



COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY OF THE UCLG

Global Citizenship Workgroup: Immigration and Human Rights

1. Conceptual framework and starting point

We are witnessing a new revision of concepts that have without doubt been accorded greater prominence by the current state of globalisation, the widespread processes of urbanisation and the ever larger numbers of pockets of humanity that are vulnerable and excluded. Concepts and words such as 'global citizenship', 'cosmopolitan citizenship', 'global village', 'world State' and 'world constitutionalism' are increasingly heard in academic and political circles. Many experts are focussing on the subject in an attempt to revive the notion of a worldwide State of Law by making use of the old principles of the federal idea: unity and diversity. Unity in response to issues that require worldwide co-operation such as preservation of the environment, safeguarding human rights and peacekeeping; diversity in the acknowledgement of the considerable heterogeneity between humankind and peoples.

Given this state of affairs, it is essential that we engage in an assessment that deals with time and territory. We are experiencing a change in epoch and discovering new key players around the world. The time has come to drive inclusive policies in the same direction and to give priority to spaces such as cities that have been emerging during globalisation. It will difficult for us to achieve these goals, however, unless we make progress in constructing a shared culture that lays the foundations for restoring human dignity in our cities.

The conceptual framework that inspires the activity of the Workgroup on Global Citizenship, "Immigration and Human Rights", needs to be complemented by research, reflection and proposals that will come out of the drafting of the Charter-Agenda on Human Rights in Cities. The range of experiences and of cultural and legislative traditions in this sphere, inspired by the existing pluralism and diversity, should enrich this process and at the same time encourage the spectrum of human wealth to embark on the necessary sharing that the initiative will entail. We already have a starting point in our first conceptual approach, which is contained in "The City and Human Rights" report submitted to the

World Forum of Local Authorities held in Caracas. This proposal was once again raised at the Forum of Suburban Local Authorities in Nanterre.

The patterns of migration around the world, the daily arrival in Europe of fishing boats with immigrants from Africa, the population shifts towards cities in Latin America, and the migration from Mexico into the United States are some of the many manifestations that appear every day on television screens and in newspapers, often leading to compassion fatigue and revealing political inadequacy, repressive and uncharitable responses, insecurity and a lack of respect for human dignity. The Charter-Agenda will need to cover these situations that are today the pulse of history.

2. The goals of the initiative

The proposal to draw up the Charter-Agenda on Human Rights in Cities aims to go further than the simple drafting of a document agreed by experts on the subject. To our mind, it needs to contribute to building the necessary consensus between municipalism and social recognition in tackling the proposals in the Charter-Agenda, and should also serve to increase the commitment of local leaders towards expressing and implementing human rights and fundamental civil liberties in every city.

This overall goal must be expressed in each of the political projects, specified in terms of public service in the cities that adopt the content of the Charter. It will be useful not to lose sight of the fact that its implementation will need to consider advanced forms of democratic participation. This participative process is also part of the specific aims of the project, which are to:

- Involve as many plural and diverse stakeholders as possible in the initial phase of reflection and drafting the Charter.
- Implement a participative process involving cities and citizens that will legitimise the proposals.
- Search for an effective and real commitment from the networks of local authorities that are part of the Forum of Local Authorities (FLA).
- Incorporate the Charter into the work plan of the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy.
- Publicise the project and the institutional support for it around the world.
- Work to define evaluation indicators for cities.
- Progress towards an observatory of public policies on implementing the Charter.

3. Drafting the Charter

There are three phases to the process of drafting the Charter as presented to the Committee:

- a. Designing the proposed draft (September 2006-January 2007).

This phase includes:

- Drafting a report on the current situation.
- Creating a control group.
- Producing the work plan agreed with the control group.
- Establishing methodological approaches to draft the Charter.
- Classifying the possible Charter options for the control group.

b. Drafting the Charter-Agenda (January 2007-January 2008).

This phase includes:

- Presenting the documents produced.
- Starting the participative process.
- Submitting the text of the Charter and the process of gathering and introducing amendments until the final text is reached.

c. Approving the Charter (January 2008).

4. Implementing the Charter-Agenda

Once the Charter-Agenda has been approved by the FLA, this approval will need to be endorsed by cities expressing their support for it. This may occur through the FLA Network and through the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy. It will be important for this initiative to be presented by the UCLG to the higher international bodies deemed most appropriate.

At the same time, it will be essential to establish the criteria for defining the evaluation indicators and for shaping the observatory of public policies on implementing the Charter.

NB. The attached document contains further details on the above. We also include the text of "The City and Human Rights" report.