



Liaison Committee Joint Declaration

HIC – IAI – LOCOA – No-Vox – SELVIP – WITNESS – USACAI – Joint WAI Promoting Committees

The Campaign "Resistances and Alternatives for the Right to Habitat" (see <http://worldhabitatdays.org>) seeks to strengthen the struggles against violations of the Right to Habitat around the world by fighting against forced evictions and land grabbing. This campaign analyses the consequences of neoliberal policies and of corruption that disproportionately affect the most economically and socially fragile populations of rural and urban areas. Building resistances and alternatives for the right to habitat also implies the reinforcement of solidarity between movements and networks, and activists for the right to housing and to land who have been victimized by repression and violence.

Evictions without appropriate resettlement have been identified as joint priorities for the coordination of concrete actions to resist together around the world. While the causes of this phenomenon are manifold, most are common to other types of land rights violations. As the cases already documented in the Campaign website show (see <http://worldhabitatdays.org/cases/>), evictions are on the rise worldwide given the speculative processes that make way for, among others, mega-projects and mega-events, and to facilitate a shift towards industrial agriculture. These processes victimize populations that are already the most vulnerable, such as small-scale farmers and indigenous people, whose relationships to land are incompatible with those dictated by the market economy.

A great number of land grabbing cases have already been recorded on the Campaign website in order to strengthen the solidarity between communities fighting for land rights. Several of the reports highlight the social conflicts created by, for example, the expansion of mono-cropping and the development of hydroelectric projects in rural areas at the expense of the farming culture that guarantees food sovereignty.

The Campaign is developing the capacities of networks and organizations working on resistances and alternatives for the right to habitat to put an end to evictions, land grabbing and the repression of activists. We urge you to continue denouncing these violations and fighting for the right to housing, to land and to the city.

For World Habitat Day 2011, UN-Habitat chose the theme *Cities and Climate Change* since "no one today can really foresee the predicament in which a town or city will find itself in 10, 20 or 30 years time. In this new urban era," according to UN-Habitat, "with most of humanity now living in towns and cities, we must bear in mind that the greatest impacts of disasters resulting from climate change begin and end in cities. Cities too have a great influence on climate change." While a reflection on the effects of climate change in cities is interesting, an exclusive focus on urban areas is not sufficient to address existing issues.

The urban bias in development policy, rooted in the highest levels of government and corporate boardrooms, replicates the inequalities and policy gaps that have allowed land-related rights violations in the countryside to perpetuate the injustices to which rural populations are subjected. As the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing for the United Nations states, there is no single solution that can be successfully transplanted from cities to the countryside to counter the effects of climate change. We think, in fact, that the urban bias might even lead to an increase in violations in the name of mitigating climate change, yet at the expense of rural populations.

We denounce the systemic causes of climate change and the rise in industrial accidents that affect the most vulnerable populations. In addition to the global financial crisis, these processes accelerate social conflicts, occupation and war. Our resistances and our alternatives must integrate/ consider these questions in order to fight against the violation of fundamental land rights, for social and environmental justice and to contribute to the building of another possible world.

The Liaison Committee

September 29, 2011

Disseminated by 
HIC
Habitat International Coalition