



Global Platform for the Right to the City
Plataforma Global por el Derecho a la Ciudad
Plateforme Globale pour le Droit à la Ville

STATEMENT ON UN-HABITAT'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

UN-Habitat is putting forward a Strategic Plan 2020-2025 with the aim of implementing the New Urban Agenda of Habitat III and embracing the Sustainable Development Goals as the new gold standard for sustainable urban development. The UN agency calls for a paradigm shift and presents itself as the engine to make this change happen.

The Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is right about embracing sustainable urbanization as the cornerstone of the different global agendas. The document also explicitly mentions youth, children, women and girls, older people, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups, including migrants and refugees. This is part of an overall Human Rights based approach that we celebrate, and that we acknowledge was not present in previous drafts.

However, the document is not successful in building the case for a paradigm shift, as it includes several contradictions and **does not address one of the key elements that civil society, local governments and some national governments contributed as part of their “Shared Vision” into the New Urban Agenda: the Right to the City.**¹ We understand the Right to the City as the right of all inhabitants, present and future, permanent and temporary, to inhabit, use, occupy, produce, transform, govern and enjoy cities, towns and human settlements that are just, inclusive, safe, sustainable and democratic, defined as common goods for enjoying life with dignity and peace. The term “Right to the City” is not mentioned anywhere in the document, and its components are generally absent or weak in the overall narrative.

The Right to the City reminds us of the importance of cities and humans settlements free of discrimination; gender-responsive and with inclusive citizenship, that embrace minorities and ethnic, racial, sexual, cultural and functional diversity; with enhanced political participation; that fulfill its social function, with quality of public space, diverse and inclusive economies, and inclusive rural-urban linkages. A city/human settlement of gender equality cannot be accomplished without addressing safe, inclusive, accessible and affordable housing, transportation, public spaces and public services for women and girls, access to employment and economic empowerment. In order to guarantee that any and all of these criteria are met, it is absolutely vital that women are involved in urban planning, local governance and decision-making processes related to their urban environments.

Although the Plan uses the terms “sustainable urbanization” and “sustainable (urban) development”, these are not defined as such. In addition, **we know sustainable urbanization is not enough.** In the context of growing un-democratic, corporate and

¹ Article 11 of the New Urban Agenda - <http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>

