



Declaration For the Right to Housing and the Right to the City throughout Europe Brussels, 5-6 November 2007

Poor quality housing, homelessness, dangerously unsanitary conditions, social and physical violence, evictions, unmanageable costs...all over Europe, millions of people are suffering the dramatic effects of the boom in the housing and property market. Current policies do not provide solutions, sometimes even running contrary to the promotion of the right to housing and the right to the city.

Our approach to winning this right is one of European convergence. The two-day meeting provided a solid base for this, enabling us to expand the network we are currently developing. More than 130 delegates from 13 countries attended, representing various organisations, local authorities, social movements, NGOs, residents' and tenants' associations, organisations for the homeless and poorly housed, unions and cooperatives. Managers of housing projects and progressive European deputies also attended.

We are committed to expanding this network to incorporate all the countries of the European continent and all those who wish to participate on the basis of shared principles, to defend and promote the right to housing and the right to the city.

We demand that citizens have the right to make decisions promoting sustainable town planning and development. This citizens' right should be expressed through public control of land, and through the promotion of all associated rights: those relating to housing, energy, water, the environment, education, work, travel, health, recreation, etc.

We want towns to be places where people live together. We want them to be the springboard of social progress. We reject the notion of the town as a place of exclusion for its inhabitants. We fight its commercialisation, its privatisation and all forms of corruption and constraints that affect inhabitants. We fight evictions, population displacement, and urban segregation.

We want a right to housing that figures in legislation, that has an impact on the real world, and that is supported by real public intervention. To achieve this, we demand new political mechanisms and new resources in each nation and on a European level, drawing on the best that each country has to offer.

We want to express our solidarity with all those defending these rights in Europe. We call upon these progressive forces, key institutional figures and all their networks and organisations to create national assemblies, and to assist in organising European forums and events in the future. Such events include our next European assembly, planned to coincide with the European Social Forum in Malmo in September 2008, and the demonstration that we will hold during the next meeting of European housing ministers, set to take place in France in October 2008.

We want to give a permanent basis to our process of sharing experiences, initiatives and standpoints as well as our construction of a European platform that unites and mobilises. We want to equip ourselves with the communication tools needed to do so, and form a technical secretariat that welcomes all volunteers and is open to all ideas which will help us move towards meeting these objectives.

The Technical Secretariat,
*European States General for Housing Rights and the Right to the City
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