

PROGRAMMATIC GUIDANCE NOTE FOR UN-Habitat STAFF

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



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PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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Foreword



Human rights are at the heart of the work of the United Nations. Most recently, the UN Secretary-General has re-affirmed this commitment in his Human Rights Up Front initiative, and UN-Habitat is fully engaged in and committed to its implementation.

Under my leadership, UN-Habitat has reinvigorated its thinking on how the promotion, protection and respect for human rights inextricably intertwine with its mandate on sustainable urban development. In 2013, I was met with full support from our Governing Council when I decided to elevate human rights to become a cross-cutting issue for all our substantive thematic areas, to be integrated in every policy, planning and project cycle of UN-Habitat. My appreciation goes to the UN Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights whose support at the highest levels has been instrumental in the development of our strong human rights policy.

At the municipal planning offices, to the urban residents themselves, it is clear that if we want to reverse the alarming trend of urbanization equating increasing inequalities, we must strengthen the engagement of urban residents in shaping the future of our cities.

We will need to innovate and think afresh in many cities where we work and throughout the many projects in which we are engaged. The emphasis on Human Rights-Based sustainable urban development requires UN-Habitat staff to familiarize themselves with the international human rights protection system in general and those human rights most relevant to UN-Habitat in particular. I hope that this Guidance Note on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights provides staff of UN-Habitat and its partners with exactly such an overview. I am sure it will lead to an increased awareness of the importance of the Human Rights-Based Approach to sustainable urban development.

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