

# Habitat International Coalition, HIC Minutes of the General Assembly 2007



**Chris Hanni Tent 2, WSF, Nairobi, Kenya  
January the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 from 12:00 to 13:30 hours**

## **1. Revision of the Quorum**

Sixty (60) persons were present at the General Assembly: 19 voting HIC members; in representation of seven HIC regions (Latin America, Anglophone and Francophone Africa, Asia, Middle East and North Africa, North America and Europe) and three thematic networks (HLRN, HSEN and WAS). (List of participants in Annex II)  
Agreed minimum infrastructure was not available.<sup>1</sup>

## **2. Welcome**

Enrique Ortiz, HIC President, welcomed the Assembly here at WSF 2007 where HIC is having different activities and is developing part of the global evaluation events. He highlighted the ever-increasing problems related with the general trends on the housing privatization and the violation of housing rights. The Coalition needs to be united to face people's problems, develop campaign capacities and enhance community based initiatives.

## **3. Revision and Approval of the Agenda**

The General Secretary explains that this is a thematic-oriented Assembly and the proposed agenda aims to deepen the debate around HIC global campaigns. The detailed agenda of this gathering has been prepared by a HIC Board Commission.  
The floor is open for comments.

**Decision 1:** The agenda is approved (unanimous)



<sup>1</sup> Note from the General Secretary: The infrastructure provided for the General Assembly was pitiful. Even though an agreement was previously established (and paid for) with the WSF for (1) a meeting space within the stadium grounds, (2) sound installations and (3) simultaneous translation services, none of these demands were met. The General Assembly was held in a gigantic tent wherein -simultaneously- other activities were held and provided an exceeding amount of noise and distraction. The decision to hold the Assembly within the infrastructure of the WSF was a grave mistake, particularly considering the great installations that were available to us in the Mazingira Institute, where the Board meetings and evaluation workshops were held.

Even though there were six hours foreseen and reserved for the General Assembly, the WSF calendar provided but two hours without any possibility for extensions. Further more, the tent where the Assembly was held had to be vacated at 13:30 due to other loud and even musical interruptions from neighbouring groups. The notes found here are post-recollections of the themes and discussions of the meeting since, due to the chaos previously described, the HIC-GS team was unable to take the usual detailed notes.

#### **4. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous General Assembly**

The Minutes of the General Assembly of Vancouver have been available on-line since August 2006. The floor is open for comments.

See <http://www.hic-net.org/content/Online%5CHIC-GA-2006-minutas-Vancouver-2006.pdf>

**Decision 2:** The minutes are approved

#### **5. Revision of the Housing and Land Rights Day Campaign 2006**

Interventions were recorded by Issa Samandar, Joseph Schechla, Najma Sadeque, Kasem Abu Dayyeh, Enrique Ortiz, Shivani Bhardwaj, Khady Diagne, Leon Guy and Graca Xavier.

A revision of all the characteristics of the HLRD Campaign 2006 included the main themes and events:

- Two HIC main mobilizations were made, one in London and the other in Calcutta.
- Manifestation in Palestine
- Various events on the social impact of the Privatization of Habitat
- Caravan through 20 Indian cities manifesting against evictions
- Various cases of evictions in Africa
- The process of the *Clinique Foncière* 2006 in Cameroon, which facilitates the access to land to women.
- Denounce the urban and rural evictions in Brazil

For further information see: <http://hic-net.org/indepth.asp?PID=61>

#### **6. Proposals for the Housing and Land Rights Day Campaign 2007**

Interventions were recorded by Rabial Mallick, Katherine Coit, Mallick Gaye, Shivani Bhardwaj, Joseph Schechla, Enrique Ortiz, Knut Unger, Ana Sugranyes, Nelson Saule, Wade Rathke, Rabial Mallick, Knut Unger and Michael Kane.

Discussion and suggestions on the main plausible themes of the next HLRD campaign 2007.

- The campaign has to focus on main issues, i.e. evictions, privatization of housing, land and water and analytical revision of MDG's. It should also include concepts such as the Right to the City, emphasis on the time frame (housing rights **now!**) and a clear strategy against the speculation.
- The campaign has to be based on clear objectives oriented towards precise target group, accompanied by defining slogans and communicational a strategy. The campaign should also experiment with new mediums. Proposed was a film festival and online library of films and publications on housing issues.
- The campaign should be able to support local struggles.
- The campaign should sustain a way to share violation records.
- It should also alliance itself with the main environmental campaigns especially the Right to Water Campaign.

**Decision 3** (unanimous): The creation of a commission made up of Knut Unger, Nellie Agingu, Nadjma Sadeque, Rabial Mallick and Michael Kane to redact a the main frame document for the HIC Campaign 2007. See the result of this commission in Annex I.

#### **7. Themes of the Coalition**

##### **7.1 Monitoring**

Interventions were recorded by Knut Unger, Joseph Schechla, Silvia Emanuelli, Ana Sugranyes and Katherine Coit.

The Coalition's demands to strengthen the Coalition, support local processes of Social Production of Habitat and influence policies demand a monitoring capacity divided in two main focuses: problems (violations of the housing rights) and victories (people centered processes in social production of habitat). Monitoring should also include the homelessness related issues.

**Decision 4** (unanimous): The creation of a HIC Board member commission constituted by Knut Unger, Joseph Schechla, HIC-AL and HIC-GS to define the objectives, methodology and operational capacity of the project.

## **7.2 Alternative G8**

Intervention was recorded by Knut Unger to explain the organization of the G8 Alternative Summit in Rostock (June 2007) and the ways that HIC-EU is participating therein.

## **7.3 Privatization of Habitat**

Interventions recorded by Mallick Gaye, Silvia Emanuelli, Michael Kane, Shivani Bhardwaj, Enrique Ortiz, Knut Unger and Wade Rathke.

**Discussion:** Conversation revolved around a better conceptualization of definitions and ideas. For example,

- The relationship between globalization of economy and the privatization of services.
- Clarification of privatization of *what* housing elements.
- Mega projects and their social and spatial impact.
- Naming and shaming of the violations made by real estate companies on housing rights.
- Relationship between migration themes, labor and homelessness.

**Decision 5:** Two main proposals were tabled. The first one was the evolution of the working group on privatization towards a Political-Economics Caucus and the second is to have a special fund raising for translations to support the HIC process to clarify the related concepts.

## **7.4 HRLN Report**

Intervention was recorded by Joseph Schechla explaining the main achievements of the Housing and Land Rights network:

- The Human Dignity/Human Rights Caucus is the result of many years of alliance among human rights organizations spurring from the World Social Forum.
- Outputs regarding the monitoring of *two years after the tsunami*.
- Advocacy in Geneva.
- Web-based capacity building on how to analyze, at a local and national level, violations on housing.

## **7.5 The Right to the City**

Enrique Ortiz presented the topic emphasizing that the elaboration of a world charter on the Right to the City is a long term process. However, he added that there are immediate tasks, such as strengthening the networking among peers and consolidating alliances with other actors (UNESCO, DPU London College, etc...). The most immediate necessity is to redefine a dissemination strategy of the charter.

Joseph Schechla recognized the process-orientated emphasis. However, he reminds the assembly that it is a charter that spurs from Latin America and that the initiative's success rests in the creation of rural networks alliance, starting with Via Campesina.

Nelson Saule also recognizes the importance the process-orientated emphasis on building the charter. He adds the urgency to build observatories that allow us to monitor the capacity of Right to the City.

#### **7.6 Social Production of Habitat:**

**Decision 6** (unanimous): The necessity to have an international project to strengthen the social production of habitat conceptualization and experiences, inside and outside of the Coalition, with peers and partners defining and translating concepts and encouraging its practices. Also HIC should facilitate capacity building through training of local and national social actors.

#### **7.7 Women and Shelter Network, WAS:**

Shivani Bhardwaj explained the possibilities of developing a new phase for the global network on women and housing issues. Six HIC Board members –in representation of five areas of HIC: HIC-Latin America, HIC-Anglophone Africa, HIC-Francophone Africa, HIC-MENA and HIC-Asia- were elected at the beginning of 2007 to carry out this endeavor. The immediate goals of this challenge are:

- Housing theme's presence in the gendered GLTN workshop in Nairobi.
- Preparation of an international event in Barcelona (February 2008) on women and housing rights.

#### **8. Closing session**

One and a half hours after the beginning of this General Assembly, at 1:30 PM, it is impossible to continue the development of the Assembly because of the noise of another gatherings starting under the same tent that included sing-along and screaming.

*HIC-GS / Santiago, November 2007*

## **Annex I**

### **Declaration of the HIC General Assembly 2007**

## **Join the Global Campaign to Stop Forced Evictions and the Neoliberal Destruction of People's Land and Housing**

Nairobi, Kenya  
January 24, 2007  
On HIC web site since March 2007

In response to the sharp increase of massive forced evictions caused by mega-development schemes, global investment and property speculation in urban and rural areas across the planet, the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) Membership Assembly proposes that all peoples housing and land movements, tenants and housing rights organizations, and their allies join in a ***Global Campaign to Stop Forced Evictions and Neoliberal Destruction of Peoples' Land and Housing.***

#### **Possible slogans include:**

- Stop Forced Evictions
- Stop Speculation in Housing, Land and Water
- Enforce the Right to Housing Now

#### **The campaign aims to:**

- Raise global awareness of these issues through a coordinated media campaign.
- Help local and national housing and land rights movements advance their agendas against local, national or regional targets.
- Strengthen local organizations and global networks for future joint actions.

### **I. Global Days of Action for International Housing and Land Rights in October**

Since 2003, HIC has coordinated International Housing and Land Rights Days of Action in October to affirm the Right to Housing in opposition to neoliberal policies across the planet. In 2004, for the first time in history, groups organized housing rights protests in dozens of cities in 32 countries, in all six continents, advancing their local and national agendas.

For 2007-2008, HIC calls on all housing and land rights organizations to sponsor one or more public events as part of the Global Campaign in their countries on or about International Housing Rights Day (first Monday in October, timed with the UN World Habitat Day). Each national or local organization would define the specific issues and demands for their country or city. Each group would emphasize the cutting edge struggles which their organization is fighting for, and which will help advance their own issues locally. Local groups would be encouraged to organize an "oppositional" event that works for them within their resources and organizational culture, but with a press angle and preferably mass action or participation.

Although the "official" UN date is the first Monday of October each year, participating groups could pick a day on the first weekend of October or some other day or days in late September or October if that works better for local participants. Local groups fighting forced eviction or speculation do not have to organize a "new" campaign to participate, but should think of how an October action can fit into their on-going local campaigns, and link to the global campaign themes (adding a paragraph to a press release, solidarity speakers at rallies, etc).

As in prior years (see web pages at [hic-net.org](http://hic-net.org)), HIC will post a Special Web Page which will list actions by each participating organization, with links to the Home Page of each group

where feasible. HIC proposes to cross-link local actions with other participating international networks (International Union of Tenants, International Alliance of Inhabitants, etc).

Participating groups are asked to forward a brief description of the proposed action to be posted to the HIC webpage in advance. HIC will issue a global press release highlighting major actions in different regions and contact global media and direct attention to key local events. HIC will also provide a Local Press Kit by October 1 with background materials including the Monitoring Map useful to hand out to your local press. Local groups would generate their own local media and mention the global campaign in their press work.

## **II. Monitoring and Mapping Forced Evictions, Housing Rights Violations, Privatization/Globalization Crises and Peoples' Victories**

HIC has launched a Monitoring and Mapping project to support local campaigns and global press work. The first Global Map on forced evictions, housing rights violations, and privatization struggles was launched on International Housing Rights Day at a press conference in London in 2006. The Map is posted on the HIC webpage ([www.hic-net.org](http://www.hic-net.org)) with links to background reports. The Map was based on information gathered from local peoples' campaigns and housing rights groups.

The Map and background reports are a tool to help local organizing campaigns, raise global awareness and media attention, and promote networking among grass roots housing rights and settlements activists. HIC calls on all organizations and networks to participate in the Monitoring and Mapping project by forwarding to HIC information and reports about forced evictions, privatization and globalization struggles, and housing rights violations in their areas.

HIC General Assembly has also proposed to create a poster of peoples' victories in the fights against forced eviction, globalization and housing rights violations. HIC invites local groups to forward their victory stories to be shared with and inspire others in struggles across the globe.

HIC will release an updated version of the Map each year to the global media for Housing Rights Day, and make available a downloadable version so groups can include it in their local press work.

## **III. "Naming and Shaming" global corporations and financial institutions targets**

In response to the rapidly accelerating rate of globalization, speculation and privatization in the habitat sector, there is an urgent need for information, research and analysis of the specific strategies of global corporations, financial institutions, governments and UN agencies in the destruction of habitat and forced evictions. Although good information exists on these issues for the issue of water privatization, little has been brought together in the field of housing and land.

HIC Working Group on Privatization and Globalization of Habitat has proposed a "Naming and Shaming" project to collect this information and post it on HIC website for global use. HIC invites all organizations, trade unions, research institutes and progressive academic friends to share information, action-oriented research, and analysis of the roles that specific corporations, financial institutions, government and UN agencies are playing in the destruction of habitat around the globe. "Naming the names" of the actors involved, and sharing information on HIC website, is the first step to "shaming" these institutions and allowing more targeted organizing drives to stop forced evictions and speculation.

HIC Working Group on Privatization and Globalization of Habitat also invites interested organizations and activists to join an on-going electronic list serve and discussion group to deepen awareness and analysis of these issues. Contact HIC to get involved.

#### **IV. Coordinated campaign targets and solidarity to local campaigns**

At this stage, the proposed Global Campaign is mainly a public awareness campaign, given the difficulty of identifying and mobilizing against a specific, single "target" that could unite and engage grass roots movements across the globe. However, some local groups have linked regionally, as in the case of Asian movements in their campaign against neo-liberal policies of the Asian Development Bank.

Still other groups have launched solidarity campaigns that unite struggles against corporate targets in several countries, such as the campaigns against Coca Cola or Walmart, although targeting of housing and land corporations has yet to occur.

HIC encourages local groups to link together to target specific corporations or financial institutions engaged in forced evictions and the destruction of habitat as part of the Global Campaign, wherever feasible. Actions timed during the October period will be highlighted in the Campaigns' global press work.

*HIC Commission / Nairobi, January 24<sup>th</sup> 2007*

## Annex II

### HIC General Assembly 2007 Participants

	Organization	Participant	Country
<b>A. HIC Members with right to vote</b>			
1	HIC President	Enrique Ortiz	México
2	AITEC	Katherine Coit	Francia
3	BLACD	Mina Makbel	Egypt
4	CIERIC	Carlos Alvarez	Cuba
5	CISRS	Rabial Mallick	India
6	CMMLK	Felix Yanes	Cuba
7	CONGEH	Leon Guy Mfomou	Cameroun
8	ENDA-RUP	Khady Diagne	Senegal
9	Habitat Netz	Knut Unger	Germany
10	Land Research Center	Kasem Abu Dayyeh	Palestine
11	National Alliance of Hud Tenants	Michael Kane	USA
12	PLANACT	Nellie Agingu	South Africa
13	POLIS	Nelson Saule Junior	Brasil
14	Sathi All for Partnership	Shivani Bardwaj	India
15	Social Democratic Forum	Nabil Maged	Yemen
16	Sons of the Land	Salah Saber	Egypt
17	The Wall Committee	Issa Samander	Palestine
18	Uniao Dos Movimentos de Moradia, UMMSP	María das Graças Xavier	Brasil
19	União Nacional Por Moradia Popular, UNMP	Jose Claudio do Santos	Brasil
<b>B. HIC Staff</b>			
20	HLRN	Joseph Schechla	USA
21	HLRN	Angie Balata	Egypt
22	MENA	Nada Gamal	Egypt
23	HLRN	Yasser Abdel Kader	Egypt
24	HLRN-SARP	Miloon Kothari	India
25	HLRN-SARP	Shivani Chaudry	India
26	HIC-AL	Silvia Emanuelli	México
27	General Secretariat	Ana Sugranyes	Chile
28	General Secretariat	Juan Necochea	Chile
29	HIC global Evaluator	Frank Samol	Germany
30	HIC global Evaluator	Lake Sagaris	Chile
31	HIC global Evaluator	Wakio Seaforth	Kenya
<b>C. Observers</b>			
32		George Kamao	Kenya
33		José Raimund Trindade	
34	ACORN	Wade Rathke	USA
35	Alliance for freedom and Dignity (AFD)	A. El Ouazzane	Belgium
36	ASHOCA	Carlo Sommaruga	Swiss
37	CEDM	Alvaro Ramis	Chile
38	ENDA-RUP	Malick	Senegal
39	FUCVAM-SCC	Gustavo González	Uruguay
40	Homerc Muanza	Susan Sprenheldec	Tanzania
41	Imani Childrens Home	George Ngoroge	Kenya
42	Imani Childrens Home	Maria Njambi	Kenya
43	Insenante	Paz Lopez	Spain
44	JUNDEP	Miguel Santibañez	Chile
45	Kenyatta University	Akolth Christine Odero	Kenya
46	Laikipia Human Right Forum	Wangea Nderitv	Kenya
47	Memory Project	Diana Wangari	Kenya



48	O-DESC	Lourdes Rios	Spain
49	PROFEFIN	Ramon Roman	Spain
50	Revista EXODO	Evarista Villar	Spain
51	Rooftops Canada	Barry Pinsky	Canada
52	Rural Women NGO "Alga"	Aijamal Bakashova	Kyrkystan
53	Rural Women NGO "Alga"	Djanaeva Olga	Kyrkystan
54	Shirkat Gah	Najma Sadeque	Pakistan
55	Sind Metal Campinas	Jair Dos Santos	Brasil
56	Social Conscience AIDS Network	Macharia Githigia	Kenya
57	Social Ministry Tangaza College of	Oscar Mapopa	Kenya
58	Uniao dos Movimentos de Moradia	María Aparecida	Brasil
59	Uniao Nacional de Moradia Popular UNMP	Marcio Porto dos Santos	Brasil
60	Womens Struggle Committee	S.S.Alli	India

*HIC-GS / January 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007*