

## CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM 2020

### OFFICIAL PROGRAM



# Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness

Prepared by the NGO Committee for Social Development with support from UN DESA/DSPD and FES

February 2020  
United Nations HQ  
New York, New York

**Creating an  
enabling  
environment**

**Eradicating  
poverty**

**Promoting full  
employment**

**Promoting  
social  
integration**

**Achieving  
equality and  
equity between  
women and men**

**10 COMMITMENTS**  
**COPENHAGEN DECLARATION ON  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Accessing  
health and  
education  
services**

**Accelerating  
development in  
Africa and in the  
least developed  
countries**

**Including social  
development  
goals in  
structural  
adjustment  
programmes**

**Allocating  
resources for  
social  
development**

**Cooperating for  
social  
development**

The year 2020 marks the 25th Anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995. The largest gathering yet of world leaders – 117 heads of State or Government – pledged to make the conquest of poverty, the goal of full employment and the fostering of stable, safe and just societies their overriding objectives. They also pledged to put people at the center of development. These principles guide the Commission for Social Development.

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# Introduction

CSOCD58

**Welcome to the 2020 Civil Society Forum!** Since 2006 this forum has been a space for members of civil society to gather to learn, discuss, and strategize on the themes and deliberations of The Commission for Social Development (CSocD). This year, members of civil society have been given more of a voice than ever. We are optimistic about our current and future possibilities for collaboration with the United Nations, and all Member States.

On behalf of the **NGO Committee for Social Development**, the **Fredrich-Ebert-Stiftung NYC office**, and the **NGO Working Group to End Homelessness**, thank you so much for attending. We hope that this forum is informative, interesting, and impactful for you.

**We hope that this Program Booklet along with the Civil Society Declaration will:**

- Serve as a guide to active participation in both the Forum and the Commission
- Clarify the connections among the Civil Society Declaration, The Commission for Social Development, and the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030,
- Enable all of us to bring key themes of the Civil Society Declaration to discussion at side events, with your constituencies, and for questions or discussion at the conference itself,
- Focus on the core vision that each of our NGOs share and which motivates us in our particular missions to see through the lens of those most in need, most excluded and most vulnerable.

# Civil Society Program

CSOCD58



## Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness

Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
United Nations HQ, Conference Room 4

The Civil Society Forum has been planned by the NGO Committee for Social Development in joint sponsorship with UN-DESA Division for Social Policy and Development and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES). This Forum has been organized for civil society participants to engage with different experts from many perspectives on the 58th Session of the Commission for Social Development priority theme. This space is to create an inclusive dialogue to foster cooperation between Member States, Civil Society and the United Nations, and to unify behind a common vision in furtherance of the Sustainable Development Goals, and housing for all. The aim is for participants to develop a global understanding of homelessness, how to reduce it, and what policies we can advocate for. The forum will feature governmental, service, and lived experiences from all over the world, gathered here to share their successes, challenges, and recommendations for how to eradicate homelessness.

**10:00AM – 10:30AM**

### Welcome

**Ms. Joanna Padgett Herz**, Chair, 2020 Civil Society Forum; Project Coordinator, Institute of Global Homelessness

**H.E. Mr. Gbolié Desiré Wulfran IPO**, Deputy permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire; Chair, Commission for Social Development

**Ms. Maria Francesca Spatolisano**, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs

**Ms. Bettina Luise Rürup**, Executive Director, FES New York

**Mr. Fabrizio Hochschild**, Special Adviser on the Preparations for the Commemoration of the United Nations' 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**10:30AM – 12:30PM**

### Expert Panel

**Moderator:**

**Amson Sibanda**, Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch  
Sustainable Development Goals Division, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

**Speakers:**

**Elizabeth Madden**, Lived Experience, Ireland  
**Rosanne Haggerty**, President, Community Solutions  
**Ify Ofong**, WorldWIDE Nigeria Network  
**Freek Spinnewijn**, Director, European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA)

**12:30PM – 3PM**  
**LUNCH (On your own)**

**3PM – 4:30PM**  
**Policy Panel**

**Moderator: Daniel Perell**, Chair, NGO Committee for Social Development;  
Representative, Bahá'í International Community

**Speakers:**

**Hanta Fida Cyrille Klein**, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Republic of Madagascar  
**Dame Louise Casey**, Former Homelessness Tsar UK; Chair, Institute of Global Homelessness  
**Yanella Posonte**, Coordinator, the Latinoamericana Street Network Project and Technical Secretary; MIDES  
**Indu Prakash Singh**, Facilitator CityMakers International

**4:30PM – 6PM**  
**Make Us Count Panel**

**Moderator: Jean Quinn**, Co-Chair, UN Working Group to End Homelessness;  
Executive Director, UNANIMA International

**Speakers:**

**Gwendolyn Cassady**, America  
**Elizabeth Madden**, Ireland  
**Alicia Vázquez Silver**, Uruguay

# Biographies

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## **Joanna Padgett Herz, Chair of the Civil Society Forum; Project Coordinator, Institute of Global Homelessness**

Joanna Padgett Herz is the United Nations Project Coordinator for the Institute of Global Homelessness, and the chair of the 2020 Civil Society Forum. She is pursuing a Masters of Sociology, in which her thesis explores the history of the United Nation's discourse on homelessness. She is the primary author of *Ending Homelessness through the Sustainable Development Goals*, an advocacy guide on the connections between homelessness and the SDGs. For the past year she has been working with the UN Working Group to End Homelessness to advance UN advocacy in an effort to eradicate global homelessness. She has been serving those experiencing homelessness and poverty for the past four years. Joanna has been a Project ID caseworker at St. John's Bread and Life in Brooklyn, NYC, where she helped clients acquire vital documents such as birth, marriage, and death certificates, social security cards, and state identification. In 2017 she was the Rome program coordinator for the Little Friends for Peace Club, where she helped teach young students about non-violent problem solving, social justice, and other peaceful life skills. She has also worked on poverty alleviating programs in Puerto Rico, Ecuador, South Dakota, and Ghana.

## **H.E. Mr. Gbolié Desiré Wulfran IPO, Deputy permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire; Chair, Commission for Social Development**

Since 2018, Mr. Wulfran has been the Deputy Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire since 2018. Previously he has been the Minister Counselor at the Embassy of Côte d'Ivoire to the Kingdom of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Grand Duchy to the European Union and the First Coast Ivory Embassy Counselor in Brussels.

## **Ms. Maria Francesca Spatolisano, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Co-ordination and Inter-Agency Affairs**

Ms. Spatolisano has 33 years of experience in public service, including extensive senior leadership in multilateral affairs. She has served as the European Union Ambassador to the OECD and UNESCO, Monaco, and Andorra. She was a member of the EU Delegation to the United Nations, serving as the Head of its Economic and Trade Section. She covered all issues related to trade, development and

environmental policies in the Second Committee and ECOSOC and was also the EC representative to the Fifth Committee. Since 2017, she has been responsible for International Organizations and Development Dialogue with other Donors in the Commission's Directorate General for Development Cooperation. In this capacity she has assured the EU presence and developed EU positions on development policy in a number of international fora including the United Nations, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, OECD, G-7 and the G-20, where she represented the EU in the G-20 Development Working Group. Ms. Spatolisano holds a Doctorate in Law (cum laude) from Florence University.

**Ms. Bettina Luise Rürup, Executive Director, FES New York**

Bettina Luise Rürup is the Executive Director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) office at the United Nations in New York. Associated with FES for more than 20 years Luise served as head of the department at FES Headquarters in Berlin as well as at offices in Chile, India, Turkey as well as at the federal state level in Germany.

Prior to joining FES she was involved with interdisciplinary field research on rural development in Costa Rica and Tanzania. Luise has published on a wide range of topics related to development, social justice and democracy. Luise earned a master's degree in Political Sciences from the University of Hamburg (Germany) and an intermediate diploma in Political Sciences from the Free University of Berlin (Germany). She was enrolled with an DAAD exchange program at the L'Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo No (Italy) and holds a postgraduate certificate from the Centre for Rural Development (SLE) at the Technical University of Berlin (Germany).

**Fabrizio Hochschild, Special Adviser on the Preparations for the Commemoration of the United Nations' 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

In his current role as Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Mr. Hochschild is coordinating the preparation for the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2020 and related celebrations, through a system-wide process of consultations and reflections on the role of the United Nations in advancing international co-operation and in supporting Member States' ability to respond to emerging challenges and frontier issues. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Hochschild served as Assistant Secretary-General for Strategic Coordination in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (2017-2019). Mr. Hochschild also served as Deputy Special Representative for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) in 2016, UN Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator

and Resident Representative of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in Colombia from 2013 to 2016, Director of the Field Personnel Division in the United Nations Department of Field Support, New York from 2010 to 2012; and as Chief of Field Operations and Technical Cooperation in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Geneva from 2005 to 2009. He began his United Nations career in 1988 with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sudan and served in subsequent postings with UNHCR, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and in peacekeeping. He was posted in Sudan, Jerusalem, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Geneva, New York, Timor-Leste, Serbia and the United Republic of Tanzania. A graduate of the University of Oxford, United Kingdom, he has published studies and articles on leadership, on the protection of civilians, on transitional justice and reconciliation among other topics.

**Amson Sibanda, Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch  
Sustainable Development Goals Division, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

Mr. Amson Sibanda is Chief of the National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch in the Sustainable Development Goals Division at the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). He has over 17 years of extensive experience in a broad range of sustainable development issues at the global, regional and national level, including the various intergovernmental processes that support this work.

In his current role, Mr. Sibanda leads a team that develops capacities of developing countries to translate internationally agreed policy frameworks and programmes at national level. In particular, the team provides advisory services and tailored support to developing countries on integrating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into national development plans and strategies. The team also plays a key role in supporting countries in the preparations of Voluntary National Reviews, and the identification of gaps and challenges with national implementation. This work contributes to accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets and commitments through increased engagement of Member States and other stakeholders. Mr. Sibanda began his impressive UN career at the Economic Commission for Africa in 2003 where he worked on issues ranging from the Millennium Development Goals; population and sustainable development; and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Previously, he was the Chief of the Social Policy Analysis Section in the Division for Inclusive Social Development in DESA, where he led a team that supported various intergovernmental processes and the implementation of the social pillar of the 2030 Agenda

and the World Summit for Social Development. Mr. Sibanda was also a member of the Technical Support Team that provided support to the co-chairs that supported preparations of the SDGs. Prior to joining the UN, Mr. Sibanda worked as a Researcher at Brown University in Rhode Island, US, and as a post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, gaining an unparalleled experience in demography and statistics. He also taught at the University of Zimbabwe and worked as a Statistician-cum-Demographer at the Zimbabwe Central Statistical Office. He has published in leading journals several articles on children's schooling, early child marriage, gender and education, HIV and AIDS, fertility, household structure, and migration and labour force participation. He also co-edited a book on The Demography of South Africa published by M.E. Sharpe in 2005.

Mr. Sibanda holds a PhD and an M.A. in Demography from the University of Pennsylvania, an MSc in Population Studies and B.A. in Geography (Honors) from the University of Zimbabwe.

### **Elizabeth Madden, Lived Experience from Ireland**

Elizabeth Madden is a mother of one from Cork City Ireland who works in frontline domestic violence services. She holds an Honors Degree in Social Science and a Masters Degree in Women's Studies from University College Cork. Upon graduation, Liz was approached to lecture on the Diploma of Women's Studies program, which she did for a number of years. Prior to returning to education and becoming employed, Elizabeth experienced periods of homelessness, addiction, mental health and relationship issues. She believes in the power of *shared lived experience* and believes that we can only gain true insight through listening and learning from the lived experience. Liz will to share about the supports that she accessed that led her to recovery. She will talk about the success that she has gained in her life through accessing those supports, and how agencies and society at large can better support individuals.

### **Rosanne Haggerty, President, Community Solutions**

Rosanne Haggerty is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Community Solutions. She is an internationally recognized leader in developing innovative strategies to end homelessness and strengthen communities. Community Solutions assists communities throughout the US and internationally in solving the complex housing problems facing their most vulnerable residents. Their

large-scale change initiatives include the 100,000 Homes and Built for Zero Campaigns to end chronic and veteran homelessness, and neighborhood partnerships that bring together local residents and institutions to change the conditions that produce homelessness. Earlier, she founded Common Ground Community, a pioneer in the design and development of supportive housing and research-based practices that end homelessness. Ms. Haggerty was a Japan Society Public Policy Fellow, and is a MacArthur Foundation Fellow, Ashoka Senior Fellow, Hunt Alternative Fund Prime Mover and the recipient of honors including the Jane Jacobs Medal for New Ideas and Activism from the Rockefeller Foundation, Social Entrepreneur of the year from the Schwab Foundation, Cooper Hewitt/Smithsonian Design Museum's National Design Award and Independent Sector's John W. Gardner Leadership Award. She is a graduate of Amherst College and Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

### **Ifeyinwa Ofong, WorldWIDE Nigeria Network**

Dr. Ofong started her career as a lecturer at the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Jos, Nigeria. She then progressed to the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Nigeria, where she held various positions, including Senior Lecturer, Head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Senior Research Fellow and Course Coordinator at the Institute for Development Studies. As National Coordinator of Women in Development and Environment, she has been committed to empowering women to speak for themselves and participate in decision making and governance. Her work has since spread across many civil society committees and organizations including the NGO Committee on Social Development and Board Member of Habitat International Coalition. She is a member of the NGO Working Group to End Homelessness, as well as a member of the Global Coalition on Social Protection Floors. As a member of the Steering Committee of the African Network of Women's Shelters, which is part of the Global Network of Women's Shelters, she is working with other civil society groups to provide safe spaces and shelters for women survivors of violence abuse. As a Development Consultant, she has carried out many studies and analysis for donors on many social issues, including the Situation Analysis of women and children in urban slums in Nigeria.

**Freek Spinnewijn, Director, European Federation of National Organizations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA)**

FEANTSA is the European umbrella of NGOs working with homeless people. FEANTSA has member organisation in 30 European countries and works on a variety of themes including housing, health, and migration. Freek studied Medieval History and European Law and Policy at the University of Leuven (BE). After his studies he did internships for the UN in Geneva and the EU in Brussels. After a short stay at the University of Leuven where he worked as a research assistant, he became director of EPSO, a European network of seniors' organisations that merged with other European NGOs into AGE. After a short period as policy officer, Freek became director of FEANTSA in 2001. Freek sits on board of several European organisations and transnational projects. He is currently the president of the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and of Social Services Europe (SSE) and sit on the Board of EAPN (European Anti-Poverty network).

**Daniel Perell, Chair, NGO Committee for Social Development**

joined the Baha'i International Community's United Nations Office as a Representative in 2011 and has served as the Chair of the NGO Committee for Social Development since 2016. His areas of work include social and sustainable development, global citizenship, human rights, the role of religion in society, and defense of the Baha'i Community. He is formerly a Global Organizing Partner of the NGO Major Group. In 2010, Mr. Perell received a JD from the University of Virginia School of Law and an MA in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School at Tufts University and was admitted to the New York State Bar Association. Mr. Perell has worked with the International Service for Human Rights in Geneva, the United Nations in Aceh, Indonesia and other organizations in the Marshall Islands and Chile.

**Hanta Fida Cyrille Klein, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Republic of Madagascar**

Hanta Fida Cyrille Klein (Mrs), is a career Diplomat of the Republic of Madagascar and has been serving at the Foreign Ministry of Madagascar for 18 years. She is ending her post as Counselor at the Permanent Mission of Madagascar to the United Nations and will soon head back to capital for new functions at the Foreign Ministry of Madagascar. She has specialized herself throughout her diplomatic career in human rights by being the first Head of Human Rights Department at the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs of Madagascar. In 2003. She was part of a team of experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Madagascar and the Ministry of Justice to set up an inter-ministerial Committee for the drafting of initial and periodic reports of Madagascar on human rights, which had the originality of being composed of representatives of the Government and of the civil society organizations, working together in the field of human rights. She was the Vice-Chair of this Committee since its creation in 2003 until 2009. She is also expert in social development issues and has been committed herself on behalf of her country, Madagascar, to important issues such as social protection floors, social inclusion, and has been engaged in the homelessness issues at the United Nations since 2018. Along with her career as Diplomat, she was Professor from 2002 to 2009 of International relations, Diplomatic and Consular law, and international organizations law at the Madagascar National School of Administration (ENAM) that forms among other students the Diplomats of Madagascar. She has also expertise in other issues such as health issues, international law and international trade law, international negotiations, and matters related to the International organization of la Francophonie. She has a Master Degree in Diplomacy, international Enterprises and international Organizations from the University of Paris XI (Sceaux). She has also a Master Degree in international relations from the International Institute of Public Administration of Paris, France, and from the Institute of Studies in International Relations (ILERI) of Paris, as well as a Bachelor degree in Communication and Public Relations from the CERIA-IPIAT College of Anderlecht, Brussels, Belgium.

### **Dame Louise Casey, Former Homelessness Tsar UK; Chair, Institute of Global Homelessness**

Over the last 20 years, Dame Louise has been instrumental in the development of a number of bespoke social policy programmes for the UK Government. Drawing on her previous experiences leading the UK homeless charity Shelter, Dame Louise has consistently delivered brave and innovative solutions to long standing social problems ranging from homelessness to anti-social behavior to troubled families. Appointed as UK Homelessness Czar in 1999, Dame Casey led a successful strategy to reduce the number of people sleeping rough on the streets. She went on to lead the Troubled Families Programme and Respect Taskforce, and also served as the first Victims Commissioner where she led flagship reviews into child sexual exploitation and social integration in some of the UK's most isolated communities. Throughout her career, Dame Louise has maintained her commitment to the charity sector and has been a driving force in the establishment of the Institute of Global Homelessness, with the aim of delivering an international solution to street homelessness across the world. Dame Louise currently serves as the Board Chair for the Institute of Global

Homelessness Dame Louise was awarded the Companion of the Order of Bath (CB) in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2008 and made Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2016.

**Yanella Posonte, Coordinator, the Latinoamericana Street Network Project and Technical Secretary; MIDES**

Yanella Posente is the Coordinator of Proyecto Red Calle Latinoamericana, an action led by the Ministry of Social Development of Uruguay together with the International Organization Italo-Latin American (IILA), the Ministry of Human Development and Social Inclusion of Costa Rica, and the Ministry of Social Development and the Family of Chile. The governments of Brazil, Colombia, and Paraguay participate as associated entities. Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, these governments cooperate to share experiences and work together to strengthen national public policies for the care of people in street situations and to improve living conditions.

**Indu Prakash Singh, Facilitator CityMakers International**

Indu Prakash Singh is a human rights defender, poet, author, feminist and PRA/PLA (Participatory Reflection and Action/Participatory Learning and Action/Participatory Rural Appraisal) practitioner and facilitator and is currently a consultant to a large number of development organisations. He has recently been made a member of the State Level Shelter Monitoring Committee for the Progress of Shelters for the Urban Homeless in Delhi. Indu is also a freelance consultant with IGSSS, Praxis – Institute for Participatory Practices, ActionAid India, Oxfam India, Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR), Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI), Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) and many others. Apart from facilitating workshops, he has worked on evaluation assignments, alongside advising organisations in the development sector. Indu is also the Facilitator, CityMakers Mission International. He has worked in the social sector, on range of issues: Children, Youth, Women, the destitute, substance misuse, the Elderly, health: leprosy/ TB/ HIV-AIDS/ Mental Health/ Community Health, rural and urban deprivations/ human rights violations, environment and biodiversity, food security and many more issues, for over 30 years.

**Jean Quinn, Co-Chair, UNNGO Working Group to End Homelessness; Executive Director, UNANIMA International**

Jean Quinn DW is a member of the International Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom. She is a Nurse by Profession, studied Family Therapy, Addiction Studies as well as Social Housing Studies with the Irish Council for Social Housing. She also Studied Theology and Philosophy with Milltown Institute in Dublin. As well as holding many Congregational and Professional leadership roles throughout her career she has been actively involved in International Social Justice through a range of facets for many years. Jean has spent a vast number of years working with the homeless in Dublin and is the Founder of Sophia Housing in Ireland. Her vision and leadership brought strength and growth to Sophia, which is now celebrating its 21st year as an organisation committed to providing a holistic approach in supporting people, specifically women and children on their journey from Homelessness. Jean was a member of the UNANIMA International Board in 2016 and completed an internship that year also. Since joining the UNANIMA International Team as the Executive Director in 2017 Jean's passion for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation have continuously been utilized in her international advocacy. Through this role, she sits as the Co-Chair of the NGO Working Group to End Homelessness and Member at Large on the NGO Committee of Social Development.

### **Gwendolyn Cassady, Lived Experience from America**

Gwen creates sustainable solutions for people through her small businesses, [www.ManagingProjects.org](http://www.ManagingProjects.org), and non-profit [www.ManagingLove.org](http://www.ManagingLove.org). Having been homeless four times since the age of 14, twice chosen and twice forced, helping create action based results through social entrepreneurial endeavors coupled with sharing people's stories to raise awareness to pertinent, global pandemics via the production company she leads, [www.VisionForward.Media](http://www.VisionForward.Media), helping other people is Gwen's personal philosophy. Born and raised in a small town, Zionsville, Indiana, she matriculated to the University of Virginia for her first degree in Economics. She has been a teacher, a nanny, a construction worker, a small business owner, a consultant, and now she works daily towards her Harvard capstone, [www.International.Villas](http://www.International.Villas) – Virginia's 1st net positive, off grid, small home community. Having started her first business selling t-shirts at the age of 15, Gwen's real first passion, caring for children, led her to create the Special Sitter Service, America's largest childcare service in the Southeastern United States, according to her primary client, the United States Army Special Ops. Having lived, worked, and traveled now to 64 countries and our 7 great continents, through witnessing too many global atrocities, Gwen has been inspired to take action towards our many challenges from fast fashion to climate control, homelessness to child trafficking. When she decided to begin a Masters in Sustainability program at Harvard concentrating in Creating

Sustainable Cities and Communities, she discovered she needed to move more quickly. It is Gwen's hope that we find ourselves in a vast edible forest foraging our way through a sustainability education in a regenerist society. It is her hope that International Villas creates that unique experience. Gwen's other passions comprise her art including sculpture, painting, watercolor, drawing, calligraphy, sewing, yoga, hiking, reading, writing, and being a foster mom to elderly dogs

# Interpreters

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Every year, the Civil Society Forum receives valuable support from faculty and students for translation and interpretation services before, during, and after the Forum. Our volunteers come from every corner of the world and they have a strong interest in working with NGOs. Some of our volunteers are also completing an academic year in an American University throughout the Fulbright Program managed by the Institute of International Education.

The Civil Society Forum Coordinating Team wishes to acknowledge the following individual interpreters' valuable contribution to the Forum's success:

## **2020 Coordinator**

Elisa Téllez Perez

## **Interpreters**

Elisa Marie Juliette Perez

Amal Kebaïer

Léandre Larouche

Eva Moreta Martín

Amalia Ordóñez Vahí

Maria Pia Maiti

Elisa Téllez Perez

# Civil Society Declaration

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## **“Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness”**

A home is one of the most basic human needs, without which a human being must live in precarious circumstances on the streets, under bridges, in slums, or on public lands, in unprotected and unsafe makeshift structures, with limited rights and few means to fulfill their potential. Yet, the number of vulnerable individuals and families living without a home is growing in low, medium, and high-income countries throughout the world. It is a problem beyond borders: it exists in every country and in urban, suburban, and rural contexts.

For the first time in its 75-year history, the United Nations is explicitly addressing global homelessness under the priority theme “Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness.”

We welcome the commitment made by Member States in 2019 to implement social protection floors which are fundamental tools for alleviating poverty and a major contributor to the realization of human rights for all, especially the most vulnerable. We are conscious of the need to take the next step and relate housing to social protection systems to provide the security and safety of a home to those trapped in poverty and subject to discrimination.

Let us seize this opportunity to build on the outcomes of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission for Social Development and all prior relevant United Nations commitments to address inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies, including floors.

Let us re-dedicate our efforts to ending homelessness, in all its diverse manifestations and wherever it may occur, as we seek to achieve Agenda 2030.

### **UNITED NATIONS’ CONTEXT**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent an historic moment for the advancement both of sustainable development and human rights, together. Nowhere is the merit of such an approach more beneficial than in addressing homelessness where Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) articulates the right to adequate housing. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) affirms this right. This is both a development issue, explicitly referenced in SDG 11 and a human rights concern as articulated by the Special Rapporteur in her report to the Human Rights Council on the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and non-discrimination in this context (A/HRC/31/54).

Homelessness cuts across all of the SDGs: eradication of poverty, good health and well-being, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, climate change, and peace, justice and strong institutions. As a global society, we have abandoned, criminalized, and left behind innocent individuals and families through unjust housing policies. All human beings require the safety and security of a home to realize their potential and participate with dignity in society.

The end to homelessness will only come when the global community not only remedies the personal and structural societal causes that drive people to become homeless, but also accepts that homelessness inhibits access to other rights and services needed for survival.

The right to adequate housing means more than just a roof over one's head. Housing must be affordable, safe, secure, and protected from arbitrary eviction, with access to basic services (clean energy, water and sanitation) and available to all, free from discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, religion, age, or disability. Biased practices and policies disproportionately affect the most vulnerable and exacerbate the risk of homelessness.

## **GLOBAL ASSESSMENT**

Homelessness results from multiple pernicious intersecting factors. The causes are both structural (poverty, inequality, unemployment and under-employment, insecure jobs, discrimination and social exclusion, aging out of youth services for orphans and vulnerable children, lack of affordable housing, the commoditization of housing, forced eviction, urbanization, rural-urban migration, land tenure,

displacement due to natural disasters caused by climate change, and conflict) and personal (mental health, domestic violence, substance misuse, chronic or catastrophic illness coupled with a lack of access to healthcare and insurance). Importantly, homelessness of individuals and families is an accelerator for other forms of deprivation including infectious diseases, malnutrition, vulnerability to civil and political violence and human trafficking, among others.

Thus, the systemic and personal drivers of homelessness, together create a vicious cycle that can perpetuate a cycle of intergenerational homelessness. Member States must commit to accelerate full implementation of the SDGs, upholding all human rights, while allocating resources to assist individuals and families in immediate need to end homelessness and stifle the cycle of homelessness. While strongly valuing and recognizing the efforts of numerous organizations around the world addressing the daily pain and struggles of people who are homeless, we believe much more needs to be done at the systemic and structural levels to end this crisis including the upholding of all human rights, the provision of social protection systems including floors, and the availability of affordable housing.

Through the United Nations, Member States are uniquely positioned to end homelessness by mobilizing governmental resources and by calling upon the corporate sector and civil society to work together to create stronger communities and an enabling environment to resolve systemic causes and human rights violations. The United Nations and its agencies must be at the center of this common effort to end homelessness to achieve its goal of ending poverty. Whether it is in devising strategies that incorporate the experiences of homeless people, mobilizing and allocating resources, forming strategic partnerships, or sharing best practices, States can rely on the UN's coordinating mechanisms. The United Nations must devise policies to strengthen the political, economic and social protection of people, especially people in vulnerable situations. The best solution to homelessness is prevention.

The end to global homelessness is contingent on the way Member States understand solution based development. The global development paradigm is largely economic. However, market-based approaches must incorporate a moral and ethical dimension. A developed country is not one with a higher GDP, but one where every person has equal access to contribute to the betterment of their society. In some States, the drivers of homelessness are being dealt with head on, with quantifiable results. Other States must seek and adapt best practices in order to leave no one behind and reach the furthest behind first.

## ADOPT A DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

The first step in this process is to adopt globally agreed upon language to describe and define homelessness. Different definitions of homelessness create different perceptions of policy priorities. We endorse the proposed definition of the Nairobi Expert Group on ending homelessness with one modification for clarity in bold:

*“Homelessness is a condition where a person or household lacks habitable space with security of tenure, rights and ability to enjoy social relations, including safety. Homelessness is a manifestation of extreme poverty, and a failure of multiple systems and **the implementation of human rights.**”*

Using this definition, we identify four broad categories of homelessness:

- People living on the streets or other open spaces;
- People living in temporary, emergency or crisis accommodation;
- People living in severely inadequate or insecure accommodation; and
- People who lack access to affordable housing.

The first category is characterized by those lacking access to any kind of adequate, safe and sustainable accommodation. These individuals and families are pavement dwellers, sleep on the street, live in open and/or public spaces including parks, streets, or abandoned or public buildings. This category includes people living in cars, rickshaws, boats, or other forms of private and public transportation.

The second category includes persons and families living in temporary, emergency or crisis accommodation: night to night homeless shelters, homeless hostels, domestic violence sanctuaries, refugee and internally displaced persons' camps, or other temporary housing structures. People experiencing this form of homelessness may have some form of short-term safe and secure accommodations, but it is not sustainable. Although there are multiple reasons why someone may

require temporary or crisis accommodation, these situations require social protection, respect for human rights, and a proactive plan to ensure a transition to a sustainable living environment.

The third category includes persons and families living in inadequate and insecure accommodations. Persons and families experiencing this category of homelessness may live in accommodations that are designed to be more stable (apartments, hotels, informal settlements, or houses) but have become inadequate, unsafe or unstable. This can mean, for example, living in spaces that have become over-crowded, unsanitary or unfit for human habitation due to landlord neglect of premises, living under the threat of violence or eviction, squatting, “sofa surfing” or doubling-up. The physical building may have nothing to do with the fact that it has become insecure. This is one of the least visible, but most significant, violations as it may appear that people in this category have adequate housing.

According to UN Habitat, land and housing affordability is a critical contemporary challenge, and this is the fourth category laid out above. While in different countries and regions the specificities of the challenge vary, the universal truism is that it is becoming increasingly difficult for low- and middle-income urban residents to obtain and retain adequate and affordable land and housing. These individuals and families lack the capacity to pay for market value housing. Persons with disabilities, single parent families, especially those headed by women, and ageing populations are representing a substantial part of this group. This requires governments to mobilize in two directions. First, to create affordable and safe housing with enabling strategies such as accommodating tenures, payment flexibility for those with insecure income or in transitional periods, and financial systems that extend credit to these vulnerable populations. Governments should also provide legal counsel to those faced with hardship and complex case issues. Finally, Member States must address or eliminate forced evictions and laws that criminalize or blacklist, persons who are homeless.

Importantly, market changes such as the financialization or commodification of housing are forcing people into homelessness. The consequences of using housing as a vehicle for wealth and investment rather than a social good needs urgent attention. Global capital markets and financial excess are transforming housing and real estate worldwide. The shift from housing as a place to create a home to housing as an investment has been devastating, forcing evictions, especially in low income neighborhoods as they become part of speculative investments. Member States need to regulate investment in residential real estate so investment supports the right to adequate housing and in no way undermines it in fulfilling SDG 11.1.

## **DEVELOP STANDARDIZED MEASUREMENTS OF HOMELESSNESS**

The natural consequence of the lack of a common definition of homelessness, and a second major obstacle, is a shortage of reliable data and research in this field. Countries that do measure homelessness are few and have varying definitions, measurements and capacities. Agreeing to a global definition of homelessness, as recommended by the Nairobi Expert Group and in this declaration, will pave the way for reliable data and comparative measurement. Common taxonomies and methodologies for collecting data and sharing best practices must be developed. We must stand in solidarity with those who have been or currently are homeless and listen to their voices throughout the process since only they have a full grasp of the dramatic circumstances, dimensions and effects of this issue.

Effectively ending global homelessness in all its dimensions will require a strong multilateral commitment to address all its systemic and personal causes and to measure progress. To make this possible, Member States, civil society and the private sector must collaborate. Partnerships, financing, and data collection for accountability are inseparable to effectively address homelessness, including its effects such as disrupting social cohesion, on the path to ending poverty.

Even as extreme poverty has fallen globally, inequality is on the rise and 1.6 billion people still live in poverty. Homelessness must be addressed within existing anti-poverty strategies. Social protection systems and floors have been agreed to during the 57<sup>th</sup> session. Addressing homelessness must be the next step in this very promising anti-poverty strategy. The international community has identified a variety of options to generate resources to finance basic social protections; it is time to add resources to remedy homelessness and provide adequate and affordable housing for all so that no one is ever locked out or left behind.

## **CALL TO ACTION**

We call upon Member States to:

- Reaffirm the international consensus on housing as a basic human right and a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, as expressed in the UN Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the New Urban Agenda (Habitat), and the Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace;

- Resolve in the Commission for Social Development and propose to the General Assembly collectively ending the global crisis of homelessness as a major marker of development, a necessary step in the eradication of poverty, and the realization of all the SDGs;
- Adopt the slightly modified definition of homelessness provided by the Nairobi Expert Group as well as appropriate taxonomies and methodologies to this definition that will enable States to measure and address the systemic drivers of homelessness, which cut across the SDGs;
- Agree on collective standard metrics of both quantitative and qualitative data, to coordinate these efforts with the UN Statistical Commission and to comprehensively disaggregate data including a sex, gender, and family- based dimension;
- Consider affordable housing as a related factor in social protection systems and ensure its coordination with Social Protection Floor policies in national legislation concerning cash transfers;
- Establish access to safe education facilities and safe transportation in homeless areas so that children without homes are offered the same access to their right to education as homed children in order to break the poverty and homeless cycle and contribute to the achievement of all SDGs;
- Expand fiscal space and mobilize resources to resolve the crisis of homelessness by increasing services for the personal drivers and addressing the structural drivers, including access to legal counseling, by including it in national budgets, in the understanding that these are necessary measures to reduce poverty and to invest in the future of human capital;
- Listen to the voices and invite the participation of persons experiencing homelessness to jointly create solutions alongside Member States, the private sector and others;

- Take measures to reduce and prevent homelessness as a point of departure to break the cycle of poverty; sharing good practices such as the “Housing First” principle applied by the Y Foundation in Finland which has helped make Helsinki the only large city to officially end homelessness;
- Accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Social Protection Systems and Floors with the understanding that these are mutually reinforcing and interdependent and that only by a comprehensive strategy will they be achieved by 2030;
- Coordinate efforts within the United Nations and its agencies and establish global partnerships to address the challenges of financing for development, sharing good practices and creating an enabling environment of solidarity around these common objectives;
- Protect people from fast-tracked development programs and the financialization of housing being implemented in the name of sustainable development;
- Enact citizenship, inheritance and ownership laws which are respectful of land rights for women, widows and other discriminated populations,
- Enact legislation to address environmental protection, social protection and housing provisions for victims of forced displacement and natural disasters resulting from corruption, weak legislation and standards, unregulated or insufficient renting, and predatory industries such as lending, mortgage, and extractive industries; and,
- Recognize that the human right to adequate housing must be integrated into all poverty eradication strategies, reaching the furthest behind first, so that no one is locked out, left behind or left homeless in this decade of action to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



# UN Acronyms & Useful Terminology

CSOCD58

**Advocacy:** Advocacy is all about taking what you've learned and putting it into action. Actions of advocacy can include: information campaigns, panel discussions, art exhibitions, film screenings, petition circulation, and lobbying.

**Civil Society:** The term used to describe the sum of non-governmental organizations and other related institutions that advocate for the interests of citizens at large.

**CSocD - Commission for Social Development:** United Nation conference generally lasting 10 days, and generally in February, which advises the Economic and Social Council on matters relating to social policies, and the social field in general. Further, the Commission highlights social development themes based on the Copenhagen Summit for Social Development held in 1995 with emphasis on poverty eradication, full employment and social integration. The Copenhagen Declaration put the person at the center of development

**DESA-DSPD - Department of Economic & Social Affairs - Division for Social Policy & Development:** Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA is charged with creating policies and programming to ensure sustainable development for all.

**ECOSOC - Economic and Social Council:** UN body responsible for follow-up to major UN conferences, ECOSOC seeks to advance consensus building, debate, and innovation on the economic, social, and environmental facets of sustainable development. The current president of the Economic and Social Council is Her Excellency Ambassador Marie Chatardová of the Czech Republic.

**GA - General Assembly:** The primary policy making, deliberative, and representative organ of the United Nations, composed of all 193 member states. The General Assembly provides a forum for discussion, debate, and adoption of UN resolutions and agendas.

**Human Rights:** Human rights are universal rights, freedoms, and protections to which all human beings are entitled. All human beings have, by nature of being human, human rights. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (a document that outlines 30 agreed upon human rights)

states that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Categories of human rights include social, political, and economic rights.

**ILO - International Labour Organisation:** Comprised of 187 member states, ILO is a UN affiliated organization that creates policy, programs, and labor standards through the cooperation of governments, workers, and employers.

**LDCs - Least Developed Countries:** countries with the lowest gross national income, high economic vulnerability, and weak human assets.

**MDGs - Millennium Development Goals:** MDGs are eight international development goals that were established by the United Nations in 2000. All of the UN member states have agreed to achieve these goals – such as reducing child mortality and combating HIV/AIDS – by the year 2015.

**NGO - Non-Governmental Organization:** non-profit, voluntary organizations working on a local, national or international level. NGOs bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through raising awareness and building coalitions.

**PGA - President of the General Assembly**

**Poverty:** The state of not having access to the resources to satisfy basic human needs, such as nutrition, clean water, or shelter. It is estimated that about one-fifth of the world’s population lives in extreme poverty. Poverty pertains not only to income-poverty and is multi-dimensional. Poverty also refers to a lack of capacity to participate in society.

**SDGs - The Sustainable Development Goals:** are a comprehensive and ambitious set of 17 goals that were created to follow-up and continue the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals. The Goals include ending poverty, protecting the environment, creating sustainable infrastructure, guaranteeing gender equality, granting access to education for all, and more. The SDGs are also referred to as “Agenda 2030” or the “Global Goals.”

**SG - Secretary General:** Currently Antonio Guterres of Portugal, the Secretary General is the public spokesperson and leader of the UN, and is the head of the Secretariat, one of the three UN organs.

**Social Protection Floors:** Reaffirming that the right to social security is a human right, social protection floors are nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees which secure

protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. These guarantees should ensure at a minimum that, over the life cycle, all in need have access to essential health care and basic income security. National social protection floors should comprise at least the following four social security guarantees, as defined at the national level:

1. access to essential health care, including maternity care;
2. basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services;
3. basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability;
4. basic income security for older persons.

Such guarantees should be provided to all residents and all children, as defined in national laws and regulations, and subject to existing international obligations.

**UDHR - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:** is a declaration adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948 (now known as International Human Rights Day) that outlines the rights to which every human being is entitled. It is divided into 30 Articles, or parts.

**UN - United Nations:** The United Nations, or UN, is an international organization founded in 1945 dedicated to maintaining international peace and security, developing positive relations between nations, and promoting social progress, better standards of living, and human rights. There are currently 193 member states (or countries) in the UN.

**UNRISD - United Nations Research Institute for Social Development:** An UN-affiliated, but independent organization that researches the social aspects of development issues.





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