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WORLD
URBAN
FORUM



JOINT STATEMENT TO THE 13TH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM

of the Organized Constituency of
Local and Regional Governments

{ 100 }
days of local
multilateralism



JOINT STATEMENT OF THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS CONSTITUENCY TO THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE WORLD URBAN FORUM (WUF13)

I. Housing justice at the center of the urban agenda

1. Housing has become a defining test of urban sustainability

We, local and regional governments and our associations from across the world, convened as the self-organized constituency of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, gather at the Thirteenth Session of the World Urban Forum in Baku at a moment of converging social, territorial, and democratic pressures.

We affirm that adequate housing is a human right and a precondition for a dignified life. We affirm that the scale and depth of the current crisis make clear that housing can no longer be treated as a sectoral issue, but as a systemic challenge. Housing is foundational to dignity, safety, resilience, social cohesion, agency, and democratic life.

We hold that the housing crisis is not only a crisis of shortage of supply. It reflects deeper distortions in land and housing systems, including exclusion, inequality, weak governance, and insufficient public investment.

For our constituency, this must be stated clearly: housing is a justice issue. It is about rights before profits, the prevention of conflict before fragmentation, and the social and ecological functions of land before its extraction as an asset. Housing is not a residual outcome of markets, but a global common and a shared political responsibility across all spheres of governance.

2. Housing justice begins with the Right to the City

We affirm that housing justice requires rights-based and non-speculative housing systems. It requires preventing forced evictions, expanding social and affordable housing, ensuring that housing and land governance serve the public interest, and safeguarding the social function of land.

We underline that housing justice is inseparable from the right to the city: the possibility to remain, to belong, to access land, services, and opportunities on equal terms, and to participate in shaping the future of communities through democratic life.

We hold that housing cannot be approached separately from local public services. Water and sanitation, energy, mobility, public health, culture and education, care, waste, digital access, and other essentials are not secondary or parallel concerns; they are the material conditions through which housing becomes real in people's lives. Housing can only be

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realized as a lived right when these rights are secured, rather than mediated through fragmented provision or unequal access.

Universal, accessible, and quality local public services are not an add-on to housing policy. They are what make equality tangible, sustain democratic life, and hold communities together.

We maintain that housing justice and climate justice are inseparable. Those pushed furthest to the margins of housing systems are often the first to bear the heaviest environmental burdens, including exposure to air pollution and its impacts on health. Housing, land, public services, and climate action must therefore be addressed together.

This is the political direction set by the Local Social Covenant, through which our constituency has committed to defend housing as a human right and a public good, but to drive a deeper shift: away from exclusionary systems, and toward housing models grounded in dignity, care, democratic participation, and territorial justice.

II. Advancing global urban commitments through territorial leadership

3. A year to reclaim global urban commitments

We reaffirm that housing justice stands at the core of SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities, but that its realization will remain impossible if treated as an isolated urban target. For local and regional governments, adequate housing is inseparable from the delivery of other public services, including water and sanitation, energy, mobility, care, and territorial equity.

We recall that this Forum takes place in the year of the 10-year review of the New Urban Agenda. A decade ago in Quito, local and regional governments were not spectators. We were co-shapers of that agenda, and we remain central to its realization. The ten years of *Towards the Localization of the SDGs* reports presented by our constituency at each HLPF stand as a clear testament to the fact that local political leadership has advanced the Global Goals and the New Urban Agenda.

In the framework of the WUF, the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments is the recognized mechanism through which our constituency contributes to the follow-up, monitoring, and review of the New Urban Agenda, while also turning local action into collective political voice.

4. Recentering the New Urban Agenda through rights, care, and territorial action

At this ten-year mark, we affirm that the principles of the New Urban Agenda remain valid, but its implementation has too often remained trapped between political ambition and weak delivery. The gap is not only one of implementation capacity, but of powers, multilevel governance, financing, and institutional recognition. In housing especially,

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financialization, weak de-centralization, and constrained fiscal space have too often blocked the path from principle to practice.

We therefore affirm that the New Urban Agenda must be recentered through rights, care, and community-led transformation. It must move beyond fragmented delivery and urban models shaped by extraction and exclusion. Instead, it needs to recognize care as a right, a public obligation, and a governing principle across housing, public services, territorial planning, climate resilience, and democratic life.

Grounded in participation and stronger local public action, this is the shift required if the implementation of the New Urban Agenda is to be measured not only by commitment, but by its ability to sustain life, dignity, equality, and rebuild trust in our territories.

III. Our Call to Baku

5. From Baku, we call for housing justice, territorial action, and stronger global urban commitments

From Baku, we make the following calls.

1. We call on the international community to place housing justice at the centre of the urban and development agenda, not only as a policy priority but as a democratic imperative, and to recognize housing as a human right.
2. We call for housing to be addressed together with the public services that make it real in people's lives, including water and sanitation, energy, mobility, care, public health, culture and education, waste, and digital access, and for these essentials to be secured in ways that are universal, accessible, and equitable.
3. We call for stronger multilevel governance arrangements that match local responsibilities with the powers, financing, and institutional recognition needed to act, and for decentralized cooperation to be strengthened as a practical means to connect territories, sustain peer learning, and scale shared solutions.
4. We call for the review of SDG 11 at this year's High-Level Political Forum to recognize that adequate housing cannot be advanced in isolation from the wider conditions that sustain dignified, inclusive, and sustainable urban life.
5. We call for the 10-year review of the New Urban Agenda to move beyond formal stocktaking and confront the structural barriers that have held implementation back, including weak decentralization, fragmented competences, constrained fiscal space, the financialization of housing and land, and insufficient multilevel governance arrangements.
6. We call for the World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments to be reinforced as the recognized mechanism through which the constituency contributes to the follow-up, monitoring, and review of the New Urban Agenda, and to the shaping of the territorial contribution to global urban debates.

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7. We call for local and regional governments to be recognized not only as implementers, but as political actors and spheres of government that help shape the frameworks through which global urban commitments are carried forward.



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