

GLOBAL CHARTER-AGENDA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CITY

1.- Presentation

The Diputació de Barcelona, through its Department for Citizen Participation, received the assignment from the Forum of Local Authorities (Caracas, 2006) to lead a new project to promote Human Rights from the local level: the **Global Charter-Agenda on Human Rights in the City**. By means of this project, it is intended to draw up a text with a worldwide scope and a multicultural perspective, whereby cities from all over the world shall commit themselves to develop inclusive public policies for the safeguarding of Human Rights applicable from the local level. In this sense, the Charter-Agenda will contain those fundamentals Human Rights that every city should recognise, protect and ensure, along with a list of municipal commitments that will determine the type of local action that can be implemented in order to materialize every specific Human Right. This local agenda will be made temporal and linked to a series of indicators in order to facilitate the assessment of the level of success achieved.

2.- Background

The basis of this project may be found in the **Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion (FAL)** of **Porto Alegre**, a forum of mayors that has been held since 2001 simultaneously with the World Social Forum. Among its aims, there is one to build and develop, together with civil society, alternatives of public management in the process of globalisation. From its very foundation, local mayors from all over the world accepted the challenge of occupying a political space in the international scene and assuming an active role by implementing public policies of social inclusion.

During the **5th FAL**, held in **Porto Alegre** in 2005, a work plan was approved in which it was established that one of the thematic axes of the FAL was Human Rights in the Cities. One year later, in the **6th FAL** held in **Caracas**, it was reasserted the commitment in favour of social inclusion as the necessary means to achieve an equitable society and a more participative democracy. This is why the working group on Human Rights was established, coordinated by the Diputació de Barcelona, with the aim of elaborating the **Global Charter-Agenda of Human Rights in the City**.

3.- Reasons for the project

The society of the beginning of the twenty-first century is, more than ever before, a **globalized society**. One of the most expressive effects of globalisation has been the generalised increase in the **processes of urbanisation** all over the world. Large cities have little by little become “metropolises” (cities of cities) that in most cases are increasingly diffuse or include a whole series of occupied and peripheral spaces, accompanied by the appearance of human agglomerations, poor and scourged by social exclusion.

These processes of urbanisation are the result of an unstoppable will of the right of people to look for and define the necessary framework to lead a decent life. **The city is experienced as the place in which it is possible to guarantee some rights that are hardly unattainable in other contexts.** Among the cities' strong points there is **proximity**. It is a concept and a reality that is not only spatial, but political. But although the city becomes the basic tool for materialising these rights, it has also kept an ambiguous attitude with regard to its own development. The most obvious verification of this fact is the existence of **large groups of people in our cities whose life is determined by the denying of many of these basic rights.** These groups of people are increasing due to the current globalized migratory movement.

It is obvious that such inclusive challenges (to make people's basic rights come true) implies some specific stands, impregnated by a good dose of repolitisation, which must point to alternative ways of socialisation. Inclusive policies must be centred on three substantive axes: **full citizenship** (a whole set of rights and duties that raise people to the level of citizens), **sustainability** (responsible commitment with future generations) and **democracy** and **participation** (that confers legitimacy to the inclusive models of progress).

We need to join all the efforts that from different areas have fostered the defence of human dignity and Human Rights and build common proposals that embody complicities from both the institutions and society. The establishment of these principles must combine respect for diversity, existing cultural and ethic pluralism with the juridical or normative recognition for all people of their rights and responsibilities in the civic and local areas. Today it is possible to keep alive the hope that **"another world is possible"** and that this world is being built thanks to the dynamism of cities.

This is why it is important to express this proposal of elaboration of a **Global Charter-Agenda of Human Rights in the City** that may be useful to build the necessary consensuses in the context of our cities; we want to see them globalized in a more human and socially inclusive way.

4.- Aims of the project

The **general aims** of the Global Charter-Agenda of Human Rights in the City consist of achieving, in as many cities as possible, the materialisation of a basic range of **Human Rights** applicable from the local sphere. The beneficiaries of these rights will be all the residents of the signatory city, no matter what their nationality is.

Every Human Right contained in the Charter-Agenda will have an "agenda" or **local action programme** whereby municipal commitments which are necessary to implement that specific right shall be defined. This local action programme, to which signatory cities will commit themselves, will be made temporal, will include the results expected to be reached and, finally, some indicators for the assessment of the level of success achieved.

This way, every Human Right contained in the Charter-Agenda would have this structure:

1. Formulation of the right
2. Duties derived for the city – rights/capacities of the citizens
3. Commitments assumed, progressively, by the city in subsequent periods of time (i.e. in one year, five years, ten years... depending on the nature and content of the right)
4. Elements or indicators proving the achievement of the right
5. Theoretic-practical foundation of the right

The **specific aims** of the Charter-Agenda are the following:

- Incorporation of the Charter into the work plan of the **Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy** (CSIPD) of United Cities and Locals Governments (UCLG) and development of the project from within this Committee, along with the rest of the city members;
- Implication of a **large and heterogeneous number of actors** in the process of reflection and drawing up of the Charter-Agenda: civil society, social movements, international organisations and local authorities from all over the world;
- Implementation of an **on-line participatory process** that legitimises the result of the project;
- Achievement of an **effective and real political commitment** from the involved local authorities;
- Dissemination of the project on a **global scale**;
- Implementation of the Charter-Agenda on a **local scale** by means of adapting municipal regulations and the planning of inclusive local policies;
- Progress towards the creation of an **international observatory** for the monitoring of the Charter's implementation.

5.- Process of elaboration

In order to draw up the **Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City**, a Driving Group and a Group of Experts will be set up. The **Driving Group**, of a political nature, will have the mission to define the strategic guidelines of the project. This Group is made up of (to be confirmed):

Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy of UCLG
Other cities belonging to United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
Network of cities of the Forum of Local Authorities (FLA)
European Network of Cities for Human Rights
Network of Cities for Human Rights – Diputació de Barcelona
Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces / Catalan Federation of Municipalities
UNESCO
Other cities interested in the project

As to the Group of Experts, made up of specialists from the different regions of the world, it will draw up the text of the Charter-Agenda, taking into account the amendments proposed by the Driving Group and the proposals derived from the on-line participatory process. The Group of Experts is made up of the following people:

North America	Jules Patenaude	Coordinator of Public Consultation and Participation, Town Council of Montréal
South America	Sebastian Tedeschi	Coordinator of America's Programme, Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE)
Sub-saharan Africa	Davinder Lamba	Coordinator of Operation Firimbi, Habitat International Coalition – Mazingira Institute
Asia	Nicholas You	Special Advisor for Strategic Planning, UN-HABITAT
Australia	Andre Frankovits	International Projects Director, Human Rights Council of Australia
Europe	Monique Chemillier	Professor of International Law, University of Paris VII
Arab World	Madjid Benchikh	Professor of Law, University of Cergy-Pontoise (Paris-Val-d'Oise)
Coordinator	Jaume Saura	President of the Human Rights Institute of Catalonia

The foreseen schedule for the development of the project is:

	PHASE 0	PHASE 1.1	PHASE 1.2	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>May – August 2007</i>	<i>September 2007</i>	<i>October – April 2007</i>	<i>2008</i>
DRIVING GROUP	<i>(these phases will be developed in a different speed according to each local authority)</i>		a. Validation of the draft prepared by the Group of Experts b. Meeting with the Group of Experts c. Dissemination of the project among the partners of every local authority	a. Participation in the on-line participatory process b. Promotion of the participation to the on-line participatory process among the partners contacted in Phase 1 c. Dissemination of the project	a. FAL 2008: validation of the final text of the Charter-Agenda b. CGLU: validation of the final text of the Charter-Agenda
GROUP OF EXPERTS	a. Constitution of the Group	a. Drawing up of an individual proposal by each expert b. Transfer of the proposals to the rest of the experts c. Drawing up of a synthesis document by the coordinator of the Group of Experts (draft of the Charter-Agenda)	a. Meeting with the Driving Group b. Incorporation of the amendments proposed by the Driving Group, if any	a. Coordination of the on-line participatory process b. Participation in the forums that will be organized on-line c. Assessment of the proposals received d. Drawing up of the final text of the Charter-Agenda	c. Presentation of the project at local, national and international level

6.- Presentation of the project in the international field

1.- VIth Forum of Local Authorities (23-24 January 2006 in Caracas, Venezuela)

At the meeting of the working group “**Human Rights in the City**” of the FLA, it was proposed to draw up the **Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City**, in a shared way and trying to reach a consensus. It was agreed that the Diputació of Barcelona would lead and develop the project, along with the cities which are members of the FLA and the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy.

2.- World Meeting of United Cities and Local Governments (29 October – 1 November 2006 in Marraquech, Morocco)

The Diputació of Barcelona presented to the members of the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy the draft of the project for the drawing up of a **Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City**.

3.- World Social Forum and Forum of Local Authorities (20-25 January 2007 in Nairobi, Kenya)

On the 21st January, the Diputació of Barcelona presented the project of the **Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City** to the social movements which participated at the workshop “**The right to the city**”, organised by Urban Spot and Habitat International Coalition. Furthermore, the Diputació of Barcelona took part in the VIIth Forum of Local Authorities (23rd January) and issued an appeal to local authorities for their participation in the project.

4.- Extraordinary Meeting of the CSIDP of UCLG (17 March 2007 in Saint Denis, France)

During this meeting, the Diputació of Barcelona contacted the cities of **Saint Denis** and **London**, and the **Province of Milan** in order to invite them to become members of the Driving Group of the Charter-Agenda's project.

5.- Meeting of the Network of Cities for Human Rights (28 March 2007 in Barcelona, Spain)

The Diputació of Barcelona met with its **Network of Cities for Human Rights** in order to present in detail the project for the drawing up of the Charter-Agenda and invited the members of the Network to participate in the Driving Group.



Secretaria tècnica:

7.- Schedule of the activities planned

DATE	ACTIVITY AND ORGANIZERS	PLACE	OBJECTIVE
JULY 2007			
25/27-Jul	III Latin American Conference of Cities and Local Governments (Latin American Federation of Cities, Municipalities and Associations / FLACMA)	Florianópolis (Brasil)	Presentation of the project and adhesion to the Driving Group of those cities interested in it
25/07	Meeting of the Forum of Local Authorities (FLA)		
26/07	4th Meeting of the Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy (CSIDP)		
to be determined	Meeting of the Network of Cities for Human Rights (Diputació de Barcelona)	Barcelona (Spain)	
SEPTEMBER 2007			
17/09	International Seminar on Best Social Inclusive Policies (Town Council of Barcelona)	Barcelona	Presentation of the project and invitation for the on-line participatory process
to be determined	Meeting of the Driving Group and the Group of Experts (Diputació de Barcelona)	Barcelona	Assessment of the draft prepared by the Group of Experts
OCTOBER 2007			
26/10	Conference on "The roads to political participation: exclusion and activism in the new millenium" (Província de Milà - FLA)	Province of Milano	Presentation of the project and invitation for the on-line participatory process
28/31-Oct	World Congress of UCLG	Jeju (Korea)	
15/17-Oct	Meeting of Ministers of Local and Regional Government (Council of Europe)	València (Spain)	Distribution of information on the project
NOVEMBER 2007			
29/30-Oct	Forum of Local Governments from the European Union and Latin America Fòrum de Governos Locals de la Unió Europea y América Llatina on Social Cohesion (Spain, France, Italy and UCLG)	Paris (France)	Presentation of the project and invitation for the on-line participatory process
DECEMBER 2007			
10/12-Des	World Meeting "Participative democracy: from local to global" (Region of Rhone - Alpes, França and FLA)	Lyon (France)	Presentation of the project and invitation for the on-line participatory process
JANUARY 2007			
26/Gen	Day of Action and Mobilisation (Network of Cities for Human Rights, Diputació de Barcelona)	Barcelona	Participation in the Day of Action and Mobilisations organised by the International Council of the World Social Forum
MAY 2008			
to be determined	Conference on the Charter-Agenda's on-line participatory process (Committee on Social Inclusion and Participative Democracy - UCLG and Diputació de Barcelona)	to be determined	Presentation of the results obtained from the on-line participatory process
month to be determined 2008			
to be determined	Conferences for the presentation of the final text of Charter-Agenda: - UCLG - Network of Cities for Human Rights - Forum of Local Authorities - UNESCO - Other international organisations	to be determined	Presentation of the Charter Agenda for Human Rights in the City