



CONCEPT NOTE

2018 is the 70 anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the main international instrument for the recognition of rights, and essential tool for the construction of global citizenship.

In recent decades, the UDHR has been widely commented, discussed and complemented with other legal commitments that develop some of the rights and establish guarantee mechanisms. However, despite the ongoing task of social movements and citizen struggles, the scenario of regression of rights is, unfortunately, a reality everywhere.

Facing this scenario, cities appear as a space of freedom, development and reception of people who seek and want a better world. Today the city is the meeting point and, therefore, a space of possibilities. At the same time, it is also the space where contradictions and risks are expressed with the most harshness. In the urban area all inequalities appear, such as unemployment, poverty, violence and discrimination. It is in this context that the city reappears as a resource of a new political and social space of democracy of proximity.

And we are talking about re-emergence because in December 1998, 20 years ago, the 1st European Conference of Cities for Human Rights was held in Barcelona. That Conference brought together more than 70 cities from over the continent, with the common goal of raising the voice of municipalism as the voice of the administration closest to citizens, which defends, protects and guarantees the rights of everyone. In a framework, then, where international human rights commitments were decided only between States and where responsibilities and resources were not shared with other decentralized administrations. At the Barcelona Conference, the municipal movement decided to adopt the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City, where the obligations of local authorities were expressed as a political commitment, but also legally binding local government's obligations.

In these 20 years this movement has been consolidated and municipal mechanisms for guaranteeing rights have multiplied everywhere, such as local ombudsmen, and local human rights policies are also being planned. And Barcelona is a particularly relevant example. Among other milestones, it has been possible to establish a municipal service for victims of discrimination, the discourse of social services policies has been consolidated as policies for the defense of social rights and not for the coverage of needs, the associative network of rights defenders entities has been empowered with a clearly rooted and consolidated citizen culture...

However, the rights of many people, especially women and migrants, continue to be violated on a daily basis and challenges as a society and as local administrations are important. Many of these violations are systematic and respond to the global political configuration in nation-states and the prevailing patriarchal and neo-liberal system.

So 2018 is a year of commemoration, but above all, it's a year of demands. Because 70 years after and 20 years later, we are living a moment of regression of rights where protected spaces and achievements reached until now are at risk, and the achievement of global citizenship seem even farther away.

Human mobility, recognized as a right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 70 years ago, is seriously threatened by criminal and discriminatory migration policies. The so-called "refugee crisis" in Europe, has led States to justify and deepen a series of anti-rights practices, such as border control externalization, or increasingly restrictive security



and asylum policies. In the United States, the arrival in power of Trump has led to the imposition of arbitrary and discriminatory entry country vetoes, and has jeopardize the position of thousands of "dreamers", young migrants living under the permanent threat of deportation. In this context, cities have become fundamental actors of resistance to migration policies, and a new global actor essential to guarantee social cohesion in an increasingly hostile environment.

On the other hand, half of the world population, women, continue to suffer inequalities and violence due to the mere fact of being women. Women continue to have more difficulties in accessing labor market, decision positions and to equal payment. They also continue to take care of unpaid domestic work, they are still underrepresented in public and power spaces, or continue to be assaulted and murdered at the hands of men. Nevertheless, trough global mobilizations such as the one at March 8th, feminism has been strengthened as one of the priority issues in the political agenda, forcing different social, economic and institutional actor to a reconfiguration of their practices and policies with gender mainstreaming.

In a world where the fear and insecurity are turning into hate, and inequalities, xenophobia and authoritarianism are increasing, towns and cities are becoming global actors of hope. We propose, therefore, a global alliance to create a common front to defend full citizenship, feminisms, human rights and democracy.

Preliminary Program

December 10th

Morning - Saló de Cent. Barcelona City Hall.

For cities united for rights

Institutional meeting of mayors of European and international cities

Adoption of the Barcelona Commitment

Afternoon - Center of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB)

16:00-18:00 Migrations and refuge from the municipal perspective

Sactuary cities and Solidarity cities will discuss how, from the perspective of municipalism and with a human rights-based approach and respect for full citizenship, closed border, hatred and restriction of rights policies implemented by the States can be faced. It will represent a municipal point of view on the transformative resistance potential of cities around the world. The building of global citizenship from the cities.

Introducer: Lucía Nbomio, journalist

- Muriel Bowser, Mayor of Washington DC (or Atlanta, Keisha Lance Bottoms)
- Bitta Mostofi, Immigration Commissioner, New York City
- Jozias van Aartsen, Mayor of Amsterdam
- Luigi de Magistris, Mayor of Naples (or Athens, Yiorgos Kaminis; or Palermo, Leoluca Orlando)
- Martin Rees, Mayor of Bristol (or Sheffield, Magid Magid; or Birmingham, Yvonne Mosquito)
- Ada Colau, Mayor of Barcelona.

18:00-18:30 Coffee Break

18:30-20:00 Opening Conference

Naomi Klein, Canadian writer



December 11th

Morning - Auditorium of the Contemporary Culture Center of Barcelona (CCCB)

9:30-11:30 What Human Rights' Cities are? Hall, CCCB

There are different Human Rights Cities' models, and very often they deal with the real concretion of the right to the city as a movement to "place" human rights. It is a must to share good practices and ideas that show these concretions, far beyond political declarations. A series of good practices can be seen at an Exhibition created for this Conference, and a round table on the issue.

- María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop, Carlos III University;
- Itziar Ruiz Giménez, Autonomous University of Madrid;
- Esteban Cuya, Office of International Relations of Nuremberg;
- Shams Saidi, Human Rights Commissioner, Wien.

Moderator: David Bondia, President, Human Rights Institute of Catalonia

11:30-12:00 Coffee Break

12:00-14:00 The setbacks in the area of civil and political rights. The most protected rights, in danger

Freedom of expression, the right of assembly and demonstration, the right to protest, the right to political participation ... are some of the most recognized and protected rights by both international and national regulations. Despite this, the setbacks in these matters supported by authoritarian governments around the world are a reality. It is necessary to exchange ideas about different experiences that respond to the same repressive and coercing pattern of public liberties, from examples very close to Barcelona to more distant scenarios.

- David Graeber , Occupy Wall Street
- Santiago Alba Rico, philosopher and writer
- A representative of Artists at Risk
- A Representative of Som Defensores

Presents: Jaume Asens, Deputy Mayor, Barcelona City Council

Afternoon - Auditorium of the Contemporary Culture Center of Barcelona (CCCB)

16:00-18:00 Interculturality as a commitment to achieve a more cohesive society



An intercultural perspective at the diversity of our cities is based on the idea of putting at the center the recognition and valuing these diversities, equality and non-discrimination as basic principles and the interaction and dialogue as a way to build relationships between people.

- Rami Jahanbegloo, Harvard University, University of Paris;

- Lilita Suárez, Autonomous University of Madrid.

Moderator: Jordi Pigem

18:00-18:30 Coffee Break

18:30-20:30 Feminist and local views on human rights

The world, from feminist perspectives, is understood as a complex network where the reconsideration of power relations and structural inequalities is at the base. Women of different origins, traditions and cultures will discuss de-colonialism, migration, human rights and the role of local administrations in these areas, and feminine political leadership in this areas.

- Laura Pérez, Councilor, Barcelona City Council

- Epsy Campbell, Vice President, Costa Rica

- Souad Abderrahim, Mayor of Tunis, Tunisia

Moderator: Patricia Caro, Roma People activist.