



Habitat International Coalition General Assembly

Cairo, Egypt, Hotel Flamenco
6 September 2005

For approval in the next General Assembly of Vancouver 2006.

1. Revision of the Quorum

63 persons were present at the General Assembly: 29 voting HIC members; representatives of 5 regions (Latin America, Anglophone Africa, Asia, North America and Europe); and 3 networks (HLRN, HSEN and WAS). Simultaneous translation was available to work in Arabic, Spanish and English. (List of participants in Annex 1)

2. Revision and approval of the Agenda

The General Secretary explains that the most important points in the agenda are: the definition of a common lines of action for the following years; the expressions of solidarity with specific cases; and the financial report.

Decision 1: The agenda is approved (unanimous) (Annex 2)

3. Welcome

Enrique Ortiz, HIC President, welcomed the Assembly. This session is a continuum of the Training on the Human Right to Adequate Housing, the Workshop on Social Production and Management and aims to bring policy orientations for HIC strategic lines of action.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the previous General Assembly, Porto Alegre 2005

The General Secretary asks for comments to the minute that were posted in HIC website, HIC mailing list and also included in the dossier distributed to the participants.

Decision 2: Minutes are approved. (unanimous) (Annex 3)

5. Follow-up of decisions of the Porto Alegre General Assembly

Report by Ana Sugranyes based on follow-up activities regarding the past General Assembly, particularly dealing with the creation of a new Task Force on Globalisation and Privatisation of Habitat.

Comments of the Assembly

- Include the issue of land in the task force for globalization
- Analyse the economical impact of globalization
- Include the issue the privatization of water and sanitation
- Task force has to take the initiative to contact the focal points

Decision 3: Promoters of the Task Force on Privatization of Habitat shall contact the Focal Points, and include land privatization to the scope of the task force. A caucus of HIC members and interested parties is convened to join to make specific recommendations to the task force. (unanimous)

6. *Brainstorming on strategic issues*

Participants to the SPH workshop proposed a draft that identifies crosscutting themes and themes to be deepened for the period 2005-2007. (Annex 4a)

Comments of the Assembly

- Emad Abdeen, Sudan: Have actual feedback of HIC activity in the field through factual involvement, training, capacity building and education.
- Davinder Lamba, Kenya: If HIC develops a special initiative to address the Cities without Slums it would be an opportunity that could include SPH as well as gender equality and others. Millennium Declaration brings national declarations to global level. Cities without Slums means many other areas.
- Olga Segovia, Chile: Include specific proposals, including the gender thematic.
- Malick Gaye, Senegal: After Cities Without Slums initiative there has been several evictions.
- Marisol Dalmazo, Colombia: Consider among the evictions the forced displacements in Colombia, supporting research, monitoring, denounce. Develop the urban security theme as well as a citizenship attitude about gender.
- Joe Schechla, HLRN: First paragraph needs to be clarified. Add human rights based before people-centred. (Including as example the Cities Alliance meeting). List shows a great process but this are no task for the GS but for you, you do it, is you all.
- Evaniza Rodríguez, Brazil: Broaden HIC participation at the WSF. HIC must guarantee presence at the 2006 decentralized expression of the Forum, with active participation of regional bodies and include the strategic themes in the 2007 Forum to be held in Kenya. Include in point (4a) the costs of water, sewage and housing as investments (no as public expenditure)
- Alejandro Florián, Colombia: Try to group the text into major categories to simplify the message and have a clear identity to show what we are doing. In 2006 HIC will commemorate it's 30th anniversary; let's try to make an agenda with major lessons for the defence and promotion of the right to housing and social production of habitat (achievements and assets)
- Amal Basha, Yemen: Add to the strategy how to join the international activities as the efforts for OP-ESC Rights. How can we raise such massive violations, document, record and submit to the International Criminal Court and the Security Council to prosecute criminals for their actions.
- Syria: Further clarification of real possibilities for training and capacity building for the civil society, i.e. in Syria for Turkish minorities and Kurds.
- Anita Beaty, US: gentrification is not mentioned and the reduction of the number of homeless people is shadowed to say they are criminals and not homeless.
- Enrique Ortiz, Mexico: Better to bring together the diverse messages in two packages: first, leading with HIC action for the promotion and defense of the right to housing; and second related with activities for the fulfillment of such right through diverse modalities, including different scopes of action. Point 10 should be integrated in other paragraphs. Point 2, with the WSF, and the uncertainties about negative impacts of globalization are present both in north and south. Davinder's proposal about the Cities without Slums initiative is interesting requires internal discussion.
- Lorena Zárate, Mexico: De Soto initiative will be launched and governments will begin to apply his theories (widely criticized) to public policies for legal recognition of individual land titles. We have to learn about best, good and bad practices as well as of good policies.

- Cristina Bossio, Argentina: Move towards building joint actions and alliances with other networks, promoting articulation axis among different sectors of the "altermundista" movement. Create task groups for the fulfillment of such actions/alliances.
- Maite Martínez, Spain: promote the decentralized management of urban and regional planning, equipments, development of dwells and infrastructure, as in Brazil. WAS has documents on mainstreaming gender in all policies.

Decision 4: A working group will edit the current text to include comments and recommendations expressed by the General Assembly and further discuss HIC Strategic Lines during the Board Meeting. (Annex 4b)

7. Solidarity statements

HIC members present at the General Assembly addressed the following solidarity statements:

- Iraq's catastrophe after the U.S. occupation, presented by Dr. Hazim Alluhebe, Human Rights and Immigration Bureau, Baghdad, Iraq. (Annex 5)
- Open Letter regarding MDG Summit and US obligations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, proposed by Anita Beaty, Michael Kane (to be edited and signed by HIC President and General Secretary). (Annex 6)
- Afghanistan: refugees' housing problems, solidarity statement presented by Mohammed Akbar and Shivani Choudry. (Annex 7)
- Solidarity statement for the families of Paris fires and for the Right to Housing in France, presented by Ana Sugranyes following a communication of Knut Unger, Germany. (Annex 8)
- Solidarity statement to support Puerto Rico communities that face imminent eviction, presented by Pedro Franco, Dominican Republic. (Annex 9)
- Expression of concern and solidarity with the situation of immigrants in Morocco, who deserve the right to life and the same opportunities and conditions for a decent life.
- Motion of rejection to the steel factory in the city of San Luis, Maranhao, presented by Evaniza Rodrigues, Brazil. (Annex 10)

8. Housing and Land Rights Campaign

Habitat Day is the first Monday of October. This year HIC expresses solidarity with specific cases as Palestine, Puerto Rico and Colombia. The call to action has been disseminated worldwide and follow-up is required to prompt local actions coordinated globally.

Comments of the Assembly

- Evaniza Rodrigues: Suggests improving the information in each country because message is strong; put information on-line during the day and making it more stronger and more international.
- Mike Kane: it is hard to coordinate in the same day, in the past years this has been done some weeks before or after because it's not always possible to have all information in the same day. Actions can address what is being struggled in your own city including only a few lines making references to the day of action.
- Cristina Bossio: I suggest that in order to gain visibility we let the press in our countries know there are many celebrations and events that have been held in the rest of the world and use in our own countries to call attention.
- Enrique Ortiz: in former years we have used the symbol of this day, so use it, to have an image of being together. In these days we are going to make a meeting for a common strategy to promote the Charter of Right to the City and there are many issues coming from this meetings, will disseminate these information.

9. Financial report

Joseph Schechla presented two reports and explained current procedures for the administration of HIC global funds.

- Audit of fiscal years 2001-2003, for the Secretary General based in Cape Town, covering the finances for the Consortium Program including donors EED, Misereor and Cordaid, administrating expenses in four currencies. The report shows a small 150 euros, but the auditors found it as acceptable.
- Report for the operation budget of the General Secretariat for fiscal years 2004-2005: includes the instalment and operation of the GS, funded by Misereor, covering only the GS to operate and not to promote activities. Total 3 years grant of 300.000 euros (2004-2007). On-going grant in the second six-months period.
- GS produced accounting software for a global control of membership contributions and other little projects; management in 3 currencies (US dollars, euros and Chilean pesos) of six accounts (bank, cash and PayPal system for transfer of reduced amounts. Board has authorised the focal points to collect membership dues to alleviate transfers and make process more fluent.
- HIC has no legal status in Chile. GS is working with HIC Dutch status which allows a global administration of global funding; for the operation in Chile a HIC member is giving the administration and accounting support that gives the opportunity for auditing.

Comments of the Assembly

- More precision about the contributions, the cost of the last General Assembly and that the financial report is expressed in an easier format so that everybody can understand it, this would require its translation into the various languages.
- Need of having a short table summarizing the financial audit available for the members and an easy to read version of the budget.
- More information on the costs of the last General Assembly and on the financial needs of the General Assembly, which are of higher-priority than financial decentralization.
- Members stressed the need of having French simultaneous translation.

Motion: Treasurer shall make an abstract of the information, balance and synthesis that has to be opened for public consultation during the following days as a measure for transparency within the Coalition. (with no vote)

Decision 5: The financial report is approved. (Annex 11)

10. Other business

- Davinder Lamba: introduces two new Board members of Anglofone Africa: Nellie Agingu (Planact, South Africa) and Salvador Ferreira (Development Workshop, Angola)

11. Next General Assembly

HIC will commemorate its 30th anniversary in 2006. General Assemblies usually take place at global events that make possible to bring people together. The World Urban Forum will be held in the birthplace of the Coalition: Vancouver. It is possible to convene the next General Assembly coinciding with such global activity.

9. Closure (14:00 PM)

Annexes

- Annex 1: List of participants with right to vote
- Annex 2: Agenda of the General Assembly of Cairo 2005.
- Annex 3: Minutes of General Assembly of Porto Alegre 2005.
- Annex 4a: Brainstorming on HIC strategic lines of action.
- Annex 4b: Strategic Lines of Habitat International Coalition 2005-2007. Cairo Declaration.
- Annex 5: Iraq's catastrophe after the U.S. occupation
- Annex 6: Open Letter regarding MDG Summit and US obligations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina
- Annex 7: Afghanistan: refugees' housing problems
- Annex 8: Solidarity statement for the families of Paris fires
- Annex 9: Solidarity statement to support Puerto Rico communities that face imminent eviction
- Annex 10: Motion of rejection to the steel factory in the city of San Luis, Maranhao
- Annex 11: Financial report, following comments of the GA.