

Habitat International Coalition Coalición Internacional del Hábitat Coalition Internationale de l'Habitat Coalizão Internacional do Habitat Coalizão Internacional do Habitat ।।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय पर्यावास गठबंधन

HIC General Assembly 2019

English transcription

Agenda

- 1. Welcome by HIC President (5')
- 2. Approval of this agenda and of the meeting minutes of the last online General Assembly meeting 2018 (5')
- 3. World Habitat Day and Urban October Campaign (10')
- 4. Brief Reports of Coordination Offices and future projects (HIC President, HIC AL, HIC MENA, HIC SSA, HIC HLRN and HIC GS) (25')
- 5. HIC Members' and HIC Board Members' contributions and open debate on HIC achievements and challenges (30')
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- 7. Closure and next General Assembly (2020) (10')

Motions received

No motions received

Question received

No questions received

1. Welcome by HIC President (Lorena Zárate). (5')

LZ (HIC-PR): Good morning all. I will start in English and then change to Spanish. Welcome all to the 2019 HIC General Assembly.

Thank you to the HIC General Secretary Alvaro Puertas and the whole GS team.

As you know it is not the first time we do a general assembly online. Even if it is not the same thing as meeting in person, it still is a possibility. Due to economic difficulties it is not always possible to meet in person, so we can also do it online.

Now we have 42 participants, including several Board Members, among them the Representatives from Latin America Ana Pastor, from Africa Ifeyinwa Ofong, from Europe Alexandre Apsan Frediani, Ana Falú as invited Board Member from Women's and/or Feminist Movements. Also people from the HIC-GS, HIC-HLRN and HIC-MENA (Egypt) and HIC-AL (Mexico).

The agenda was disseminated several weeks ago and has 7 points. We have to go over the agenda and approve it.

We will only vote on some subjects. The voting process starts today but remains open for Members in good standing for the next weeks.

As you all know this is the end of my second term as HIC President, we are having elections in the next weeks and this is my last General Assembly as HIC President. It has been a great honor to serve as HIC President. HIC will remain a big part of my life. I will support the transition to the next phase so it runs smoothly.

As we all know we are living in difficult times of political polarization and violence, but as a network we are working to bring forward the message of collective hope and justice for the next generations.

2. Approval of this agenda and of the <u>meeting minutes</u> of the last online General Assembly meeting 2018 (5')

LZ (HIC-PR): Going through the main points of the agenda:

- Approval of this agenda and of the meeting minutes of the last online General Assembly meeting 2018. (5')
- World Habitat Day and Urban October Campaign. (10')
- Brief Reports of Coordination Offices and future projects (HIC President, HIC AL, HIC MENA, HIC SSA, HIC HLRN and HIC GS). (25')
- HIC Members' and HIC Board Members' contributions and open debate on HIC achievements and challenges. (30')
 - Important reminder: HIC is carrying an internal evaluation and we are happy to have the presence of Samia and Joanna (evaluators) today in the GA
- Gratitude messages to the President of HIC for her work over the past 8 years (20')
- Closure and next General Assembly (2020). (10')

AF (CISCSA): On point five (HIC Members' and HIC Board Members' contributions and open debate on HIC achievements and challenges) I suggest to include a topic on the working group on gender and diversity.

LZ (HIC-PR): Moving forward to the minutes. Are there any clarifications or questions about the meetings of the previous assembly? If there is no need for further clarification, we can move forward.

RG (DESCO): suggests that someone from Ecuador explains a bit about the critical current situation in the country. (At that moment no one from Ecuador is participating).

3. World Habitat Day and Urban October Campaign (10')

LZ (HIC-PR): We have a report from the World Habitat Day Campaign. Irene from the HIC-GS will speak about this.

IF (HIC-GS): On World Habitat Day (WHD) we launched a campaign we launched an online campaign to raise awareness of the fact that the struggle for human rights, and specifically for the defence of people's rights to housing, land and the city, has been the cause of persecution and criminalisation by powerful forces.

We invited Members to share stories of habitat defenders who have been persecuted, so that we could combine our efforts to make these stories more visible.0

In this campaign we have briefly seen the impact, as it was launched on Monday and it is a short period to evaluate, however we can evaluate that we are in the top 100 most influential users in the WHD conversation on Twitter.

We would also like to comment on how we have improved our impact on our campaigns, from planning, preparation, implementation and impact assessment. For that reason, we invite all Members to join future campaigns. We plan to continue this one; the plan is to keep updating the cases of threatened defenders and to give more visibility throughout the month with a stronger action on 31 October, the World Day for the Right to the City.

Digital campaigns strengthen the network serve to work together and to share a common goal and common impacts. In addition, they value our work, it is important to communicate what we are doing and make our work visible, otherwise we are working and putting efforts but the rest of the Coalition is not aware of what one part of the HIC family is doing. To better evaluate our work it is important to communicate what we are doing, and the campaigns highlight the advocacy effort of the organisation.

Our improvement is due to different factors, but the recent communication workshop has been useful; it has been developed with the GPR2C. The workshop was developed to encourage common learning on how to launch online campaigns, and was distributed to Members and Allies online. Please share with us any communication learning you would like to share and we can learn from each other through a coalition and improve our communication work. I copy in the chat now the Manual:

https://www.right2city.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guide_advocacy_campaigns_EN-1.pdf it was the outcome of this workshop that was held online last summer in English and Spanish....

Also, in terms of the last campaign, it has been a joint work that was an initiative coming from HIC-AL and the HIC-GS together with the Global Platform. It has also served to work closely with HIC-AL in terms of communication, and how this collaboration enhances our actions, so I invite all of you to think how we could improve our global communication strategy, which can start to share a common internal communication channel to share what is happening from the different HIC Reference Centres and Members.

Whether it is a common calendar, email group or other, it does not have to be something to multiply our work, but to create an asset to communicate our work and give value to our work as a Coalition. In the meantime, please keep this email in mind: communicationteam@hic-net.org.

I leave it open and we will discuss it further in the near future, in the meantime I invite you to continue to participate in the ongoing campaign, to share with us the cases of threatened human rights defenders and to stay tuned for the second big wave of the campaign on 31 October.

LZ (HIC-PR): We can share now the general activities that have been happening in Member's countries. If you want to make an intervention now to share, please do so. The floor is open.

AP (HIC-GS): I don't know if Khadim Dahot is attending this call. He and his family have been suffering death threats, and we have invited him to share his situation with the GA. On many occasions it takes too much time to access the tools used to support threatened human rights defenders. If you are aware of any international mechanisms that can assist with this situation, please share it with us. The floor is open to those who wish to share the situations of other human rights defenders under threat.

HF (Pólis Institute): I am a staff Member of Pólis Institute and part of the Support Team for the GPR2C. To report on the campaign, since Monday we joined the HIC and GPR2C campaign, we did many activities for World Habitat Day. We also started a process of researching the DESC platform, with 45 Member orgs. Since 2002 we have a methodology similar to that of the UN Rapporteurs; we do visits and reports. On Monday we started a mission on criminalization of defenders by making visits. Nelson is one of the rapporteurs, I am from the support team. In the next few weeks we will write a report that we will share with everyone.

To report on the campaign, since Monday we joined the HIC campaign and the GPRC, we did many activities for World Habitat Day.

JS (HIC-HLRN): HLRN has been monitoring cases in Cambodia, Myanmar, Palestine, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Tibet, Turkey and Western Sahara. Other HIC Members and Offices have been involved in cases in Mexico and Honduras. We propose a long-term "campaign" to defend housing and land rights defenders.

AS (Corporación Sur): In HIC's annual report, it would be useful to have an article clearly explaining the relationship between HIC and the GPR2, its advantages, overlaps and/or contradictions would be good.

LZ (HIC-PR): To clarify, the WHD campaign was launched on Monday, but it is intended to be open, to share and bring awareness to the trend of violence and persecution against human rights defenders. This requires us to build solidarity with the broader movement. Thank you for your contributions, these will be shared online and on the website, and please continue sharing your information.

JS (HIC-HLRN): I met with the Special Consultant who is working to support the SR on Human Rights Defenders, and since last October we have been dealing with the SR on Adequate Housing on cases relating to Egypt. I was also in touch with two people based in Dakar who are ready to work with this campaign.

DE (RNHC): I would like to share the activities in Cameroon starting on Monday. Is based on people that face forced evictions and have been chased for this reason. We need mechanisms of urgent support (emergency service). We have created a "safe house" and we have requested support to our networks to help homeless people living on the streets. Till

today, 48 people have supported this initiative. We would like to increase this number and have expanded this service to other regions in Cameroon.

HZ (ZPLRM): I support the campaign surrounding human rights defenders. I would also like to raise the issue of Pakistan - the toolkits take a long time to assist people, yet that person's life is in danger. In supporting that long term proposal, we need to have a social strategy among activists which helps those activists whose lives are in danger. In the case of Pakistan, regardless of the level of violence, we need a long term strategy amongst those working on these issues.

LZ (HIC-PR): There is an intervention on the chat, it would be a good idea to collaborate and build strong partnerships with networks dealing with these same issues.

We need to move forward onto the next agenda item, but before we switch I note that this proposal on the HIC/GPR2C partnership has been raised before. And also to remind you that there is a current evaluation process going on so you can take this opportunity to exchange and learn.

AF (CISCSA): On Monday, the Women and Habitat network launched a campaign for Women Building Movements in Diversities. One of the messages is about Guarantees for the protection of the lives of women leaders who fight for the conservation of natural resources.

LZ (HIC-PR): Let's gather the initiatives that are being carried out and share them.

AN (Codas Caritas): Codas Caritas has developed multiple initiatives this year in support of families threatened by forced evictions in Douala. Right now there are 8 collectives working together and one of the objectives is to change the policies of the Habitat National Office. Another action tries to give people the tools to confront forced evictions in Douala and support these groups. We already have 5 active neighborhoods.

There's another initiative "Le Salon Villes et Toits du Cameroun", on 19 and 20 December at Douala, with 173 participants, which counted with the collaboration of the Development Ministry of Cameroon and HIC support, very much appreciated. The idea is to expand this to other cities in the country.

SE (HIC-AL): The campaign aimed at giving more visibility activists working for the right to housing, land and human rights. Urban issues have not been included in other campaigns (environmental and rural issues were the preference). The idea is to complement other campaigns. The initiative, as they commented, is an initiative that comes out of HIC-AL, and we want this campaign to join other initiatives that already exist, highlighting that housing defenders are also human rights defenders (not a known aspect in Mexico, for example), who are under threat, and the idea was to highlight this message in addition to the fact that we want to highlight some cases such as Milagro Salas and Elias.

SC (CHRA): So about the general context of Canada: the Canadian government has recently recognized housing as a right as well as the obligation for the progressive implementation of the right to housing as recognized in international agreements. This also came with important financial commitments. These are positive elements. The negative side is that the overall housing conditions in Canada have been deteriorating over the last 25 years. Also in North America we have to look at the US. The overall climate is of cuts of budgets mainly in the national government, but in other levels as well. There are good campaigns and organizations working there to fight back but we can't say that the overall

picture is positive. A good thing that has been developing is the improvement of collective work between Canadian and US organizations.

MK (NAHT): The Trump administration has imposed over the last three years imposed cuts on housing budgets and aids. We have managed to survive the last cut, but there are still fears for the future, but there seems like there won't be rent increases. Meanwhile, at the democrat party primaries for the first time housing has become a key issue. So if in the next term the democrats maintain control of the House of Representatives and gain control of the Senate, the landscape can be very different. This in terms of housing construction but also regarding tenants legislation and others. So I would be a bit more optimistic than Stephan.

There is a growing movement for rent control in Oregon, Illinois and other states. We are talking with Stephan on restoring coordination at a North American level in these issues.

LZ (HIC-PR): Yes, we can't afford to be pessimistic. Thank you for bringing up the theme of tenants and also the role of cities in taking the forefront in this issue. This is the case of cities like Berlin and Barcelona and for this it is required to improve the coordination between regions, since this is an issue that is gaining momentum.

4. Brief Reports of Coordination Offices and future projects (HIC President, HIC AL, HIC MENA, HIC SSA, HIC HLRN and HIC GS) (25')

AP (HIC-GS):

I'm going to give you some figures about participation.

We have 52 people online (48 last year).

26 countries

31 Members organizations

25 Members with the right to vote.

A quorum of 29%, so any motion can be voted today.

Now the Coordinators of Regional Offices will speak. I suggest that they focus on future activities and not so much on the past.

I will start talking about the work of GS. There is a group of Members from Latin America that will take part in the COP-25 in Chile in December. If you want to join us, you can contact the HIC-GS. The idea is to enhance the strategy to work also with climate issues.

Also in collaboration with Ify, the Board Representative from Africa, we are following up an event on the committee of social development that took place last year in New York.

The same goes for Beijing +25 on gender issues, which will also take place over the next year. If you are working with these themes, let us know.

The World Social Forum on Transformative Economies will take place in June next year in Barcelona. This could be the occasion of an in person General Assembly of the general WSF in Mexico next year as well.

Even if you are not focused on targeting these spaces, from HIC we are happy to help you in acting in these spaces, just contact us.

Now Irene will present briefly the new HIC website

IF (HIC-GS): We have been redeveloping the HIC-GS website. This is just not in terms of design but also the usability and features available. On the bottom you can always see the contact information.

There are three main sessions:

1) the Coalition

General information about our work, documents, the Teams and President.

In this section you can also find information about the Members and the advanced search mechanism (still being developed).

2) Happening now

The news and also different newsletters.

3) Knowledge and tools

Space dedicated for the delivery of knowledge and the collective expertise of the coalition. This links with documents and tools developed by all the offices of the coalition.

Finally the advanced search allows you to find information in depth on activities, Members, events and publications under specific themes.

We are happy to hear your comments on the website through the GS mail.

SE (HIC-AL): I will make a report on the last year based on the strategy and objectives

1- Reinforcing formal processes: I am going to highlight some of the many things that were done.

The post-earthquake reconstruction of 2017 is still underway and there is a political incidence against the new government we have.

On the part of the office we facilitate meetings and we have produced a video to raise awareness about this activity and the Social Construction of Habitat. Also with a media campaign to echo this video.

Here we have briefly the scope of the video on Social Networks: Facebook 28000 people, Twitter 10000 people

We work to make visible the problem of forced evictions, to make legislative proposals to solve this problem. Always with the aim of reinforcing the work of the groups and making the voice heard.

Last year we organized an event in parallel to the G20, International Meeting for Equal Cities, so that Members could echo their voices.

2 - Influence Public Habitat Policies:

We do advocacy at various levels, for example several Members have worked on the preparation of the report of the Rapporteur, in the preparation of a series of reports to UN bodies, in Argentina the law was presented, the laws of tenants have returned strongly in the region. In Mexico we have done advocacy, and we have participated in the national plan of human rights, and in the plan of right to housing, there is also a lot of work and examples that I cannot summarize for the time being but that are in progress.

3- Strengthen the articulation of Members in the Coalition: next month there will be a Strategic Workshop with the help of Polis and Moradia Popular, we have organized the regional selections at the end of last year. We continue to support the HIC Strengthening Group. We have entered the Public University.

We are working on regional campaigns at the request of Members.

Members recognize an improvement in our internal and external communication.

AP (HIC-GS): Thank you very much Silvia. We will hear from Joseph from HLRN and the MENA region.

JS (HIC-HLRN): I just wanted to focus on a couple of things to keep it simple. The first is the website and then a couple of things over the last years.

The first is our effort to link the obligations of National governments on Human Rights in international levels to the work on the local level on the SDGs.

We've had a lot of good experience from the 14 states under review at the HLPF in New York, using that opportunity to engage in training of Allies that come into the process, on how to use human rights obligations as the principal reference for states.

I would also like to discuss our work on the violation impact assessment tool, which has evolved over the years. In working with Members in several countries, we managed at the end of last year to compile the cases where we have used the tool, with 21 applications so far. We have expanded this to a project supported by Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, to quantify and genderise human rights violations, so that women can determine their own set of values at stake in forced evictions. This project has focused on three countries in the last two years (India, Kenya, Uganda) with our Members there: in Kenya, Pamoja Trust and Mazingira Institute, in Uganda, Settlement and Shelter Alternatives, where it has been used to assess impacts on fisher villages. In Kenya it has focused on the impact of forced evictions. In India, with HLRN India, the focus has been on urban forced evictions with two cases now ongoing. We hope in the future we will be able to expand this project for at least one more year, and this will probably involve engagement with Members in Zimbabwe and Zambia. I am going to also as the link for the applications of the cases, behind each link is a corresponding report including training materials and the quantification of losses costs and damage in each one. I will now turn over to Ahmed to discuss HIC MENA.

AM (HIC-MENA): Hello, briefly we have two main projects in cooperation with FAO to build a civil society database to ensure that all are engaged in the agenda and to focus on land tenure security. We have a special consultation to be held in November to be held in the Near East Conference on the issue of access to food, land rights, and to follow up on the upcoming session on the region relating to food security and natural resources. We have activities in the region engaging with the committee on food security land rights. We will review the situation in the region on these issues. We have now our new Member in the region, and we are present for the urban food, and this will be discussed in the upcoming conference in Rome.

AP (HIC-GS): we have received a brief report from Malick, which shall now be shared. We also ask Ify to share a report on the regional efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa.

MG (ENDA-Rup): I thank the HIC GS for the GA. And congratulate the presentations that have been made so far.

Our partnership with the ODDs, which we are strengthening.

In the recent past at World Urban Forum 9, the African Urban Research Initiative (AURI) network, including Development Workshop Angola and ENDA-Rup, Members of HIC, are active and are among the founding organizations. Many other AURI Members are well known or have already collaborated with the Mazingira Institute SINA Network, which is the Reference Centre for HIC-SSA. The two networks co-organized an event on co-production or self-production of habitat and previously during the GPR2C meeting in September 2017. Thus AURI should be a strategic partner of HIC in Africa.

Currently within the framework of the Cities Alliance Joint Work Programme (JWP), the 3 continental networks in Africa, Europe and Latin America are working together on issues of interest to HIC such as access to socio-economic services in southern cities. This highlights the relevance of a possible global partnership.

Finally, it should be recalled that in the past there have been joint actions between HIC in Africa and other networks such as ANEW African CSO on water and sanitation in Addis Ababa as part of the definition of Africa's action plan towards CSD on responsible consumption and water and sanitation and integrated water resources management.

HIC would have greater opportunities to strengthen its presence in South Africa and in the south of the Sahara.

5. HIC Members' and HIC Board Members' contributions and open debate on HIC achievements and challenges. (30')

AP (HIC-GS):We have reached the 2 hours mark. As such, we should soon open the floor to Members.

AF (CISCSA): Thank you Alvaro, to Lorena, to Irene, to all the Members of HIC who are strengthening our Coalition. I will now report on the work of the Women and Gender working group, and the Women's network of Latin America that is a part of HIC.

We must genderise the human rights perspective and diversity perspective also. In Latin America we are promoting women's actions in the region. I just want to share with you that since last year when we started to formally work in HIC and assume a Board position, we have worked to enhance women's participation. There are many groups working towards this, and as Joseph said we are trying to genderise HIC and the NGOs within it, and we have improved a lot. At the end of the month we are going to have more definitions and precision on when we start this work, and it would be very good if we could start this work in other regions of HIC.

The Women and Habitat Network this week launched a campaign mainly centered on climate change, focused on women's leaders in environmental campaigns. Many have been killed, and this was the central focus of our WHD campaign. We are also coordinating as a HIC Member and working in a consolidated network spanning three decades of work in the region, with several NGOs participating in the region.

I note that within Latin America there is a consolidation that is working very well, Ana Pastor knows this very well. Strong support is being given towards the work of women and gender within HIC. In yesterday's meeting, we shared this point for the Assembly, and also the agenda we want to build within LA. It would be great if we could start this next month in contact with the regional offices, and work on the identification of who is who within women and feminist work, to start to link internationally HIC's work on these matters.

I want to congratulate Irene for the great work she has done for HIC, and I would like to request that you include the women and gender group at the web page, and we commit to you sending information on the Women and Habitat Network.

Taking what Alvaro proposed with regards to the agenda of events, we want to coordinate the Beijing 25 proposals, and for the World Urban Forum, and tell you that we will be participating in Durban. We are going to do some side events there to highlight women and habitat work there. I also want to request that the assembly recognise the Women and Habitat Network as a formal network within HIC, this should see some initial contribution to help consolidate the network. Thank you.

AP (HIC-GS): As you can see we have reached the point number five on HIC Board Members' contributions and open debate. So if you want to contribute, raise your hand.

IO (Worldwide Network): Let me start by refreshing your memory regarding the event that took place in February this year. It was a well attended event and as a result HIC was invited to integrate the Expert Group to prepare further events and reports.

As Alvaro said, next year we are planning to be at the 68th edition of the Social and Economic Commission session. We will be also taking part in the Beijing +25 at the UN in March. 5 events. The deadline will be next week. If you need more information on these events you can either contact me or Alvaro.

AP (HIC-SG): The floor is open

AF (DPU): I would like to highlight that the DPU and other HIC Members are taking part in activities during the UCLG congress in Durban. The main theme of this event will be urban equality. We have been planning it in collaboration with Lorena and HIC. If you will be attending, let us know. Also if you have questions.

HZ (ZPLRM): Thank you from all the regions for the reports. My main vision from these reports is that the African region is isolated and not adequately represented in the activities developed. My proposal is that there is a HIC office set up in Africa or that the HIC Secretariat will be based in Africa in the future. This is particularly relevant for the sub-Saharan region.

AP (HIC-GS): Thank you. The GA should know that during yesterday's Board meeting, similar concerns have been raised.

IO (Worldwide Network): Thank you for raising this very obvious situation, which we have actually discussed at the Board meeting. The request has already been made so there is a specific meeting to discuss moving the HIC-GS to Africa. This includes adequate funding and the development of activities in order to enhance the coalition in the region. I feel that when other offices are reporting, the amount of resources and activities is very different from what we have now in Africa. I can begin to emphasize the benefits of having a local office in Africa. Maybe the first step could be moving the GS Office to Africa.

AR (CENESTA): I just want to suggest that it would be good for HIC to consider more indigenous people in their activities. So I suggest that the concept of "territories" is more considered.

6. Gratitude messages to the President of HIC for her work over the past 8 years (20')

AP (HIC-GS): Now we have more than 2 hours of the GA and maybe we can start to wrap up, moving to this very special part of thanking Lorena for the work done during her tenure as HIC president.

On my personal behalf I can say that from the beginning that I started acting as HIC General Secretary I had the help and support of Lorena and this was very important. If you also want to express your thanks for Lorena, the floor is open.

AF (CISCSA): I really want to thank Lorena. She has been open and friendly, but also showed strong leadership. For us from feminist movements it was very important to count with your support and your understanding. I am very happy to keep on collaborating with you in the future on the GPR2C and other occasions.

MG (Enda-Rup): thank you to our President, and greetings. Excellent work, very good communication with her, she speaks perfectly French, great diversity of knowledge. I know Lorena since her beginning at HIC, and I wish her to continue to support us and to greet Enrique Ortiz.

SE (HIC-AL): I may not be the best person to talk to the President, because she's a very dear friend. She has done a great job and the standard is very high, she has had a very fluid communication with offices, Members, Allies and to convey the struggles and demands of

our peoples'. She has never forgotten that the struggle is from below. We believe it is necessary for the UN to hear that people's reality is very complicated. Lorena knows this and she transmitted it very well. She knows the fight and has taken it there. The next person I hope will have this at the heart of their mandate. It is not goodbye because we will continue to communicate.

JS (HRLN): We have known Lorena for many years, but I am sure that this is just the beginning. I just regret that this is your last GA as HIC President and I can't give you an in person hug.

LZ (HIC-PR): Thank you all. I will do my best to be in the next in person GA so I can see all of you and say thanks.

AP (Madre Tierra): We are not going to let you get lost in other people's fields, we know that we will continue to count on you. You helped me a lot by dedicating many hours to introduce me to the role of Board Member. I'm not going to miss you because I know we're going to have you for a long time. You're a big one!

AP (HIC-GS): A brief comment on the ongoing election process for the HIC Presidency. Right now we have more than 80 Members with a right to vote, which makes it look like we will have a very participatory process.

So if there are not any additional messages, we will close the meeting. We usually just open our mics and shout and say goodbye:)

Thank you all!

3. Closure and next General Assembly (2020) (10')

Annexure:

Updated list of participants