



Habitat International Coalition
Coalición Internacional del Hábitat
Coalition Internationale de l'Habitat
Coalizão Internacional do Habitat
التحالف الدولي للموئل
अंतरराष्ट्रीय पर्यावास गठबंधन



Synthesis document

Convergence Meeting of Habitat International Coalition's social and feminist movements

March 19 and 20, 2023

Buenos Aires

Argentina

Participating organizations ([you can find more information about the organizations here](#))

Habitat International Coalition (General Secretariat, Board and Latin America Office)

Argentina

- Asociación Civil Centro de Madres 27 de Mayo
- CANOA Hábitat Popular
- Centro de Estudios y Acción por la Igualdad (CEAPI)
- Centro de Intercambio y servicios para el cono Sur (CISCSA)
- Nueva Imagen Cooperative
- Manos Solidarias Cooperative
- Federación de Cooperativas de Viviendas TODOS JUNTOS
- Federación Tierra y Vivienda (FTV)
- Habitar Argentina
- Madre Tierra
- Squatters and Tenants Movement (MOI)
- Secretariado de Enlace de Comunidades Autogestionarias, SEDECA
- Vecinos sin Techo

Brasil

- União Nacional por Moradia Popular

India

- Working People's Coalition (WPC)

International

- Global Platform for the Right to the City

Mali

- Global Convergence for Land, Water and Seeds in West Africa

Sudáfrica

- Ndifuna Ukwazi
- Reclaim the City

Uruguay

- Uruguayan Federation of Housing Cooperatives for Mutual Aid (FUCVAM)

Zimbabwe

- Zimbabwe People's Land Rights Movement

Executive Summary

Between March 19 and 24, 2023, our Coalition convened a meeting in Buenos Aires ([you can find the full program here](#)) with representatives of different generations of more than 20 social and feminist movements and HIC member organizations from Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, India, Mali, South Africa and Zimbabwe to strengthen their articulation.

The meeting preceded our participation as a Coalition in the [3rd World Human Rights Forum](#) in the framework of which a number of activities organized by HIC members took place (detailed below). The week culminated with HIC's participation in a massive march to celebrate March 24, National Day of Memory for Truth and Justice in Argentina, established to commemorate and pay homage to the victims of the last military dictatorship in the country. A sobering reminder that democracy and rights are defended and advanced in the streets and on the basis of collective mobilization, resisting silence, apathy and oblivion.

The objective of the convergence meeting was to initiate the collective construction of a common agenda for action, learning from the struggles and local experiences and political advocacy from the movements (social, feminist and workers') that operate within HIC, as well as to discuss the principles, processes and practices that allow them to incorporate a feminist perspective and feminist political leadership within them. This meeting arose from an agreement promoted by the HIC Board and Presidency to make evident the will and need to strengthen the linkage and dialogue with social movements working within and in alliance with our Coalition. The experience marks a milestone in the history of HIC. We hope that from this first and powerful instance of exchange and coexistence, work routes will be opened to continue building collectively, open to the active participation of more movements from different regions interested in transforming the reality we live in and the prevailing economic model.

Background and objectives

In 2019 Ana Falu joins the HIC Board as International Representative of Feminist Movements, and in 2022 Massa Kone, as International Representative of Social Movements. In the context of our first face-to-face meeting after the pandemic, held in Katowice (Poland) in the framework of the World Urban Forum, and from talks led by both representatives and our President, the HIC Board reached an internal commitment to deepen the work of the Coalition with social and feminist movements, facilitating joint exchanges, mutual learning and construction of shared agendas and strategies. As a follow-up to this commitment, in the following months we advanced a work program based on these objectives, which began with a face-to-face meeting between social movements and feminists to begin to advance on a joint work agenda, to be deepened and expanded with the development of two subsequent online meetings during the course of 2023.

In this sense, we took advantage of the III World Human Rights Forum held from March 20-23 in Argentina, in which activities had already been registered by HIC members and ally organizations, as an opportunity to develop the in-person meeting. The convergence meeting responded to the objectives described below:

- **General objective:** Identify common themes and priorities for joint action to ensure better networking between social and feminist movements inside and close to HIC;
- **Specific Objective 1:** Get to know each other and exchange experiences of the social movements present, with emphasis on opening spaces for the participation of women and diversities;
- **Specific Objective 2:** To build a common agenda and a joint action plan based on shared commitments to ensure better linkages of HIC social and feminist movements from different regions.

Promoting encounters and mutual learning

On March 18th we started the convergence meeting at the headquarters of the Movement of Squatters and Tenants (MOI), a member of HIC in Buenos Aires. That same afternoon, visits were made to different experiences in the city's metropolitan area, led by member organizations. On the second day, we continued the visits to housing cooperatives in Buenos Aires whose work was able to advance thanks to [Law 341](#) promoted by social movements and their allies.



The international participants of the meeting have been accommodated in the MOI's cooperative "La Fábrica", allowing exchange and mutual learning with the residents.



Participatory dynamics allowed us to get to know each other better and find shared objectives and challenges



Visits to neighborhoods in the "Los Hornos" area of Moreno municipality allowed participants to learn more about the experiences of land occupations in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area ([see video](#)), and the role of the [Fair Access to Habitat Law](#) of the Province of Buenos Aires.





Visit to the Amanecer community kitchen in the El Quijote neighborhood, Moreno.



Visit to the Manos Solidarias Cooperative, Buenos Aires

Following the visits to the metropolitan area, on March 20, the participants had the opportunity to visit three housing cooperatives in the city of Buenos Aires. The visits provided an opportunity to exchange strategies to promote self-managed housing.



Visit to Nueva Imagen Cooperative, Buenos Aires



Members of the Manos Solidarias cooperative shared with us the work developed by the cooperative in the La Boca neighbourhood

Main conclusions and agreements of the convergence meeting

After the discussions and field visits, the convergence meeting closed with some central conclusions and agreements. Among the first, the need to continue the collective reflection on HIC's work under the current economic and political context in different regions, pointing out common problems and trends derived from the capitalist model and promoting exchanges on practices, strategies and transformative alliances. The need to make explicit shared attitudes such as the certainty that we have the power to change things and that self-management processes allow the construction of popular power was also identified.

In particular, the relevance of continuing to promote the demands and proposals that arise from grassroots territorial processes became evident. This is to be done through exercises such as the recent [popular caravans in West Africa](#) that were mobilized in defense of the right to land and climate justice in both rural and urban areas; [the charter of demands of grassroots unions in India](#); and the [Latin American Schools of Self-managed Habitat of SELVIHP](#). In underscoring the importance of continuing to share a collective analysis of political trends and possible actions to confront them, the representative from India highlighted the value of exercising acts of international solidarity in support of movements working in the defense of human rights linked to habitat, under repressive and/or dictatorial governments. It was also commented that, while recognizing that social movements and feminism are deeply related, from their practices and the leadership of women who are at the forefront of popular movements, it is essential to continue promoting spaces for reflection and practices that contemplate the different feminisms and put the dimension of care at the center.

Finally, the importance of continuing to build, collectively and led by grassroots organizations in the territories, a common counter-hegemonic, anti-patriarchal and anti-racist agenda, anchored in collective rights such as the right to land and the right to the city, was ratified. That is, an agenda of denunciation but also a propositive one, based on the recognition and respect of differences - gender, class, race, age, sexual orientation, and physical-mental capabilities - and their intersectionality.

In summary, there was an agreement on the need to continue building a work agenda from HIC in relation to the following objectives:

1. Encourage and practice international solidarity between movements that converge in a common struggle, particularly in contexts of repression and political persecution;

2. To maintain a collective space for political reflection under an inter-regional, counter-hegemonic, anti-patriarchal and anti-racist key that supports and consolidates the processes and actions of political advocacy of our Coalition at the international level;
3. To build a common vocabulary of transformative political action from the movements: a militant, collective and multilingual glossary of key concepts that synthesize their struggle in defense of habitat related human rights, overcoming the colonialism of language, including for example terms such as 'social production of habitat', 'self-management' and 'cooperativism', among many others.

To this end, three structuring lines for collective work were identified throughout the discussions, with respect to **political advocacy objectives, practices of struggle** to be promoted, supported and developed, and **attitudes and/or guiding principles** to strengthen the convergence between struggles and regions. These are presented below:

Political advocacy objectives

- Support and promote self-management laws for a fair habitat in terms of social production of habitat.
- Support anti-patriarchal land reforms for land access and management led by women.
- Promote feminist care laws and programs through the realization of the right to adequate housing, land and the city.
- Struggle for the recovery/reconstruction of citizen power and a responsible and progressive state, through popular and self-managed decision-making mechanisms
- Document and promote the construction of redistributive and reparative budgetary mechanisms with citizen decision-making power.

Practices to be developed, supported and consolidated:

- Collective mobilization practices
 - Popular caravans and construction of collective political documents (e.g.: [Habitat Voices](#))
 - Virtual campaigns to disseminate common messages
 - Solidarity statements
- Popular education processes
 - Self-documentation, exchange and collective reflection on practices of transformative pedagogies at regional and interregional levels
 - Implementation of popular schools and exchanges (internships) at regional and interregional level (e.g.: SELVIHP Schools and Diploma of Participatory Design in Latin America).

- [HIC co-learning spaces](#): spaces on feminist approaches to habitat, land rights and multilevel advocacy (2022). Launch of two new co-learning spaces on climate justice and social production of habitat (2023).
- [Interregional working groups on feminist approaches and land rights](#) (2023).
- Quarterly HIC advocacy meetings for the construction of a collective agenda.
- Systematization of our practices/proposals:
 - Book "[Feminisms in loud voice: experiences of gender and habitat in latin america](#)" that could be enriched with experiences from other regions.
 - [Manifesto on women's right to the city](#), with measures to combat discrimination against women and girls and guarantee their political participation; access to adequate housing; and recognition and compensation for care work in homes and communities.
 - [Documentaries on popular pedagogies practiced by HIC-AL members](#)
 - Latin American campaign for neighborhood improvement entitled "[Our neighborhoods, our rights, our cities](#)" in the framework of which public policy proposals have been made and are intended to be presented to decision-makers in different countries. A similar campaign could be extended to other regions.

Attitudes / principles to be encouraged in order to build a convergence between struggles and regions

- Dialogic autonomy
- Collective political subjects
- Permanent social and political awareness
- Feminism as a change of habits
- Counter-hegemonic action
- International and interregional solidarity

Getting to know other experiences in the realization of human rights to habitat

Participants also had the opportunity to learn about other community projects in Buenos Aires.



As Project 7, an organization created and coordinated by homeless people



Or the popular communication project "Urbana TV" in the Padre Mujica neighborhood.



Or the day care center self-managed by MOI members



Events held within the framework of the III World Human Rights Forum

"Towards the decommodification of habitat: regulatory frameworks and promotion of self-managed habitat production policies in Latin America" organized by SELVIPH, HIC-AL and the RLS of Argentina.



"Habitat as a right" with the participation of Ana Pastor, regional representative on the HIC Board



"Adverse Cities, Diverse Cities" organized by CISCESA, RLS Argentina and La Poderosa



The week ended with the participation in the march to celebrate the Day of Memory for Truth and Justice

