, doesn't only attack street children, the indigenous or the disabled, but also entire towns and cities in all the continents. It has victims in even in rich and poor Europe, especially in the ex-soviet countries. The excluded and the poor amount to millions in the world without access to housing, public services, employment, education, health, etc. Some social groups suffer exclusion even more than the rest: the indigenous, and the disabled for example.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- Conformity must be eliminated through solidarity, equity and unity; the method to achieve this is through popular education.

TRANSFORM

- The inclusive city is one with room for all, but it must be build from the bottom up and from the family. Awareness must be instilled by mothers and fathers in their children and by social organization in citizens.
- The inclusive city should have the means to allow its residents, regardless of their condition or origin, to procure access to work, education, health care and housing, as well as socialization with the rest of society.
- The inclusive city should give preference to the most needy population, facilitating housing that is paid within conditions which are adequate to the salaries or economic capacity of the families.

APPLY RIGHTS

- Respect the right to life of all men and women inhabitants in the city.
- Respect the rights of the disabled.
- Respect the rights of the indigenous.

ORGANIZE

The organizations should:

- Be inclusive, incorporating all men and women, and foment collectivity, democracy and tolerance.
- See to it that the municipalities have housing policies that contemplate the availability of areas with infrastructure and that they make use of barren plots.
- Have communication mechanisms that maintain links and exchange among their experiences.
- Incorporate inclusion as an essential reference within their daily work.
- Seek the support of organizations at the international level, given that international solidarity carries great weight in local governments.
- Be self-critical. We will not be inclusive while we do not judge ourselves.

- Promote training processes on equity directed to both men and women. Women have struggled arm-in-arm with men, nevertheless, they are left alone to struggle for reproduction rights.
- For indigenous women, the main support from international organizations is information exchange.

Proposals for a livable, sustainable, productive and safe city

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- Promote new human values and a popular ethic different from the dominant liberal ethic: an ethic of solidarity at all levels, including towards the victims of violence.
- Build awareness of the fact that the safe city can not be based on discrimination of any kind.

TRANSFORM

- Urban and rural development must be conceived integrally.
- The alternative proposals promoted by the social organizations must be rescued, accumulated and directed from a political perspective.
- Urban agriculture must be promoted to facilitate the reuse and recycling of wastes and water, contributing to the environmental sustainability of settlements.
- Governments must be held accountable for the sustainability of settlements.
- A culture of health and disease prevention should be developed, rescuing preventive medicine experiences and attending especially to the most vulnerable sectors, including women and children.
- The struggle for a healthy life should be integrated within the struggle for housing, health and employment.
- Campaigns should be promoted so that the television industries contribute resources for health.
- We must manifest on the responsibility of the governments in health procurement.
- We must struggle for employment through alternative proposals and generate new productive proposals in our cities.
- Social-productive projects for basic goods and housing must be generated, working from our micro-experiences to translate them into general policies.
- The cooperatives should be encouraged to support the popular economy through preparation and training.
- Youth employment policies should be introduced.
- An economy of inclusion should be created.
- A collective security should be assumed by the inhabitants.
- The social fiber should be rebuilt with the participation of the organized inhabitants of the city.
- New ways of making our cities safe should be created, without recurring to more violence.
- A global movement of real change towards safe cities should be initiated, starting with a change of perspectives (the poor are not violent, but rather are the victims of multiple acts of violence).
- Society's safety should be promoted in the local, national and international spheres.
- Organizational processes should be promoted that include disaster prevention and mitigation, with the broad participation of social organizations, academics and civil and non-governmental organizations.

- Broad social participation should be included in emergency response plans which should be public domain and which should be carried out from the bottom up.
- Disaster preparedness should be incorporated within formal and informal education programs.
- Inhabitants must abandon the dominant vision imposed from the outside and in its place create a critical popular vision of reality.
- Natural disasters must be analyzed and their prevention reconsidered by the people themselves, including a self-diagnosis of vulnerability and land risk.
- In order to reduce vulnerability and risk, urban and rural improvement programs should be developed based on participative projects in health and environmental protection.

APPLY RIGHTS/ LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Land occupation will not end through academic debate or boss-client measures. Political responsibilities must be assumed to confront this phenomenon and not divert attention with penal or punitive measures which end up damaging a legitimate right: the right to remain where one lives and produces.
- The legal frameworks that refer to the care for an environment should take into account and collectivize experiences.
- The right to health should be rescued, taking off from the community and alternative experiences developed by the world's inhabitants.
- The legal framework on human health should be inclusive; the poor should not be excluded from attention because they don't have the resources to pay for it.
- A new legality that considers popular interests must be found for the informal economy activities.
- Governments must be required to produce the necessary legislation for environmental conservation (MUP).

ORGANIZE

For a livable city:

- The first step for the construction of the livable city is necessarily the availability of a place in which to build, to transit and to enjoy leisure activities. Access to serviced urban land requires national governments to carry out land zoning. The creation of land banks, finance and facilities for the repopulation of the city centers must be undertaken by the governments as a key postulate for the development of any land development plan and a fundamental basis in the housing projects that we propose.
- A livable city is only built through intellectual and physical effort and sacrifice, depositing all our energy in generating proposals to transform our reality.

For a sustainable city:

- Create networks integrated through the experiences developed in order to promote and disseminate our programs and actions.
- Link the experiences achieved with serious technical support and specialists in the matter based on an effective work relationship that makes sustainable cities possible.

For a healthy city:

- Strengthen the organizations that develop health alternatives, promoting the undertaking of workshops and forums.

For a productive city:

- Decentralize public services with national, regional and local resources in counter the privatization actions.

For a safe city:

- Promote the creation of an international network for disaster prevention, attention and mitigation.
- Emergency response plans should not be technocratic or bureaucratic and should incorporate broad social participation through the affected communities themselves.
- In order to change perspective and act on the real causes instead of the most visible consequences, we must be able to rely on:
 - An adequate judicial system at everyone's reach,
 - An ethical public administration,
 - Respect for others.

Organizational strengthening and International action strategies

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- Organizations should be plural, collective, autonomous, democratic, self-managed and non-dogmatic.

TRANSFORM

- Make strides in the occupation of decision-making spaces.
- Develop planning and participative management proposals.
- It is strategically crucial that the social organizations develop actions and conceptions to consolidate our power, ie that lead our organizations to decidedly occupy public policy decision-making spaces.
- We must establish communication bridges between our different struggles and the different levels of the same, not only to be informed but to know and fight globalization. Citizens must be re-made; the beaten, used and abused human being should not be an object but rather a citizen.
- Each nation should extend solidarity to those who need international support: agreements of solidarity must be established among organizations to pressure governments.
- Multiple kinds of bilateral and multilateral exchanges of experiences should be developed, so that we can know each other's organizations and share and exchange proposals and solutions to our common problems.
- Each of us must actively participate in the actions, meetings and campaigns through which we as inhabitants in our specific work contribute to collective processes.
- We must use the international spaces opened buy the UN, such as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and other international bodies. We should participate in national committees such as those established in preparation towards Habitat II + 5, and if that is not possible, we will participate in alternative ways.

APPLY RIGHTS/ LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Promote proposals to transform the legal frameworks and legislation from a popular perspective.

ORGANIZE

- The popular economy must be strengthened with the inhabitants as self-managers and subsequently creators of our own project.
- Organizational development through strongly promoting the linkages in the following planes:
 - a) develop linkages in the different sectors, from the local to the national scale;
 - b) Develop linkages in the intersectoral field (habitat, health, education, union, student, etc.) from the local to the national;
 - c) Develop linkages at the sectoral level in the regional and international plain;

- d) Develop linkages at the intersectoral level, at the global level, or globalization of popular solidarity;
- e) Through the previously mentioned linkage processes, reinforce local and sectoral identities.
- Recognize all of the forms of organization and struggle in the world and reinforce the international linkages of inhabitants which already exist through FCOP, SELVIP, CIAH, ACHR and HIC.
 - Implement a process for the establishment of a global alliance based on the organizations of the World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants.
 - Broaden our alliances with union, peasant, indigenous, ecologist, and women's organizations and governments and local powers, etc.
 - Use all electronic tools possible for international linkages: directories, web page, e-mail, teleconferences, etc.
 - In order to sustain the construction and activities of this global network the social organizations must have resources on three levels: their own and solidarity resources, resources from social public policies, and from external agencies (United Nations, the European Union, foundations, etc.).
 - HIC and the Alliance for a Responsible World will coordinate and monitor this process.

Collective preparatory documents

African charter of partnership between inhabitants and local collectivities

PREAMBLE

We, the inhabitants of African Cities, salute this May 2000 “Africities” meeting by placing in it a great hope: the assertion, through the local collectivities, that all of us belong to one continent.

We can congratulate ourselves on the projects carried out in the autonomy of the African local collectives. This should allow reconciliation between the local authorities and the populations of nations. However, without the active involvement of communities in the deliberations, this will remain a dream.

We, the inhabitants, expect that this autonomy will exist through partnership in management, transparency and meeting our basic needs.

After having exchanged our experiences between inhabitants of West, East and Southern Africa, we take note of the diversity and the intelligence of the initiatives undertaken by the people to address their needs: access to land, the right to shelter, provision of basic services, a clean environment, retention of public space, education, professional training, job creations, urban security, access to credit through loan schemes, primary health care. These remain the core essential for a good life, of which many communities throughout Africa provide themselves. These initiatives need the support, recognition and institutionalization of local authorities. Where local authorities do provide these services, partnership with community groups may ensure maintenance and sustainability of the services provided.

We therefore strongly appeal for a real partnership with local authorities based on mutual respect and clear principles on which other public and private partners can also participate in.

A. MUTUAL RECOGNITION

Community based organisations whether formal or informal, are a form of representation of the people. They act in the interest of the people, bringing them together in one voice, and are accountable to the community at large. Local authorities are as a result of election by the people. Hence the call for the recognition of each other’s legitimacy. Mutual recognition is a precondition for partnership. In a democratic society, popular participation is not about toppling elected representatives but to consciously make them aware of the needs of the people and their right to participate in governance.

The recognition of communities means also the recognition of their histories, organisations and cultures. It is not to idealize traditions but to recognize them because they often play a critical role in the cohesion of the community and in the management of many local issues such as land distribution, social conflicts, education, etc.

In many cases, communities provide their own services without local authorities. The recognition to the value of their work and of their skills empowers them to play a meaningful role in the provision of services.

Communities may need external support from local authorities or NGOs in capacity building, provided that the external support does not impose on them. The empowerment of communities means the realization of their strengths to identify, articulate and prioritize their needs. Networks, alliances and federations of communities at various levels allow for building significant information, exchange of experiences and mutual support.

Recognition also means the acknowledgement of the internal diversity of communities and relevant forms of representation of this diversity such as women, youth, elderly people.

B. ORGANISATION OF LOCAL COLLECTIVITIES AND PARTNERSHIP

A partnership between local authorities and inhabitants may be difficult due to bureaucratic delays - even when the political will is there. The different partners, local elected representatives and communities, must ensure that the conditions for successful partnership are secured. The most common problems, which must be overcome, are:

1. The reluctance of local authorities to listen, dialogue and respect communities views and to negotiate with the people make it very difficult for constructive partnership. The need for training on both sides to ensure qualitative partnership becomes important.
2. Useful information is not given to the inhabitants, or is given in a difficult way (the language and the words used) for poor people to understand it. It is necessary to institute a system of information adapted to the needs of the communities in order to create the best conditions for mutual trust.
3. The legal role of local authorities is limited and does not permit them to deal seriously with the real problems of the inhabitants. The means to solve problems are imposed on inhabitants. In order to address the situation new methods of working together must be explored between the state and the local authorities or to enhance their responsibilities.
4. The municipality services are too divided: health, housing, education are treated separately while they form a whole for the inhabitants. Municipalities therefore need to develop integrated plans that will provide services to the people at once.

5. The public finances given to the populations do not answer to their real needs. They are assigned in a way, which is too rigid; they do not allow the municipality to take commitments beyond one year. We must either modify the rules, create new structures, or find other types of finances (international or private funds).

C. BUILDING THE PARTNERSHIP

Partnership means mutual confidence. It is an outcome of the role that local authorities and civil society play in the development process.

Partnership cannot remain informal. It supposes space for dialogue. It needs contextual obligations and the identification of assets and potentials of each partner.

Partnership calls for a participatory process. The co-produced projects which result from such process give a sense of ownership and sustainability since it ensures the participation of all partners.

The rules of the game for the decision making process should be elaborated in common.

The elaboration of participatory budgets is a bottom up approach to citizenship's and active participation.

Transparency in the information, in the decision process, in the setting of priorities, in strategies and actions has to apply to all stakeholders.

Shared decisions make partners accountable to each other and to the public.

D. FINANCING OF PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

Participation in the budgetary process can strengthen our citizenship and can improve mutual trust. Global donations to the local authorities and the supervision thereof are a good solution. The accounting must be simple, accessible to any person with a low level of training and the habitants must be able to appreciate the usefulness and efficiency of the expenses.

The partnership has always –or most of the time- had a financial dimension. It means, in general, a contribution from the local collectivity, from the habitants themselves and from other partners, often international aid agencies, for the financing of partnership projects. This mixture of finances makes the communities responsible and plays a positive role in the right appropriation of the projects, according several conditions:

. The saving and repayment modes must be adapted to the means of the population.

. The habitants remain in control of the use of their money, especially in the choice of the skilled persons they prefer to be involved in the conception and realization of the projects.

. The collectivity must not be released from its responsibility and must not become a commercial developer.

. The International Aid Agencies must not dictate to the communities in exchange for its money. Priorities must be those of the inhabitants.

E. GLOBAL

Global forces largely affect the relationship between Local Authorities and inhabitants. This is mainly in view of the factors that have direct influence on the ability of Local Authorities to provide services, e.g. structural adjustment programmes.

However, consolidation of the relationship between Local Authorities and inhabitants will be greatly enhanced if efforts are made to involve the communities in the formation of policies that directly affect them. At the same time when communities are able to understand the global issues that affect their way of life, then they have the capacity to identify realistic solutions to the challenges that confront them.

As African countries, in influencing global policies the networks and alliances must be established and strengthened as they would be a source of bargaining power.

If our voice is unison then this will produce impact.

For just and democratic cities

Belo Horizonte, 7-9 June 2000

The Latin American Secretariat for Popular Housing (SELVIP), meeting in the Seminar "Rethinking the cities from the grassroots" on 7 - 9 June 2000 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil and in preparation for the World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants, hereby publicly presents its proposals and reaffirms its commitment to the struggle and building of just and democratic cities.

We want livable, inclusive, educational, healthy, sustainable, solidary, safe, democratic, productive and enjoyable cities.

To build them requires structural changes that remove our cities from the neoliberal path which has only deepened the social inequities and the concentration of wealth, towards a more just society where wealth and land are shared by all.

We want to present some of the tools of this citizen mutirao - mutual-aid crusade:

- popular participation at all levels, with public policy management and social control mechanisms, through councils, democratic budgets, and fiscalization and decision-making channels in regards to the use of public resources, that orient citizens and impede corruption;
- self-managed programs in which the organized civil society is a subject of public policies;
- stimulate the organization and the recognition and respect of the cultural identity of all peoples; and the promotion of the self-esteem and identity of the inhabitants with their city;
- recognize public spaces as citizen spaces for all, reverting their abandonment and appropriation in favor of private spaces;
- democratization of the city, guaranteeing the decentralization of opportunities, reverting the process of territorial exclusion and occupying the barren spaces of the consolidated city for popular housing;
- housing policies that guarantee the full implementation of the right to housing as a human right, through regularization of the settlements, non-excluding legislation, and urban housing production;
- understand that dignified housing is the house with quality and comfort, with all infrastructure and public services, close to social recreational and cultural facilities, transportation and employment;
- education policies that form the citizen to be conscious of his or her rights and provide training for production;
- combat social exclusion with inclusive policies and employment generation;
- creation of policies that revert gender inequities, as self-managed processes in which women are the protagonists;
- combat urban violence, through the valuation of public space and through inclusive policies directed especially to youth with training, opportunities, recreation and sports;
- construction of sustainable urban and production policies;
- defense of the urban environment, integrating humans and nature and building balanced ecological alternatives.

We call on the population, public authorities, universities, popular movements, churches and labor unions to join this broad mutual-aid crusade.

Belo Horizonte, 9 June 2000

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Local Heroes 21 - Final Resolution

Berlin, 6 July 2000

We, as Local Heroes participating in the meeting of urban grass-root movements from 3 – 6 July 2000 in Berlin, believe that the considerations, principles, and postulates of the representatives of governments and major cities assembled in URBAN 21 are, for the most part, void of meaning. In our opinion, the giant URBAN 21 conference has only developed platitudes which will not lead to concrete results. The fact that millions of German marks have been spent in order to say such things as "We live in a world of great diversity ...", is scandalous.

If the conference organisers really wanted to help cities and the people living in them, they would have made a strong appeal to governments to implement the Habitat Agenda, to substantially increase funds for development co-operation in the urban sector, and to cancel the debt of the poorest countries. In our view, URBAN 21, under the pretext of being concerned with poverty and citizen participation, is in fact opening the way for more privatisation of public services, housing, health care, schools, water and sanitation.

We ask the governments of all countries not to organise other conferences like URBAN 21, unless people and their grass-root organisations are fully involved in the preparation of the conference from the very beginning until the formulation of the final accords.

Conclusion of Workshop 1 "A City for All - Without Exclusion and Discrimination"

Our cities are forced to compete by the will of those in power who decide over and for the citizens. The spectacular revaluation of city districts is accompanied by the destruction of social networks thus depriving poor people of their social context. The poor, the losers in competition based society, are perceived as a tiresome outcome of self-created destitution to be alleviated, if at all, by means of their own efforts, or as a criminal threat to be reduced by means of zero tolerance strategies.

The demand for "empowerment" in the sense of increasing ones own forces should not be associated with laying blame on the excluded for their misery, and should not permit the state to neglect its political responsibility for social inequality. Empowerment should allow the excluded to oppose dominant interests.

Conclusion of Workshop 2 "Housing is a Civil Right"

We have been encouraged by the many NGOs and CBOs taking part in the Local Heroes conference. We are convinced that by maintaining our co-operation we may have significant influence on local, national and international policies in the field of human settlement.

One of the problems identified as common to most European countries is the deregulation with respect to social standards and the privatisation of social

and public housing. The way in which the free market philosophy has been introduced in Central and Eastern Europe has had disastrous consequences.

Conclusion of Workshop 3 “Local Power and Development - Strategies for Community Empowerment”

The experience acquired from our work in different regions of four continents lead us to conclude that governments have not made any effort since the Habitat II conference in installing mechanisms to create popular participation and allow bottom-up decision-making according to the wishes of the citizens.

We will continue to fight for genuine participation in order to guarantee sustainable development with respect to social justice, sound ecology, equal opportunities for education, culture and health, and the redistribution of wealth. We believe in our duty to educate our children as citizens with a sense of responsibility for our common future.

The Follow-up

We shall present the problem of deregulation with respect to social standards and the privatisation of social and public housing to the European Ministers of Housing when they meet in Paris in September 2000 together with our demand for alternative policies which focus on the protection of inhabitants as a number one priority.

In October 2000, a World Conference of Urban Inhabitants will take place in Mexico. In the run-up to this event, we want to establish a European-wide network for the exchange of viewpoints on concrete issues and help to organise campaigns on a global scale. In order to facilitate this exchange and speed up our decision-making, we have set up several web-sites on the internet. The web-sites will serve, among other things, to collect and to disseminate information on the situation in different countries, to draw special attention to gender issues and, most of all, to discuss deregulating housing policies in various countries.

Xalapa declaration

July 2000

Prepared by the participants in the national meeting of Mexican urban popular organizations held in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico on 22-23 July 2000.

The urban-popular organizations from the states of Sinaloa, Nayarit, Zacatecas, Coahuila, Querétaro, Hidalgo, Oaxaca, the state of Mexico, Puebla, Veracruz, and the Federal District (Mexico City), have met in the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF INHABITANTS to:

- Reflect on the city that we want and advance in the construction of a collective ideal.
- Establish the bases to promote strategic alliances and build exchange networks with different organizations and social movements at the national as well as international scales.
- Establish agreements on coordination strategies and mechanisms to strengthen our intercommunication for the defense of our human rights in general through lobbying, negotiation, pressure, etc.

After a broad debate we have established the following declaration:

1. The cities have been built by their inhabitants themselves who in turn have not been allowed to enjoy the fruit of that effort. We reclaim the cities for all their inhabitants. Cities must be re-thought as democratic, safe, inclusive, equitable, educative, livable, sustainable, enjoyable and productive.
2. We recognize the importance to begin a process of linking our organizations at the national level, as well as the commitment to tie in many other organizations that develop important work in other states and other social movements committed to the struggle for democracy.
3. We promote the systematization of our experiences, weighing our mistakes and successes, as well as the exchange of experiences that strengthen the construction of a social fabric based on solidarity, democracy and a different cultural and political ethic.
4. We assume the responsibility to build the nation and city that we want, for which we must elaborate a Social Agenda and a strategic project that provide us with a long term perspective, incorporating disaster prevention based on democratic territorial management.
5. The construction of our collective ideal should involve strategic alliances with the Non-Governmental Organizations and Universities, summoning them to a real commitment.
6. We defend the principle of autonomy of our organizations in relation to the political parties and the government. We propose the evaluation of this relationship for that purpose.

7. In the face of the globalization imposed on us by the current economic system, we call for the globalization of the social organizations in order to build a democratic, equitable, sustainable and solidary world.

8. We assume the commitment to promote the WORLD ASSEMBLY OF URBAN INHABITANTS in the perspective to unite efforts with the international initiatives such as the Cry of the Excluded, the World Women's March "Bread and Roses," and Jubilee 2000.

Latin America habitat 2000 forum “Salvador Charter”

**Recommendations from the
Meeting of Latin American Inhabitants for Better Habitat Conditions.
Salvador de Bahia, 18 May 2001**

We, inhabitants of Latin American cities gathered at the Habitar 2000 Forum in Salvador, Bahía, Brazil, make the following recommendations to the State, the popular and community organizations, the universities and technical institutions, the private sector, and ourselves, as necessary measures for the construction of just, sustainable and democratic cities.

We manifest that the whole accessibility to quality habitat is compromised and limited by a socio-economic system determined by the logic of profit and the market. These circumstances, found in all Latin American cities irregardless of their differences, must be deeply transformed and substituted with a system that allows social justice and quality of life.

TO THE STATE
(National, Provincial or State, and local powers)

- 1) Understand housing as a social right and not as a market good.
- 2) Municipalize urban and housing policies.
- 3) Guarantee popular participation in the definition of urban and housing policies.
- 4) Create and implement councils and decision-making instruments for urban development and housing policies, that guarantee equalitative participation of the beneficiaries and other participants in the system. These mechanisms should be built through a democratic discussion process, involving all the sectors of the urban population, with budget prevision to guarantee its autonomy.
- 5) As part of a continuous and broad urban management and housing policy, care should be taken to not prioritize the number of new units to the detriment the improvement of the housing and urban quality of the neighborhoods, including infrastructure and social facilities.
- 6) Instrument policies and legislation that impede and/or provide disincentives to real estate speculation.
- 7) Constitute and regulate Finance Funds for housing, composed of diverse options, that directly subsidize the nuclear families and are administrated by the Councils proposed in paragraph 4.

8) Housing policies should be integrated to employment generation and resource redistribution policies in order to achieve impact on the social situation in the neighborhoods.

9) Implement legal land regularization in the popular neighborhoods, guaranteeing the right to property of those who live there, through existing or new constitutional mechanisms.

10) Demand that the planning institutions take into account the existing context in the neighborhoods in which intervention will take place, prioritizing the inhabitants' regularization and urbanization processes.

11) Create housing programs that attend to all the needy families, giving special attention to the most vulnerable.

12) Prioritize the processes of social production of housing (self-management, cooperatives, etc.) in order to avoid the formation of intermediaries who usually raise the cost of the final product and neglect their quality.

13) Assure transparency in the public bidding processes for housing and infrastructure construction, with technical and democratic criteria.

14) Guarantee interdisciplinary technical assistance, especially in engineering and architecture, as a public service for poor families. Undertake intervention projects conceived in a participative form in popular neighborhoods.

15) Support social control to guarantee quality and comfort in the popular housing, avoiding repetition of projects and respecting the particular characteristics of each neighborhood and family.

16) Execute important urban facilities in popular neighborhoods as a way to incorporate them within the city.

17) Preserve the housing in historic city centers and areas, protecting their traditional residents and capacitating them for their insertion in the local economy.

18) Dedicate special attention to the urbanization of open spaces, addressing the improvement of the quality of life and stimulating community organization.

19) Guarantee that the international resources destined to popular housing projects do not impose conditions which are opposed to the interests of the local community.

20) Guarantee the application of taxes or other fiscal instruments that recover the worth of specific buildings or lands which originated through public investments in the improvement of privileged areas. These earnings should be applied in investments in the poorest neighborhoods.

TO THE POPULAR AND COMMUNITY MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

21) With the State, the universities and the NGOs, link all the areas of technical support necessary for a better quality of life.

22) Preserve the autonomy and political independence of the popular and community movement organizations together with the other institutions (public powers, NGOs, universities, etc.).

23) Strengthen the organic integration ties among the popular movement institutions at the local, national and international levels.

24) Create incentives for the participation of the organizations in the public institutions concerned with the urban environment (ej. municipal, state and national councils), including the organization of Agenda 21 + 5 commissions, among others.

25) Take care in the formation and renovation of leaders in order to guarantee effectiveness and continuity of movements.

TO THE INHABITANTS

26) Take responsibility for the quality of life in the neighborhoods.

27) Contribute to democratic decision making responding to calls for participation.

28) Respect and preserve collective patrimony.

29) Participate in the Inhabitants Associations or similar entities.

30) Avoid all kinds of manipulation and co-optation that comes from sectors outside of the wishes of the population, in particular those of clientelar or populist politicians.

TO THE UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GROUPS THAT WORK WITH THE POPULAR HOUSING PROBLEMS

31) Consider the inhabitants and their representatives as allies who should participate in all the stages of the conception and execution of housing policies and programs.

32) Take into account the contribution that can be obtained from the experience lived by the inhabitants and their leaders for the success of the policies and projects.

33) Recognize popular knowledge as a complement to technical know-how.

34) Incorporate the aspirations of the different groups within the projects: different ethnical and cultural sectors, youth, women, the elderly, those with special needs, etc.

35) Link the education of students to the reality of the city in which they live, without omitting those areas that were constituted outside of technical knowledge.

TO THE BUSINESS PEOPLE

36) Contribute to social development with housing finance schemes for families with scarce resources, in accordance with the payment capacity of the families.

37) Define the costs of the homes and their housing schemes through the application of criteria of social justice and equity.

38) Guarantee the quality of the built housing, in terms of size, basic services, collective facilities and environmental surroundings.

39) Reduce the financial gain expectation in order to make it possible for the families to obtain dignified housing at a lower cost.

International seminar
Social production of habitat and neoliberalism:

The capital of the people versus the misery of capital

Montevideo Declaration

Inhabitants of Latin America:

Meeting in the city of Montevideo during the first week of October 2001, we, delegations from diverse countries of our continent, have agreed that the future can and should be lived with dignity.

Over the past decades, the committed inhabitants and technical support teams in our countries have built millions of square meters of city, and have extended the networks of community services and collective facilities. To the measure of our possibilities, we have taken it upon ourselves to make sure that the places in which we live are safe and healthy, and we have transformed arid land into comfortable home.

We have made strides to build Life in the urban land, with our knowledge and skills, culture, and our old memories in tow. We have accumulated generations of calloused hands eager to fight in defense of our place in the world.

We have also known how to look at and recognize ourselves, as well as focus our gaze on the rest of the world, so that it be less and less broad and foreign.

Nevertheless, for our governments we remain nothing more than statistics, electoral booty, clients, or simply the poor, outcasts, scum, nameless faces, street trash, or aliens, who can go from the election victory parade straight to violent eviction with no intermediate stages.

The expansive neoliberal flood wipes away in an instant the years of work accumulated by our people. The market, transformed into master and lord of the universe, determines the rules of the game, violating all reference to culture, history, and anything unique and special our communities may have.

The Empire continues its reign. The incipient regional linkages are absorbed by the veracity of the ALCA, the continental free trade train. Our veins remain open, draining our riches towards the metropolises, impoverishing our peoples to levels never before imagined.

Four thousand children die every day in our continent. Three out of four families are unemployed or on the verge of becoming so. As the final stroke of midnight rings out tonight, some 20,000 people will have been evicted from their homes, left in the street, to die of cold, hunger, or just an invisible death, with the complicity of the governments.

Today, the western and unchristian-like world rushes to war, celebrating rites of combat and sharpening their bayonets. Just behind the CNN cameras, the

arms traffickers count their winnings by the minute. It is a shame that this launch of troops didn't take place during the genocides of the Videlas, the Pinochets, Stroessner, or the secular infamy of the Condor Plan.

Beneath other ruins, we have also lost many of our brothers, and we continue to search for them, not with sophisticated equipment, but simply with a white scarf tied around our gray heads.

The inhabitants and technical support personnel united here celebrate our encounter with Hope. We celebrate in the commitment to ratify the role of the national State as responsible for the policies and decisions that concern the needs of our people. We refuse the compulsive expropriation of the ferocious privatizers.

We demand priority be given to the provision of elements which are basic to life, such as health care, education and housing.

We underline the fundamental instance of Work, giver of life and dignity, as the vigorizing element of economies and the irreplaceable basis for the fair distribution of wealth.

The inhabitants united in Montevideo, rediscover our capacity as builders, and we will promote an exemplary consultation through the Working Group on Social Production of Habitat. Said group, articulated through Habitat International Coalition and its office in Mexico, will take advantage of soon-upcoming events to systematize the experiences of our continent and to gain visibility for our proposal. We will make our voice heard at the upcoming World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, and we will meet again to reach our conclusions.

In order to advance in the struggle, we must learn from our daily practices. We must take on an offensive pose both strategically and ideologically in the struggle against exclusion and misery. For that purpose we propose to develop the action tool that is SELVIP, strengthening from the base and towards the new linkages that emerge.

We have decided to create the International School of Ideological Formation, that will greatly contribute to the development of the inhabitants_organizational process, facilitating an intense exchange of experiences, all of which will allow us to take charge in the promotion of ideas and the generation of sense and culture.

Today we conclude a week of hard work and we return to our daily struggles. We return strengthened in the discovery of new horizons and in the confirmation of our truths.

History has not ended. Very much to the contrary, the struggles of the workers inside and outside the factories and sweatshops continues to nourish the historical cycles, and we have been assigned our responsibility to accumulate and build Peoples_ Power. We propose the construction of a new supremacy with the workers at the head of an Alternative Popular Front, that will open the avenues to a better society. We move forward to overthrow corruption, false morals, cynicism and lies. We must be clear in marking our

strategy and we will not be deceived by the sirens that call us to sharpen the angles of capitalism. Only a radical transformation of the current order can guarantee our solidary and democratic coexistence, and the constitution of a society based on values and on love for life and nature.

We leave with Utopia as our flag, with the confidence of knowing that we are thousands throughout the continent. With the peaceful conscience of he and she who ratify their work and commitment.

We, the inhabitants of Latin America, are building democratic and sustainable cities, and more than that, we are moving forward in building a collective noble and generous ideal.

We carry the responsibility to continue forward. We have a work plan and we commit ourselves to labor without tiring in the achievement of our objectives. Just as the Commander Che Guevara said:

The only way to advance our work is to lead it, showing by example how it is done, not dictating orders from behind as to how to do it.

Latin American colleagues, this has been your home and it will continue to be so. This is our struggle, and will continue to be so.

This is our unity and we will continue to build it.

WE WILL STRUGGLE UNTIL WE OVERCOME,
THAT VICTORY BE UNDENYABLY OURS.

Montevideo, 6 October 2001

Notes

(1) Habitat International Coalition, HIC, is a coalition of NGOs, social organizations, urban researchers and activists all working for the rights to the city and to housing in approximately 80 countries. The office in Mexico is the HIC Secretariat for Latin America.

CREDITS

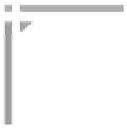
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The Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World

Working together towards the challenges of the 21th century

Ever since the late eighties of the 20th century, numerous initiatives have been put forward from different regions of the world and extremely diverse contexts. Different social actors were thus put in motion with the aim of organising a vast worldwide process seeking to explore values, proposals and regulations capable of overcoming the modern challenges humanity is faced with.

A large number of thematic, collegial and continental meetings were organised in the early nineties, a process which led, in 1993, to the drafting of the *Platform for a Responsible and United World*.

Regional groups were set up, international professional networks and thematic networks on the fundamental issues of our era were developed: the Alliance was created. It is financially and technically supported by the Charles Léopold Mayer Foundation for the progress of Humankind (FPH), among others.

The Alliance is focussed on inventing new forms of collective action on both a local and global scale, with the aim of shaping together the future of an increasingly complex and interdependent world.

The challenge of the Alliance is to actively support unity in diversity by asserting our societies' capability to understand and appreciate the complexity of situations, the interdependence of problems and the diversity and legitimacy of geo-cultural, social and professional perspectives.

The Alliance, as a space of discussion, reflection and proposals, is built around three main orientations:

Local groups aiming to bring people of a community, a region, a country or a continent together by looking at the realities and issues of their own societies. This is the **geo-cultural approach**. It reflects the diversity of places and cultures.

Groups of socio-professional actors wishing to provoke dialogue and mobilisation within a given social sector or profession (youth, peasants, scientists, local representatives, etc.). This is the **collegial approach**. It reflects the diversity of social and professional milieus, their concerns and responsibilities towards society and the challenges of today's world.

Thematic workshops seeking to create reflection groups centred around the major issues of our common future (sustainable water management, regional integration and globalisation, financial markets, art and society, etc.). This is the thematic approach. It reflects the diverse challenges humanity is faced with in the 21st century. Thematic workshops are

organised into four areas: Values and Culture, Economy and Society, Governance and Citizenship, Humanity and the Biosphere.

Seeking both to draw on the richness of materials and experiences gathered by these reflection groups whilst networking with other citizen dynamics with a similar focus, the Alliance fixed itself the objective of obtaining collectively developed, concrete proposals. The following meetings were thus organised:

- international meetings, for each thematic workshop and each college,
- synchronized continental assemblies (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe) and a regional meeting in the Arab world (Lebanon) in June 2001.
- a Citizen World Assembly, held in December 2001 in Lille, France, bringing 400 participants together from around the world.

These meetings together contributed to the drafting of some sixty *Proposal Papers for the 20th century* and a *Charter of Human Responsibilities*, published in several languages in different countries.

The Alliance has been involved in a process of disseminating and developing these outcomes since the beginning of 2002. Networks are expanding, branching out and their work themes are becoming increasingly transversal. They also strengthen links with other approaches aiming to create an alternative globalisation.

For further information, please visit the alliance website at www.alliance21.org, where the history of the Alliance, the challenges it is engaged in and the workshops and discussion forums being held can be viewed in three languages (French, English and Spanish).

E-mail: info@alliance21.org

The proposal papers on the internet

Whether in their provisional or definitive form, all the proposal papers and their corresponding translations can be accessed on the website of the Alliance for a Responsible, Plural and United World, at:

<http://www.alliance21.org/fr/proposals>

Themes available:

Values, education, cultures, art and the sciences

Teachers and education - Education to an active and responsible citizenship - The alliance and the media - Art and cultural identity in building a united world - Women - Youth action and proposals for social change - An intercultural cultural diversity in the era of globalisation - Proposals of the inter-religious college - War, genocide, ...restoring humanity in human beings faced by extreme situations - Thinking through university reform - Social control of the scientific production system - Information society, knowledge society: benefiting from change - time and sustainable development

Economy and society

Transformations in the field of work - The trade-union movement at the dawn of the 21st century - Exclusion and Precariousness - Companies and solidarity - How can enterprises exercise their responsibility - Corporate responsibility - Production, technology and investment - Ethical consumption - Fiscal policy, tax, distribution of national income and social welfare - Social finance - Escaping the financial maze: Finance for the common good - Social money as a lever for the new economic paradigm - Debt and adjustment - Fair trade - From the WTO's setback at Seattle ... to the conditions for global governance - Food security and international trade negotiations - Completely sustainable development: an alternative to neo-liberal globalisation - Economic policies, ideologies and geo-cultural dimension - Women and economy - Economy of solidarity - Health and its challenges in the 21st century - The challenges of Artisan fishery in the 21st century - agriculture and sustainable development - People's right to feed themselves and achieve food sovereignty - Food security

Governance and citizenship

Principles of governance in the 21st century - Territories, places for creating relationships: for communities of shared relations - Thinking the city of tomorrow: the words of their inhabitants - Urban violence - Peasant farmers confronting the challenges of the 21st century - Social leaders in the 21st century: challenges and proposals - Local authorities or local co-ordination - State and development - Food, nutrition and public policies - From the conversion of arm industries to the search for security - The military and the construction of peace - Re-modelling global governance to the meet the challenges of the 21st century

Relations between humanity and the biosphere

Environmental education: 6 proposals for citizens' action – Proposals relating to the question of water supply – Save our soils to sustain our societies – Forests of the world – Energy efficiency – Industrial ecology: agenda for the long-term evolution of the industrial system – Civil society and GMO's: what international strategies? – Refusing the privatisation of life and proposing alternatives

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