



#Cities4All

INDIGENOUS CITIES

Indigenous Peoples and the City Declaration

Adopted at the Indigenous Cities Conference, Otavalo, Ecuador and presented at the Habitat III Conference

Preamble

We, the indigenous peoples invited to this process of analysis and dialogue in the process of HABITAT III, convened in Otavalo, Ecuador with the principal objective to explore effective means to emphasize the importance of the recognition of indigenous peoples and their communities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the New Urban Agenda, adopted in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016¹.

Reaffirming the goals and commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat I) held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976; and declarations of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996.

Reaffirming the importance of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), highlighting, in accordance with Article 43, the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of indigenous peoples of the world”. The UNDRIP protects the collective rights that cannot be addressed in other human rights instruments that put emphasis on individual rights; while also

protects the individual rights of indigenous peoples, specifically in the articles 21.2 and 22.1, referring to the needs of indigenous youth.

Reaffirming the importance of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY), in its role in guiding the United Nations, intergovernmental processes and youth programs at all levels via plans and outreach programs with cultural relevance; with the objective to account for the urgent need to implement WPAY effectively through plans, mechanisms and programs at all levels. In addition, recognizes the need to promote meaningful participation, recognition of rights and integral development of youth, represent some of the greatest challenges to be addressed, with the priority areas of the WPAY.

Recalling Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO), based on respect for the cultures and lifestyles of indigenous peoples by recognizing their right to land and natural resources in order to define their own development priorities. The Convention aims to overcome discriminatory practices affecting indigenous peoples, enabling them to participate in decision-making which affects their lives.

Recalling the terms of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the

¹ Participants of the two side events on “indigenous cities” organized by UN-Habitat Youth during the regional meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development Habitat III held in the city of Toluca, Mexico on April 19, 2016 and during the 15th Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held in New York City on May 13, 2016.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the numerous international instruments on the prevention of discrimination, the American Convention on Human Rights, the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man.

Welcoming the adoption of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1, “Transforming Our World: The Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development”, in particular target 11 “Making cities and settlements humans are inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”; and the adoption of the Agenda for Action Addis Ababa of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; and the adoption of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Welcoming with satisfaction the Paris Agreement, which recognizes that climate change is a common concern of humankind, and that when parties take action to address climate change they must respect, promote and consider their obligations on human rights, the right to health, rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, migrants, children, people with disabilities, people in vulnerable situations, the right to development, gender equality and the empowerment of women and inter-generational equity.

Emphasizing the fact that today more than half of humanity lives in urban areas. By 2050, this proportion will reach nearly 70% making urbanization one of the most transformative trends of the 21st century, intensifying social, economic, political, cultural and environmental challenges and opportunities.

Recognizing that the New Urban Agenda aims to be concise, action-oriented, forward-looking and spatially integrated, recognizing different trends evolving regional specificity and transformative potential, as well as taking into account a wide biocultural diversity, realities and contexts, cultures, presence of indigenous territories and historic urban and human settlements, avoiding a one size fits all.

Bringing into evidence that many indigenous cities are now modern cities, where many indigenous youth, youth organizations and indigenous people reside.

We present the following recommendations:

Empower indigenous peoples, particularly through participation in all decision-making processes and at all levels; equal opportunities to education and employment, ensuring that the principles of self-determination, subsidiarity and self-identification of indigenous communities are respected under all circumstances.

Recognize the knowledge of the integration of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the New Agenda Urbana, with reference to knowledge, practices and values of indigenous communities in urban territorial planning and resilience toward climate change.

Promote urban territorial governance, where cultural diversity is promoted and developed in urban sustainability; the participation and decision of indigenous peoples in the use, management and conservation of biological diversity, is necessary, considering them as strategic actors in the design of inclusive intercultural policies improvement and sustainable the urban growth of cities.

Emphasize the importance of gender equity in urban and rural areas, as well as recognizing and promoting the crucial role of indigenous women in the development of inclusive, safe and sustainable cities: likewise recognize their role in the conservation of language and contribution to the local economy, in urban areas, among others.

Recognize the special protection that must be provided to indigenous children, indigenous young women, indigenous youth with disabilities, indigenous LGBTI youth, in urban and rural areas.

Highlight the fourfold discrimination against indigenous young women: for being women, for being indigenous, for being poor and being young; cities must provide an environment of non-discrimination for all, especially for indigenous youth and children.

Recognize that indigenous populations continually faced with both domestic and international migration, due to the lack of opportunities in their home communities, in light of this, local governments should establish measures to promote local employment and protection for indigenous migration to cities and abroad.

Urge Member States to establish a synergy between the national public policy on indigenous peoples’ human rights approach and execution of the public budget that includes, not only economic principals, effectiveness, efficiency, rationality, transparency, accountability accounts, control; but also that public spending reflects the pursuit of the principle of respect, protection, defence and guarantee of human rights. Accordingly, it is necessary that government authorities define objectives, strategic lines, actions, plans and programs on the human rights of indigenous peoples and their communities and that public budgets are aligned with them.

Emphasize the need to encourage and ensure local governance, implementation and enforcement of the various international instruments related to the rights of indigenous peoples in order to create safe and inclusive public spaces where young people, including indigenous youth, promote a culture of peace in urban centres.

Ensure the recognition and inclusion of indigenous peoples and their communities in all decision-making processes at all levels. Indigenous rights should be a cross-cutting issue in all agendas. It is also essential that local governments recognize local indigenous authorities and traditional and modern associations as strategic actors in order to create a multidisciplinary relationship that addresses urban challenges and the territorial context of indigenous peoples.

Recognize and promote traditional knowledge and the plurality of indigenous peoples, as these ancient peoples have been in harmony with nature long before the emergence of modern cities, as it is important to emphasize the importance of this knowledge to create sustainable and resilient cities.

Emphasize the importance of creating a strategic relationship with authorities and public and private stakeholders in order to develop alternative financing for affordable housing for the most marginalized urban populations, taking into account the architectural identity of indigenous peoples and local communities; also build public spaces that architectural respect the identity of each nation and nationality.

Provide opportunities for indigenous people and their communities to have access to information technologies and communication in order to provide them with tools to share their culture and knowledge with clarity and efficiency in cities, allowing them to use their own language.

Guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples and their communities, as collective rights; their rights must be recognized, promoted, respected, and always defended under the principles of human rights, human development, human security, international conventions relating to the rights of indigenous peoples, gender equality and indigenous women; including the right to the city and the right to exercise their holidays and traditions, based on the ancient calendars, in public spaces and sacred sites.

Urge local and national governments to generate data and indicators disaggregated for indigenous populations. It is important to make visible the situation of indigenous peoples in urban and rural areas in order to implement and adjust programs, plans, and indigenous national policy.

Recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to collective ownership to land and their spiritual relationship with nature respecting sacred sites and sites located in cities so that they can realize their spiritual practice, understanding that the protection and enjoyment of these urban spaces promotes their own quality of life.

Promote a two-way exchange, both in cities and communities in order to prepare the transition phase for indigenous peoples in general and indigenous youth in particular; also to promote friendly spaces in cities to protect indigenous migrants.

Highlight the meaning of good living as an alternative to the idea of sustainable development. The good life is based on philosophies of indigenous peoples related to the deep interactions between humans with nature.

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