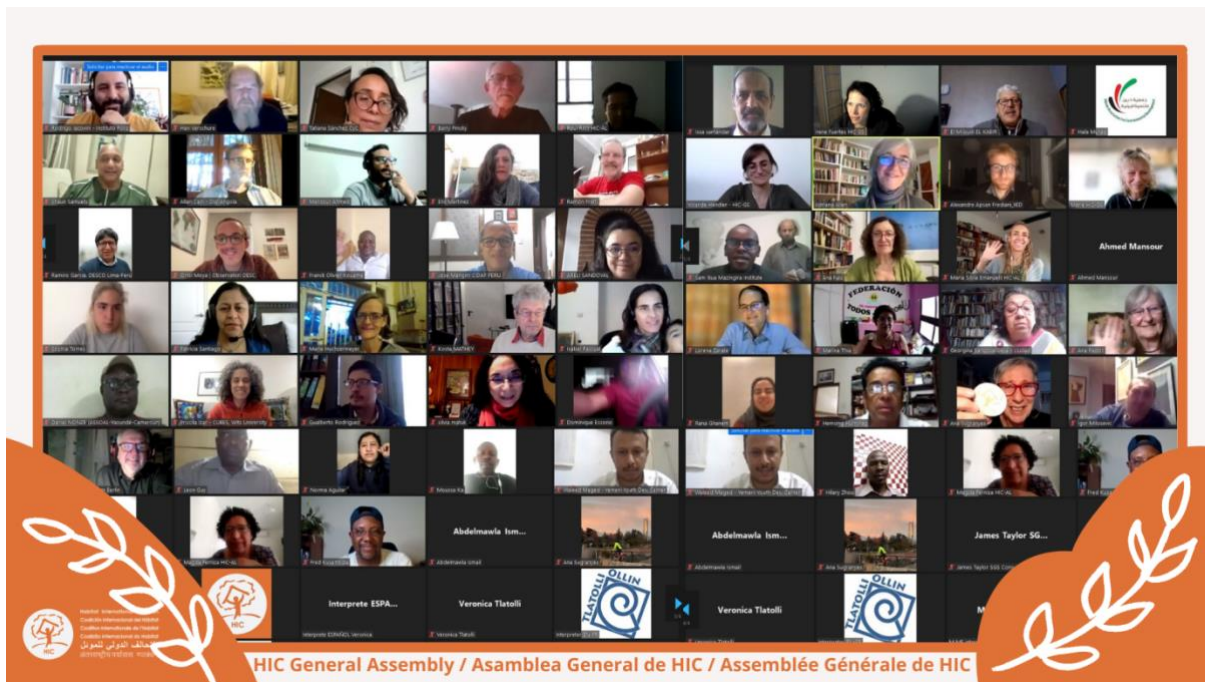


# 2021 General Assembly (GA) Minutes

9 December 2021



86 registered participants (43 women and 43 men) from 54 organizations, 31 countries; 8 Board Members, and the team of 7 HIC Reference Centres (The list of participants is available [here](#))

# **Overview of Agenda**

## **1. Welcome:**

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- 1.2 HIC Members in memoriam

## **2. Approvals and presentations**

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- 6.2 Co-Learning Plans
- 6.3 Advocacy Milestones

## **7. Closing Photo & Next GA in June 2022**

## **Welcome: “45 years of HIC” video**

**Chair: Adriana Allen (AA)**, HIC President

Welcomes participants and launches the celebration of HIC's 45th anniversary.

### **1.1 Celebrating 45 years in the life of HIC**

All watch the “45 years of HIC” video. Click [here](#) to watch it.

**AA:** The celebration is an opportunity to look back and to look forward, to reflect critically and collectively, to think about what comes next and to grow together as a Coalition. Importantly, we do so at a crucial moment in history, the struggles that inspired the creation of HIC 45 years ago are still relevant and there are new challenges: COVID-19 pandemic, the climate emergency, the financialization of life and the urban transition. HIC's mission and vision are more relevant today than ever and we have to think about how to grow our voice together in the years to come. We will have a number of events, four publications around HIC's 4 key themes: housing and land rights, gender, social production of habitat and sustainable environment, and if possible, an in-person gathering around June, on the occasion of the World Urban Forum (WUF).

### **1.2 HIC Members in memoriam**

**AA:** 2021 has been also a very sad year. We have lost four dear colleagues. One of the Coalition's strengths is to remember and value the legacy of all its Members.

All watch the “HIC Members in memoriam” video. Click [here](#) to watch it.

## **2. Approvals and presentations**

**Chair: Adriana Allen (AA)**, HIC President

### **2.1 Approval of Agenda**

Presents the agenda of the General Assembly (GA). It was also sent by e-mail. There are no comments, so the agenda is considered as approved.

### **2.2 Approval of Minutes of GA Feb 2021**

The minutes were sent by e-mail, since no comments have been received, they are considered as approved by the General Assembly.

### **2.3 Presentation: Financial Statements 2017, 2018, 2019**

**Speaker: Alexandre Apsan Frediani (AF),** Board Member and Treasurer

The consolidated annual financial statements of HIC are compiled from the audited annual financial statements of each of the 4 HIC Reference Centres, HIC-AL, HIC-MENA, HLRN and the HIC-GS. **It is important to note that each Reference Centre is financially independent.** This means that each reference centre raises its own funds and has its own accounting and auditing processes. Each column details the annual income and expenditure of each Reference Centre.

Year 2017	Expressed in US Dollars					Income expressed in percentage
	HIC-AL <sup>(2)</sup>	HIC-MENA	HIC-HLRN	HIC-GS	Total	
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 168 735</b>	<b>\$ 40 683</b>	<b>\$ 230 625</b>	<b>\$ 250 142</b>	<b>\$ 690 185</b>	
Beginning Balance 2017	\$ 31 178	\$ -48 418	\$ -9 910	\$ 102 374	\$ 75 224	10,9%
Donor Agencies <sup>(3 a, b, c, d)</sup>	\$ 137 557	\$ 76 565	\$ 236 489	\$ 144 407	\$ 595 018	86,2%
HIC Membership fees <sup>(4)</sup>	--	--	--	\$ 2 141	\$ 2 141	0,3%
Solidarity, special contributions	\$ -	\$ 12 536	\$ 4 046	\$ 1 220	\$ 17 802	2,6%
						100,0%
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>\$ 160 785</b>	<b>\$ 194 187</b>	<b>\$ 103 043</b>	<b>\$ 202 252</b>	<b>\$ 660 267</b>	
Staff Costs <sup>(4)</sup>	\$ 92 959	\$ 108 319	\$ 68 233	\$ 90 941	\$ 360 452	54,6%
Projects, activities <sup>(5)</sup>	\$ 53 020	\$ 71 827	\$ 16 701	\$ 105 415	\$ 246 963	37,4%
Administration Costs <sup>(6)</sup>	\$ 12 043	\$ 11 321	\$ 15 389	\$ 3 166	\$ 41 918	6,3%
Audit <sup>(7)</sup>	\$ 2 763	\$ 2 721	\$ 2 720	\$ 2 730	\$ 10 934	1,7%
						100,0%
<b>Restricted cash on hand</b> <sup>(8)</sup>	<b>\$ 7 950</b>	<b>\$ -153 504</b>	<b>\$ 127 582</b>	<b>\$ 47 890</b>	<b>\$ 29 919</b>	

**Notes:**

- Financial Statements are reported from four structures that have infrastructure dedicated to the Coalition purpose: Latin America (HIC-AL), Middle East (HIC-MENA); Housing and Land Rights Network (HIC-HLRN) and the General Secretariat (HIC-GS).
- HIC-AL office in Mexico works in three dimensions: (i) HIC networking and advocacy in Latin American, (ii) Support to HIC Presidency, and (iii) Mexican advocacy and networking. The HIC-AL accounting includes the three dimensions. 20% of the reported amounts corresponds to the national Mexican activities.
- 3a) Main contributions to HIC-AL: Misereor (2016-2018) USD 82.830; Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung USD 43.000; Ford Foundation (HIC-Polis) USD 5.000\*\* (received from the GS as part of the joint project "R2C for all"); Urbamonde USD 7.525
- 3b) Main contributions to HIC-MENA: Cities Alliance USD 37.723; ILO USD 3.000; OHCHR USD 10.842; Land Forum USD 17.500 and IPC mapping USD 7.500; HIC-HLRN General Fund USD 12.536
- 3c) Main contributions to HIC-HLRN: Misereor USD 86.439 (see point 3d); Wellspring fund USD 150.050 and HIC-HLRN General Fund USD 4.046
- 3d) Main contributions to HIC-GS: Misereor USD 113.281 for the joint operation of the HIC-GS and HIC-HLRN; Ford Foundation USD 105.000; HIC-GS' share is 39,20% (USD 44.407); HIC-HLRN's share is 60,80% (USD 68.874); HIC-AL's overhead USD 5.000
- (4) The staff costs cover administrative and professional staff, whose duties are not related to a specific project but to the operation and administration throughout the HIC structure.
- (5) The costs of projects and activities include fees, travels, associated events, per diem, publication and promotion (web sites).
- (6) Administrative costs related to rent and office supplies (including telephone, ASDL and security), bank charges and fixed assets for the office (e.g. computer hardware and software).
- (7) Audit: (i) HIC-AL, the auditor is Arturo Sam Pérez, Mexico DF, Mexico; (ii) HIC-MENA, HIC-HLRN, the auditor is Waleed al-Batawy & Assoc., Cairo, Egypt; (iii) HIC-GS, the auditor is PLETA Auditores y Consultores, Barcelona, España.
- (8) In the four cases, the restricted cash on hand represents funds committed to ongoing operations, projects and contracts. For HIC-MENA and HIC-HLRN, the cash on audit reports is accounted for on an accrual basis.

**HIC Financial Statements 2018: AL, MENA, HLRN and GS <sup>(1)</sup>**

Year 2018	Expressed in US Dollars					
	HIC-AL <sup>(2)</sup>	HIC-MENA	HIC-HLRN	HIC-GS	Total	
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 171 463</b>	<b>\$ -72 833</b>	<b>\$ 432 497</b>	<b>\$ 418 032</b>	<b>\$ 949 160</b>	
Beginning Balance 2018 <sup>(9)</sup>	\$ 7 950	\$ -153 504	\$ 127 582	\$ 47 890	\$ 29 919	3,2%
Donor Agencies <sup>(3 a, b, c, d)</sup>	\$ 163 513	\$ 63 012	\$ 302 658	\$ 366 502	\$ 895 685	94,4%
HIC Membership fees <sup>(4)</sup>	\$ -	--	--	\$ 2 672	\$ 2 672	0,3%
Solidarity, special contributions	\$ -	\$ 17 659	\$ 2 257	\$ 968	\$ 20 884	2,2%
						100,0%
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>\$ 165 386</b>	<b>\$ 172 972</b>	<b>\$ 128 419</b>	<b>\$ 219 886</b>	<b>\$ 686 663</b>	
Staff Costs <sup>(4)</sup>	\$ 72 659	\$ 95 114	\$ 77 159	\$ 148 053	\$ 392 985	57,2%
Projects, activities <sup>(5)</sup>	\$ 63 165	\$ 63 148	\$ 31 089	\$ 27 478	\$ 184 880	26,9%
Administration Costs <sup>(6)</sup>	\$ 28 707	\$ 7 794	\$ 12 366	\$ 39 990	\$ 88 858	12,9%
Audit <sup>(7)</sup>	\$ 855	\$ 6 915	\$ 7 804	\$ 4 365	\$ 19 939	2,9%
						100,0%
<b>Restricted cash on hand <sup>(8)</sup></b>	<b>\$ 6 077</b>	<b>\$ -245 805</b>	<b>\$ 304 078</b>	<b>\$ 198 146</b>	<b>\$ 262 497</b>	

**Notes:**

- (1) Financial Statements are reported from four structures that have infrastructure dedicated to the Coalition purpose: Latin America (HIC-AL), Middle East (HIC-MENA); Housing and Land Rights Network (HIC-HLRN) and the General Secretariat (HIC-GS).
- (2) HIC-AL office in Mexico works in three dimensions: (i) HIC networking and advocacy in Latin American, (ii) Support to HIC Presidency, and (iii) Mexican advocacy and networking. The HIC-AL accounting includes the three dimensions. 37% of the reported amounts corresponds to the national Mexican activities.
- 3a) Main contributions to HIC-AL: Misereor (2016-2018) USD 86.263; ;Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung USD 49.700; HIC-Ford Foundation-Polis USD 15.500\* (received from the GS as part of the joint project "R2C for all"); Axel Dettmer Reconstruction Project USD 5.827; Global Giving Reconstruction Project USD 6.223
- 3b) Main contributions to HIC-MENA:FAO USD9.995; Land Forum USD 47.500 ; IPC mapping USD 2.438; and General Fund USD 3.079 & HIC-HLRN General Fund USD 17.659
- 3c) HIC-HLRN contribution Misereor USD 152.657 & Women land home USD 150000 & General Fund USD 2.257
- 3d) Main contributions to HIC-GS: Misereor USD 396.402 for the joint operation of the Secretariat and HIC-HLRN; Ford Foundation USD 172.825; HIC-GS' share is 45,88% (USD 181.867); HIC-HLRN's share is 54,12% (USD 214.535); HIC-AL's overhead USD 9.750
- (4) The staff costs cover administrative and professional staff, whose duties are not related to a specific project but to the operation and administration throughout the HIC structure.
- (5) The costs of projects and activities include fees, travels, associated events, per diem, publication and promotion (web sites).
- (6) Administrative costs related to rent and office supplies (including telephone, ASDL and security), bank charges and fixed assets for the office (e.g. computer hardware and software).
- (7) Audit: (i) HIC-AL, the auditor is Arturo Sam Pérez, Mexico DF, Mexico; (ii) HIC-MENA, HIC-HLRN, the auditor is Waleed al-Batawy & Assoc., Cairo, Egypt; (iii) HIC-GS, the auditor is PLETA Auditores y Consultores, Barcelona, España.
- (8) In the four cases, the restricted cash on hand represents funds committed to ongoing operations, projects and contracts. For HIC-MENA and HIC-HLRN, the cash on audit reports is accounted for on an accrual basis.
- (9) The HIC-GS beginning balance for 2018 in this report differs from the 2017 closing balance as per the HIC-GS audited financial statement. This is due to applying the 2018 average EUR:USD exchange rates to the beginning balance, instead of the 2017 EUR:USD exchange rate.

**HIC Financial Statements 2019: AL, MENA, HLRN and GS <sup>(1)</sup>**

Year 2019	Expressed in US Dollars					Income expressed in percentage
	HIC-AL <sup>(2)</sup>	HIC-MENA	HIC-HLRN	HIC-GS	Total	
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$ 178 196</b>	<b>\$ -189 488</b>	<b>\$ 603 298</b>	<b>\$ 444 013</b>	<b>\$ 1 036 020</b>	
Beginning Balance 2019 <sup>(11)</sup>	\$ 6 077	\$ -245 805	\$ 304 078	\$ 198 146	\$ 262 497	25,3%
Donor Agencies <sup>(3 a, b, c, d)</sup>	\$ 172 119	\$ 39 974	\$ 292 683	\$ 240 128	\$ 744 904	71,9%
HIC Membership fees <sup>(4)</sup>	\$ -	--	\$ -	\$ 5 739	\$ 5 739	0,6%
Solidarity, special contributions	\$ -	\$ 16 343	\$ 6 537	\$ -	\$ 22 880	2,2%
						100,0%
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>\$ 159 016</b>	<b>\$ 115 595</b>	<b>\$ 274 811</b>	<b>\$ 333 680</b>	<b>\$ 883 102</b>	
Staff Costs <sup>(4)</sup>	\$ 100 949	\$ 86 653	\$ 93 113	\$ 235 768	\$ 516 483	58,5%
Projects, activities <sup>(5)</sup>	\$ 29 658	\$ 18 128	\$ 159 493	\$ 53 568	\$ 260 847	29,5%
Administration Costs <sup>(6)</sup>	\$ 27 734	\$ 6 068	\$ 17 459	\$ 25 920	\$ 77 181	8,7%
Audit <sup>(7)</sup>	\$ 675	\$ 4 746	\$ 4 746	\$ 4 138	\$ 14 305	1,6%
Evaluation <sup>(8)</sup>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9 853	\$ 9 853	1,1%
Reimbursements of 2018's expenses <sup>(9)</sup>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4 433	\$ 4 433	0,5%
						100,0%
<b>Restricted cash on hand <sup>(10)</sup></b>	<b>\$ 19 180</b>	<b>\$ -305 083</b>	<b>\$ 328 487</b>	<b>\$ 110 333</b>	<b>\$ 152 917</b>	

**Notes:**

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- (2) HIC-AL office in Mexico works in three dimensions: (i) HIC networking and advocacy in Latin American, (ii) Support to HIC Presidency, and (iii) Mexican advocacy and networking. The HIC-AL accounting includes the three dimensions. 37% of the reported amounts corresponds to the national Mexican activities.
- (3a) Main contributions to HIC-AL: Misereor (2019-2021) USD 99.711; Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung USD 42.600; HIC-Ford Foundation-Polis USD 16.188\* (received from the GS as part of the joint project "R2C for all"); WeEffect USD 7.385; FPH Dossier CITEGO USD 5.979; Global Giving Reconstruction Project USD 256
- (3b) Main contributions to HIC-MENA: IPC mapping USD 39.974; and HIC-HLRN General Fund USD 16.343
- (3c) HIC-HLRN contribution Misereor USD 142.683 & Women land home USD 150000 & General Fund USD 6.537
- (4d) Main contributions to HIC-GS: Misereor USD 161.208 for the joint operation of the Secretariat and HIC-HLRN; Ford Foundation USD 170.775; FPH USD 16.792 HIC-GS' share is 51,84% (USD 83.562); HIC-HLRN's share is 48,16% (USD 77.645); HIC-AL's overhead USD 9.750; HIC-AL receives USD 6.717
- (4) The staff costs cover administrative and professional staff, whose duties are not related to a specific project but to the operation and administration throughout the HIC structure.
- (5) The costs of projects and activities include fees, travels, associated events, per diem, publication and promotion (web sites).
- (6) Administrative costs related to rent and office supplies (including telephone, ASDL and security), bank charges and fixed assets for the office (e.g. computer hardware and software).
- (7) Audit: (i) HIC-AL, the auditor is Leonardo Velasco Paredes, Mexico DF, Mexico; (ii) HIC-MENA, HIC-HLRN, the auditor is Waleed al-Batawy & Assoc., Cairo, Egypt; (iii) HIC-GS, the auditor is PLETA Auditores y Consultores, Barcelona, España.
- (8) The evaluation cost refers to a comprehensive project evaluation of joint HIC-GS and HIC-HLRN projects funded by Misereor between 2013 and 2019.
- (9) Project claims relate to 2018 which were paid in 2019
- (10) In the four cases, the restricted cash on hand represents funds committed to ongoing operations, projects and contracts. For HIC-MENA and HIC-HLRN, the cash on audit reports is accounted for on an accrual basis.
- (11) The HIC-GS beginning balance for 2019 in this report differs from the 2018 closing balance as per the HIC-GS audited financial statement. This is due to applying the 2019 average EUR:USD exchange rates to the beginning balance, instead of the 2018 EUR:USD exchange rate.

Regarding overall HIC income in the financial years 2017-2019: HIC-AL's income is very constant and the HLRN and GS income has increased. Overall, HIC has primarily spent funds on projects and staff costs. HIC-MENA has some deficits. In the Zoom chat, Joseph Schechla, HLRN Coordinator, explained that these deficits correspond to the accumulated salary that is still owed to him.

HIC is spending more than 50% of funds on staff costs, which means that spending is focussed on a core aspect of the Coalition, i.e., supporting the running of the

Coalition. Over the three years, there is a fluctuation of project related expenditure which is explained by different start and end dates of projects that each Reference Centre signed with its funders. These fluctuations do not affect the overall balance of the budget and this is a sign of financial health.

We need to improve the alignment of accounting practices between the different Reference Centres so as to catch up with the outstanding consolidated financial statements of 2020 and 2021 and keep up to date with the future consolidated accounting and reporting of the Coalition as a whole. Secondly, regarding the funds that HIC carries over from one year to the next, it is not clear what amounts are committed for future projects or for savings. Finally, HIC needs to address the deficit in HIC-MENA's annual balance. From 2021 onwards HIC-MENA and HLRN have reduced the deficit and are discussing solutions to address old liabilities.

The General Secretariat circulated the financial statements to HIC Members for queries, comments and approval from 20 December 2021 – 26 January 2022, after which they were approved.

### 3. Review of 2021

#### 3.1 Coalition Updates (Membership and Board)

**Speaker: Marie Bailloux (MB)**, Membership Coordinator, HIC-General Secretariat ([click here to see the presentation](#))

#### Welcoming to 10 new Members:

- CIVITIC Red Universitaria de Estudios Urbanos / **Ecuador**;
- Colectivo Poder Habitar / **Argentina**;
- Ciudad Común (CC)/ **Chile**;
- Community Alliance for Human Settlements / **Zimbabwe**;
- Femmes Rurales Amies de la Paix et du Développement (FERAPAD) / **D.R. Congo**;
- Grassroots Trust for Community Organization / **Kenya**;
- Shift 4 Change (S4C) / **Kenya**;
- Human Rights and Democracy Media Center (SHAM)/ **Palestine**;
- London South Bank University School of the Built Environment and Architecture (LSBU) / **United Kingdom**;
- Working People's Charter / **India**.

#### Results of the “Building Social Force Member Survey” that took place in September 2021:

- Member organisations currently working in the field of Feminist Approaches to Habitat: 89%; Land rights: 89%; Multi-level Advocacy: 90%.
- Members interested in participating in co-learning and advocacy spaces: Feminist Approaches to Habitat: 90%; Land Rights: 98%; Multi-level Advocacy: 95%

**Board Representative for Social Movements:** since March 2021 the HIC Board has issued a call for Social Movement Representative. Although this is a global position the Board specifically called for nominations from HIC Sub-Saharan Africa to ensure regional balance on the Board. The Board has interviewed three excellent candidates and has yet to decide who will be selected for this position.

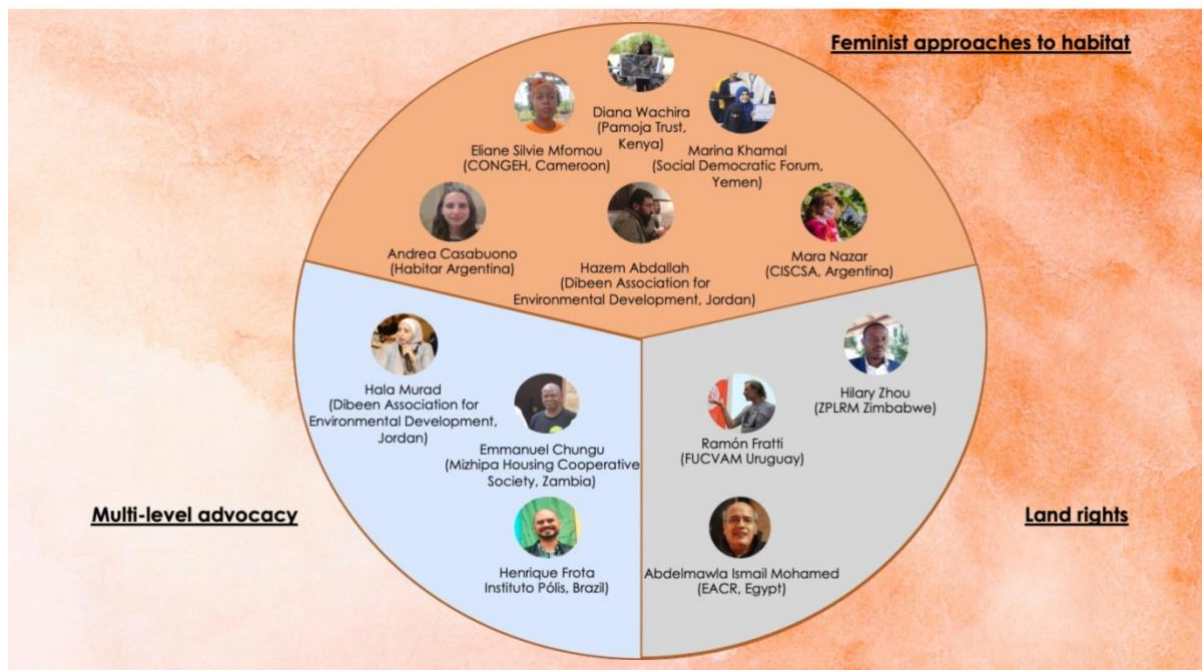
### 3.2 Co-Learning Spaces

**Speaker: Yolande Hendler (YH),** General Secretary

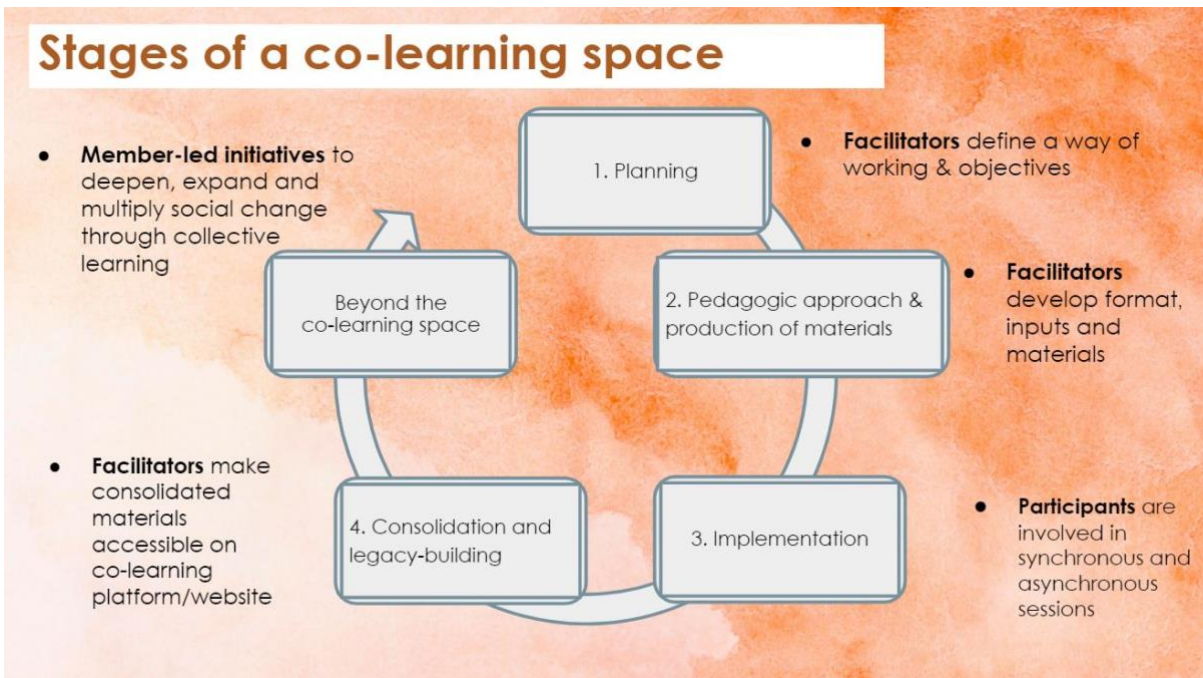
During the HIC General Assembly in February 2021, one of the main requests from HIC Members was to strengthen cross-regional interaction, mobilization, networking and communication. Since then, HIC-GS, HIC-AL and HLRN joined forces on a global project with Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality (KNOW) and other funders.

The three co-learning spaces are: Feminist Approaches to Habitat, Land Rights and Multi-level Advocacy.

The co-learning spaces build on HIC’s long history of emancipatory learning practices. They link learning to concrete advocacy actions, and aim to build the social force of HIC. They are cross-regional, multi-session encounters that support participants to prioritise, strategize, learn and advocate together on human rights related to habitat. These meetings are conceptualised and led by HIC Member facilitators supported by the HIC President and staff members from the GS, HIC-AL and HLRN.







In the last four months the team has been working on the planning and pedagogic approach with the facilitators. The next stage will be hosting the live learning sessions from February 2022 onwards, and launching invitations to HIC-Members to participate.

### 3.3 Advocacy Highlights

**Chair: Adriana Allen (AA)**, HIC President

There has been a lot of advocacy work this year, but she wants to highlight three aspects:

- i) consolidating collectively the [Habitat Voices Manifesto](#), that will continue through 2022;
- ii) expanding HIC's advocacy, establishing new alliances and ways of working, such as with UCLG. HIC is a key partner of the new GOLD report on Urban Equality, that will be launched in 2022, and, a cross dialogue with many UN Special Rapporteurs whose mandates are very relevant to the defence of human rights related to habitat (<https://www.hic-net.org/dialogue-with-un-special-rapporteurs/>);
- iii) supporting Members initiatives, such as influencing the Constitution in Peru, pushing for legal and policy changes in Spain and Zimbabwe.

## 4. HIC Regional and Thematic Updates

### 4.1 Regional

**Africa** (click [here](#) to see the document)

**Speaker, Sam Ikua Thiong'o (SI)**, SSA Reference Center

Presents the report of the HIC SSA Reference Center, also known as Anglophone African Focal Point, based at Mazingira Institute (Kenya). The Francophone African Focal Point is based at ONG BETHESDA (Benin). Davinder Lamba, Sam Ikua Thiong'o and Diana Lee-Smith support the operations of the Focal Point.

### **HLRN Women's Land and Homes (WLH) Project**

The project was initiated and coordinated by HIC-HLRN. The first phase of the project included HIC Members in Kenya (Mazingira Institute and Pamoja Trust) and Uganda (SSA: UHSNET), and the second phase included Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe Peoples Land Rights Movement) and Zambia (Civic Forum on Housing and Habitat). The Zimbabwe Project involved a study to assess the impact, particularly on women, of an impending forced eviction, and the Zambia Project involved a study of the land rights violation of indigenous women. They held workshops (in person and virtual) to share and disseminate the findings. Diana Lee-Smith and Sam participated in the workshops and shared the outcomes of the Kenyan study.

### **Women and Habitat Africa Working Group (WHAWG)**

WHAWG was initiated through a note verbale prepared by Diana, the erstwhile Secretary of HIC Women and Shelter (HIC WaS) Network. It was tabled at the previous HIC General Assembly.

### **HIC institutional review**

An independent HIC institutional review was the outcome of the consultations between the HIC Africa Members, including the Wisdom Keepers, Diana and Davinder, and the HIC Board, following the resignation of Dr. Ify Ofong as the HIC Africa Region Board Member.

The Wisdom Keepers submitted a letter on the "Amelioration of the problematic situation in HIC" to HIC Africa Members and the Board. The Wisdom Keepers believed the way forward was that the review identifies opportunities for improvement of HIC performance in the Africa region, as well as HIC governance generally and the global image of HIC.

### **WhatsApp Group**

HIC Africa Members have formed a WhatsApp group as a platform for rapid communication and response concerning HIC affairs in the region. The Administrator are some African key Members as well as HIC GS.

### **HIC Climate Justice Advocacy during Urban October**

Diana participated in the virtual event. Her contribution was on Urban Food Systems and Climate Change, based on Mazingira's extensive work in this area. She explained how urban farmers in Nairobi recycle livestock waste as an input for soil health, for healthy crop production, including recycling of organic and non-organic wastes, and this contribute to mitigating climate change and harmful environmental impacts.

## **Learning Officer position**

The Focal Point publicised position through English and French networks in the region, since the applicants had to be bilingual. The effort was successful, and the HIC interview panel appointed an applicant from Nairobi.

## **Executive Board of UN Human Settlements Programme**

Davinder collaborated with Joseph Schechla, Coordinator of HIC HLRN, in formulating HIC's submission on the relevant agenda items of the Second Session of the Executive Board held in November. It was submitted to the Programme by HIC-GS following approval by HIC Board.

## **HIC representation in IPC for Food Sovereignty Youth Caucus**

Samuel represents HIC on the Youth Caucus of the International Planning Committee (IPC) for Food Sovereignty. He facilitated its training session on Public Policy Making Cycle for Family Farming, to build the capacity of youths for effective participation in policy making processes at national, regional and international levels. It was organised in collaboration with FAO and IFAD.

## **Africa region counter mobilization to UN Food Systems Summit (UN FSS)**

Sam represented HIC in Africa region group for mobilization against the neo-liberal stance of the 2021 UNFSS and the corporate capture of food systems, particularly in Africa.

Among other actions, the African Group sent an open letter to African Union denouncing the so-called AU "common" position on UNFSS, which supports corporate agriculture and ignores the human right to food.

## **Passing of El Hadji Malick Gaye**

The HIC fraternity and the HIC Africa region mourned the untimely passing of Malick Gaye, Executive Director of ENDA RUP, the erstwhile HIC-SSA Reference Center (Senegal).

A tribute by Davinder is published in the HIC Bulletin: "As an unparalleled Collaborator and Promoter of HIC in the African region and globally, he leaves a gap that can never be filled".

## **Middle East and North Africa**

**Speaker: Ahmed Mansour (AM)**, HIC-MENA (click [here](#) to see the presentation)

In October 2021, HIC-MENA launched its new study about "*Counting on Justice: Victims of Land Violations and Supporting the Transitional Justice Project for Reparations in Yemen*", that was based on the project that was implemented in Yemen with HIC Members on applying the tool of counting costs for the victims of the violations of land and property rights.

In February 2021, during the Second Arab Land Conference, HIC-MENA participated in collaboration with Global Land Tool Network to present a masterclass about Land as Human Rights.

In March 2021, HIC-MENA joined the Arab CSOs forum on Sustainable Development to prepare for the HLPF 2021 process. HIC-MENA participated with a presentation on "Climate Action from Global to Regional".

In April 2021, HIC-MENA and its Members engaged in a series of the Special Rapporteurs reports for the Right to Adequate Housing, food, Transitional Justice, and the Situation in Palestine.

During May 2021, as a result of what the region has witnessed, the tragic situation and the gross violations that committed by Israeli forces against the Palestinian in West Bank and Gaza, HIC-MENA focused its efforts with the Members in the region to support the Palestinian situation with several activities at the political and legal bodies of the UN HRs system.

In supporting the capacity building of its Members in MENA region, HIC-MENA organized 2 regional workshops during September 2021, on *Extraterritorial Obligations* (ETOs) to build a regional strategy, and on supporting advocacy on the occupied Western Sahara.

In June 2021, during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) Process, HIC-MENA engaged in preparing with its members the key messages on the Voluntary National Reviews of MENA countries, Tunisia, Iraq, and Egypt.

During 2021, the HIC MENA Office, in collaboration with MENA Members launched 3 issues of *Land Times* Newsletters (March-July-December) 2021.

In June and September 2021 HIC-MENA and the Members of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) regional process, organized 2 regional meeting in preparing the "Nyeleni 3" as alternative popular platform for the World Food Summit.

In celebration of World Habitat Day, the HIC-MENA office launched its report "*Conflict, Occupation and War: Habitat-related human rights violations since the pandemic-era call for a global cease-fire*", to present the tragic cases of the impacts of displacement and home and property demolitions during the pandemic 2020-2021 that were recorded in the Violations Database.

## **Latin America and the Caribbean**

**Speaker: Silvia Emanuelli (SE)**, HIC-America Latina (Click [here](#) to see the presentation)

### **Strengthening grassroots processes**

The Office and its Members have advocated for the visibility, support and coordination of the different actions and approaches that were put into practice as immediate responses to the pandemic. HIC-AL, its Members and Allies have also

continued to work with urban and rural communities to prevent evictions and propose moratoriums, systematise the violations they imply, concretise the right to housing through the social production of habitat and bring cases of housing rights violations before the courts.

Five podcasts have been produced with the aim of publicising innovative processes in terms of socio-ecological and democratic alternatives and progressive social processes in the field of habitat throughout Latin America, thus building a kind of regional community radio on our issues of interest to which we invite HIC Members, but which will also have a space on radios with a regional scope.

### **Advocacy on human rights related to habitat**

HIC-AL Members carried out multiple advocacy processes focused on: recognition of the right to housing in the Constitution (Peru) and housing and the city (Chile), self-managed housing (Argentina, Brazil), evictions and issues related to rents (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Dominican Republic; land policy (Argentina, Mexico), neighbourhood improvement (Argentina, Mexico, Peru), feminist urbanism (Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay), opposition to regressive legislation on social rights (Uruguay) and participated in multiple activities and events convened by the United Nations.

### **Building a strong Coalition**

Three membership meetings were held to build the annual strategy with more than 30 organisations participating in each meeting. As a result, for example, a workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals was organised to facilitate the construction of a follow-up and monitoring methodology.

The regional group on social production and management of habitat held its 6th meeting in November with the participation of 35 people from 20 organisations and 12 countries, reaching a series of agreements.

The regional group on capacity building in habitat organised the "*3º Diplomado Iberoamericano Diseño Participativo Sustentable del Hábitat como herramienta de la producción y gestión social del hábitat y para el ejercicio de derechos*" (3rd Ibero-American Diploma in Sustainable Participatory Habitat Design as a tool for the Social Production and Management of Habitat and for the exercise of Rights).

Also, together with CISCOSA (Centro de Intercambios y Servicios Cono Sur) and the Women and Habitat Network, HIC-AL presented the book "*Feminismo en Alta Voz*" (Feminism in Loud Voice) which analyses 8 experiences of gender and housing, and launched the campaign "Our neighbourhoods, our rights, our cities" together with ACIJ (Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia) in the field of neighbourhood improvement and informal settlement upgrading, a campaign in which 44 organisations from all over the region participated. We also held a series of other events together with the regional Membership.

### **North America and Canada**

**Speaker: Jim Morrison (JM)**, Canadian Housing & Renewal Association

In 2019, a new law, the 'Canadian National Housing Strategy Act' was passed, which recognized that housing is a right in Canada. The law introduced a number of mechanisms designed to enshrine that right at a collective level. Updates on these mechanisms include:

1. *Public reporting on progress under the National Housing Strategy*: The new law stated that Canada must have a Housing Strategy in place that responds to the needs of vulnerable populations, and that the government must report every 3 years on progress under that Strategy. The first such report was issued in March 2021, and provided some data on progress made under the National Housing Strategy.
2. *Introduction of a 'National Housing Council'*: The legislation established a National Housing Council whose role would be to advise the Minister on policies and programs that could help the government meet its obligations under the right to housing. The Council was named in November 2020, and already the Council has established 3 priorities for 2021-22: Urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing, improving the National Housing Strategy, and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing.
3. *Introduction of a 'Federal Housing Advocate'*: The legislation also established a new "Federal Housing Advocate" whose role would be to accept public grievances and submissions regarding violations of the right to housing, and request investigations and studies into violations of the right. To date, the Advocate has not yet been named by the government (the Minister has said an Advocate will be named no later than January 2022), although the Office of the Advocate is now up and running.

There were 2 other developments of note in 2021.

First, in response to the pandemic, in September 2020, the Canadian government unveiled a new \$1 billion "Rapid Housing Initiative". The purpose of this program was to provide funding to develop new housing quickly, either through accelerated construction techniques or acquisition of existing structures. By the end of March 2021, the program had selected 179 projects that created 4500 new units of affordable housing. In April 2021, the federal government announced a second round of \$1.5 billion under the same program, which will create thousands more affordable housing units.

Second, a federal election was held in September 2021. The issue of safe, affordable housing was a dominant issue in the election, alongside the pandemic and climate change. All political parties, including the victorious Liberal Party under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, made significant commitments to introduce new policies and programs to address safe, affordable housing. This prioritization was evidenced when the Prime Minister introduced a new standalone Minister of Housing in his new Cabinet. In the past 2 weeks, the federal government has repeated that

housing is a top priority, and has repeated its objective to end chronic homelessness in Canada.

The United States is a different country in 2021 than in previous years, due to the change of government. There have been improvements in affordable housing, with budget increases.

## Europe

**Speaker, Alexandre Apsan Frediani**, Representative of Europe at the Board and Treasurer

Habitat Rights struggles in and from Europe have been focusing particularly on the discussions around the pandemic and its recovery. There have been interesting and progressive initiatives that have opened opportunities for policy and planning impact, as local governments have recognised and supported civil society's role in responding to the pandemic. A key priority has been on how to sustain these impacts.

Another key development in Europe was the publication of the report #Housing2030, produced by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and Housing Europe. The report outlines many important messages that HIC Members have been advocating for, including the need to integrate climate justice and habitat related rights, as well as a stronger role of governments in recognising, protecting and fulfilling the right to adequate housing.

In terms of HIC activities, HIC Europe Members coordinated and implemented a series of interesting webinars in partnership with HIC. These were important spaces to exchange experiences and build solidarity with groups in Europe and beyond. The engagement with the UCLG GOLD Report continued in 2021, and HIC submitted several important case studies, which are contributing to the elaboration of the report chapters and shaping its overall messages.

Now looking a bit forward, we are starting to put together the plan for the collaborative housing day at the International Social Housing Festival, which will take place in Helsinki, 14-17 of June 2022. This is an exciting event bringing together social and public housing actors, NGOs and social movements in this field. The collaborative housing day proposal will focus on issues like finance and legal frameworks needed to support collaborative housing processes, as well as lessons learned from experiences in the Global South, and the role of collaborative housing in responding to the pandemic and other global social and environmental challenges.

## 4.2 Thematic

### Gender

**Speaker: Ana Falú**, Representative of Women's and/or Feminist Movements at the Board

At the international level, we are working on an initiative to strengthen the voice of women and the participation of HIC Reference Centres from different regions of the world in the [Co-learning: Feminist Approaches to Habitat](#).

At the regional level, in Latin America, we are producing concrete experiences of integrating women's voices and their contribution to the social production of habitat.

The pandemic has highlighted the issues of violence and care at all levels, carried out by women. It has also exacerbated the critical economic situation of women, the majority of whom work in the informal economy.

As HIC Board Representative for Women's and Feminist Movements, I invite everybody to send messages and proposals in order to work together.

### **Women & Habitat Africa Working Group (WHAWG)**

**Speaker: Hilary Zhou, Member of WHAWG**, Zimbabwe People's Land Rights Movement Coordinator, Land Rights Co-learning Space Facilitator

The formation of the group was initiated by Diana Lee-Smith. This continues the HIC Women and Shelter Network (HIC-WAS). The group will consolidate the activities of HIC Africa Members on women's land and housing rights, and offer a collective voice for intensified advocacy. The WG offers information, opportunities of advocacy and joint action.

The group's Convener is Dr. Ify Ofong of Women in Development and Environment (Nigeria), the Secretary is Samuel Ikua of HIC SSA Focal Point, Mazingira Institute (Kenya).

Relevant activities during 2021: [Statement](#) during Urban October to raise awareness on violations and inequalities in the land and habitat sector; Review of regional and international advocacy plans with a focus on Africa, such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); and African Union Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (AUCHPR).

WHAWG works on 5 key areas:

- i) women access to, use and control of, natural and economic resources ;
- ii) customary practices predominant in Africa;
- iii) participation of women in programs ;
- iv) women's experiences in housing and land areas;
- v) identify good practices, policies and implementation

WHAWG actions will involve supporting HIC Members and Allies through:

- i) Training and capacity building;
- ii) Research;
- iii) Quantification of impacts;
- iv) Policy analysis;



- v) Vibrant social media advocacy;
- vi) Advocacy before the United Nations and African Union;
- vii) Consultation and negotiation with local governments and local authorities.

## Housing & Land Rights

**Speaker: Joseph Schechla (JS)**, Coordinator of Housing and Land Rights Network (click [here](#) to see presentation)

2021 started like 2020 closed, with forced evictions mounting around the world, as detailed in the 2020 World Habitat Day report from HLRN's Violation Database, "A Pandemic of Violations." That contrasted with global and local calls for a moratorium on forced evictions during COVID.

Meanwhile, Leaders from the UN Secretary-General to the Catholic Pope also called for a global cease-fire, but conflict, occupation and war continued apace. We even saw new and resurgent conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in Nigeria's south-eastern Biafra region and a broken 30-year cease-fire in Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara. Palestine remained in the headlines, with Israel concentrating forced eviction of Palestinians and demolition of their homes in the rural West Bank and neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem.

This violence caused widespread displacement in the affected regions, the world saw a record 82.4 million displaced, including 26.4 million refugees, 4.1 million asylum seekers and 3.9 million Venezuelan displaced persons. 86% of displaced persons are from developing countries, 73% are in neighbouring countries, and 63% are hosted in only five states (Afghanistan, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria and Venezuela).

Indigenous peoples' land struggles have seen the restoration of some rights in North America, after long court battles, while the south found their centuries-old dispossession in the current news, not least with the escalating conflict between the Mapuche people and agro-business and extractive industries, as the invasion of Amazonian peoples' lands continue to coincide with burning the rainforest.

On the positive side, international law norms have progressed this year with the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights draft of a General Comment on states' obligations with regard to land. After 100 inputs from states and NGOs to the Committee so far, that process continues into 2022 among other advocacy opportunities still to come.

## Right to the City

**Speaker: Lorena Zárate**, Co-coordinator of Support Team of Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C) (click [here](#) to see presentation)

2021 has been a fundamental year in the collective production of knowledge and the strengthening of capacities around the right to the city and its components.

The Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C) has published the first three thematic documents on COVID-19 and the right to the city, the city as a common good and climate justice, the latter very complementary to the efforts that HIC has been developing to deepen the work on the subject. In parallel, we have started the process of collective construction of another 4 thematic documents on inclusive citizenship, cities free from discrimination, public space and urban-rural links, which will be published between the end of this year and the beginning of next. We trust that these documents will contribute to giving visibility to the initiatives of our networks and the joint advocacy work, with concrete recommendations in terms of public policies in particular towards local governments.

Also, in the field of capacity building, another important milestone this year has been the development of an international online course on the right to the city, in which many of you have participated - the recordings and materials are available [online](#) and we encourage you to use them in other training initiatives. Furthermore, this year, together with CLACSO, we have produced a publication entitled "The Right to the City in the face of current challenges" (also available [online](#)). This workbook collects various political and social perspectives to advance in the realization of the right to the city in Latin America from the perspective of urban inequalities and we hope that its theoretical and practical reflections will be useful for various actors. At the same time, with allied organizations from China, South Korea, the Philippines and Indonesia, an investigation has been completed on the scope and challenges of the right to the city in Asia that will be disseminated very soon.

Finally, in terms of political advocacy, a very important activity to highlight has been the promotion of an analysis and evaluation process around the 5 years of the New Urban Agenda. Faced with the lack of commitment from official channels in relation to this monitoring, this collective effort has been the opportunity to build a reflection from our networks with an agenda of its own. In this sense, it is worth highlighting the cycle of debates that we have been developing with HIC-AL and Cities Alliance -- that comes to an end today-- regarding the advances and setbacks of the Right to the City in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting processes and fundamental initiatives, such as the Statute of the City from Brazil and the constitutional process in Chile, as well as public policies from Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Uruguay, to name just a few. In coordination with HIC and other allied networks, we hope to be able to give continuity and strengthen these processes and reflections during 2022, with the aim of expanding them to other regions as well. Long life HIC!

## **Environmental Justice**

**Speaker: Adriana Allen (AA)**, HIC President

HIC's work for environmental justice is long-standing and highly relevant. It is expressed in different ways of work: the struggles for sanitation, access to water, food and energy sovereignty and climate justice. In this last issue, HIC has promoted the right to climate justice as a human right related to habitat, through a series of



civil society and its institutions are subjected to a process of strangling and killing in order for them not to be able to work. To support the Palestinians' rights, and the right to work of Palestinian institutions, this point must be added to the HIC agenda or its priorities list to raise our voice. Calls, through this platform, upon the world to boycott, even through individual boycotts, this occupation, its activities, until this occupation stops this injustice and accepts the decision of international legitimacy, and the implementation of the two-state solution, and allow the Palestinian state to assume its true role among world countries.

The second point, in brief, concerns the issue of activating HIC membership, where there seems to be a misunderstanding. Every year, it is necessary to reactivate the membership and the regional offices should be responsible for contacting the members and sending them messages to get them up to date. So if the Cairo office in the MENA region has to do this because they know what their colleagues are doing. They can take it on as a half-task/work. Otherwise, remind the institutions two weeks or a month before the publication of the list of Members, otherwise every year we don't see the name of our institutions on this list. Honestly, I excuse the Secretariat for this. However, we need to reorganise this issue in a professional way so that every person or institution gets their vote.

**Hala S. Murad, Dibeem for Environmental Development, Jordan and Facilitator of the Multi-level advocacy co-learning space:** Thanks everyone at the HIC Secretariat, and Adriana and congratulates all for this beautiful gathering from all regions of the world. God willing, she wishes to continue with these efforts that aim to preserve rights in the first place and adds her voice to a great extent to Jamal's about Palestinian land. However, the occupation does not assault Palestinian land alone. It systematically attacks Jordan's land as well, burning many of the farmers' land at the borders of Palestine, thus also depriving many of the farmers and the small-scale farmers in Jordan of their rights to protect and sustain their lands. In cooperation with HIC, we have also previously worked on specialized reports in this area and is happy that HIC adopts these just rights issues.

She also upholds the environmental work related to HIC, as well as climate-change-related action, being aware of climate change today, and that the lands are mutually linked. Climate change affects the degradation of lands and forests, particularly more vulnerable lands. Degraded land and lands that suffer from major problems also affect climate change to a great extent, as well as the concentration of carbon in land, in addition to the emission of various gases. This may give an extensive environment to work, particularly with relation to climate justice. We are aware of the importance of these links. However, we need to have projects in the near future that are thematically and technically linked with building our capacities in advocacy campaigns related to the rights of vulnerable and marginalized communities with relation to the issue of land. We have witnessed the recent Euro-Mediterranean fires in the Mediterranean region in Algeria, Italy and in Lebanon, Jordan and the surrounding areas. Work needs to be done in a systematic way with relation to climate rights and climate justice, particularly after the UN General Secretariat approved a special Rapporteur on climate change. We should link this

with the special rapporteur on land and food rights. We also need to issue reports and work diligently on monitoring relevant violations.

She states that she is truly very happy that Dibeen for Environmental Development in Jordan is a HIC Member and is very proud that Dibeen continues to work with HIC, God willing, during the coming years offering all support of the realization of human rights in all regions of the earth. God bless you. Very happy to be with you and sends best wishes for the gathering to continue successfully.

**El Miloudi el Kabir, Association Marocaine des Droits de l'Homme and Moroccan indigenous Amazighs, Morocco:** responds to advocacy priorities: land rights and climate justice, two issues of concern to all rights advocates.

**Issa Samander, The Wall Committee (Popular Development Center), Palestine:** In Palestine, there is a very dangerous situation in which Israel, with the support of some Arab regimes, not the people, is hitting at the basis of our freedom. He asks for support.

## 6. Looking ahead: 2022

### 6.1 HIC Institutional Review & Regional Board Representative Elections

**Speaker: Yolande Hendler (YH),** General Secretary

The purpose of the institutional review is to strengthen HIC's global strategy through the lens of HIC's various organizational structures. The Institutional Review is different from a project evaluation which focuses on program content and implementation (the last one took place in 2019).

The Institutional Review covers three focus areas:

- i) strategic planning and management in the Coalition, including regional and thematic representation in HIC;
- ii) operational planning and management;
- iii) Various aspects of organizational culture and relationships in HIC.

The Board, HIC-GS and wisdom keepers have drafted the Terms of Reference and have identified an experienced Consultant Team based in Johannesburg, South Africa to carry out this process from January to July 2022. Members will be asked to contribute. A General Assembly will be held in June 2022 to share the results of the review.

#### Regional Board Representative Elections 2022:

- January - June 2022: Europe & North America
- July - December 2022: Africa & Latin America

These processes will contribute to mobilising Members in the region and will require Membership renewal. She thanks the current Board Representatives who remain in their position until the new Representatives are elected.

**Two new staff members in 2022:** Senior Office Coordinator: Martin Visagie, based in Cape Town, and Learning Officer: Irene Mwendwa, based in Nairobi.

In February, the Board, Reference Centres and the GS will have an annual planning **meeting for 2022**, taking into account the contribution HIC Members have made during this meeting.

One key event to be aware of is the **World Urban Forum (WUF)**. If COVID permits, the General Assembly will be held there in person.

We are advertising for the **HIC Africa Regional Coordinator**. Applications are open until the end of December 2021. The selection process will be in January.

## 6.2 Co-Learning Plans

Important dates: Between February and April the 3 co-learning spaces will be launched, starting with the Feminist Approaches to Habitat. All the information will be shared soon.

In the second half of the year, two other co-learning spaces will be developed: Social Production of Habitat and Climate Justice.

## 6.3 Advocacy Milestones

**Speaker: Joseph Schechla (JS)**, Coordinator Housing and Land Rights Network

HIC's long advocacy history dates back to the Vancouver Habitat Conference in 1976, an early forum for mobilizing around shared global policies. Since 1993, Members enjoy consultative status with the UN through HIC, and already have contributed to human rights norms related to habitat.

This asset enables local knowledge to reach global decision-making forums on states' voluntary commitments and their binding "obligations", while helping Members to localize strategic outcomes in their own countries. HIC's current project "Civil Society Action for Gender and Land Policy Impact" seeks to optimize this asset and build capacity to do so.

HIC Members have untapped potential to influence legal forums and treaty bodies, and political bodies like the Human Rights Council and the annual Forum on SDG progress. Numerous factual functions such as the Special Rapporteurs, and technical functions such as the operations of UN-Habitat and other development agencies need HIC input.

In 2022, HIC will face a 3 January deadline for inputs to the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in occupied Palestine on Israeli apartheid in housing and land administration, which HLRN is now working on with HIC Members and Allies.

In February-March 2022, HIC's Feminist Approaches to Habitat will find advocacy opportunities in the UN Commission on Social Development, Commission on the

Status of Women, and the next session of CEDaW, where countries in each HIC region will come under review.

In March, focusing on the human right to adequate housing, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights will review Congo, El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia and Iraq. HIC Members will face a 14 January deadline to submit their written inputs.

Also in March, the Human Rights Council will consider the human right to adequate housing and related reports of the Special Rapporteur. Like the Council's recognized a "human right to environment" last year, several thematic decisions in 2022 concern HIC Members, including those living in countries in conflict and under occupation in Western Sahara and Palestine.

HIC also advocates in such policy forums as the UN Committee on World Food Security, where HIC represents the interests of the urban insecure, and the UN-Habitat Executive Bureau, where we advocate human rights criteria and stakeholder-engagement. However, potential still remains for HIC advocacy and engagement in the UN Environment Programme and the forums of the African Union and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on the 2022 horizon.

He encourages Members to participate in this advocacy milestones.

## **7. Closing Photo & Next GA in June 2022**

**Speaker: Adriana Allen (AA)**, HIC's President

Best wishes for very good start to 2022! Please switch the cameras on to take our annual picture.