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WIEGO - Inclusive Cities/Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

A New Urban Agenda

A search for its reasons, and future

"...we shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive..."

(Albert Einstein, 1954)

This is our challenge.....

Discussion Paper within the members of the
Habitat Professionals Forum

Presented at the Habitat III Preparatory
Committee 2

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Nairobi, Kenya

April 15, 2015

Madame Chair Person

Delegates to this Prep Com 2

My name is **Ismael Fernandez** from Mexico, I am the Chair of the **Habitat Professionals Forum**

My Organization is a worldwide platform of voluntary affiliation of international and regional associations of Human Settlements Professionals involved in sustainable urban development.

We have as members 17 global societies of professionals encompassing some 5 million individuals experts in the several facets of the city

The HPF was established after Habitat 2 with the

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purpose of promote sustainable and equitable human settlements development.

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Cities are in transition, so is the present Urban Agenda.

It is clear that humanity is moving fast towards a future that is urban.

Urbanization has become an unstoppable and inevitable process that is facing humanity with a necessary change in order to confront such challenge.

This challenge is also a great opportunity for the revision of the present trends and processes and propose new and better ways of looking at our present urban life.

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This is one of the objectives of Habitat 3, to question our present performance and propose a different one that would respond more thoroughly to the new challenge.

It is clear, that Cities can become engines of economic development, spaces of freedom, of innovation and prosperity, the battle for a more sustainable future will be won or lost in Cities.

As the process of urbanization unfolds, with variable intensity in different parts of the world, the phenomenon of the city reveals its primary essence

It is the center point of future civilization.

This is the size of our responsibility, as

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governments, and as professionals

Considering that this process of urbanization tends to produce an enormous demographic and geographic shift, the significance of this paradigm modification for the destiny of humanity and for the configuration and sustenance of the world as a whole, is quite profound.

This process of urbanization, it is certainly not only referred to the physical side of the city and the construction of infrastructure, housing and services associated.

It is also, and more important, referred to the social and economic factors that shape the society that inhabits it, and are the main reason of the

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physical development of the city.

The urbanization phenomenon is Economic, Social and Physical, in that order of importance.

We need to return to the basics.

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Madame Chairperson

In searching for a new paradigm, we are facing the option to either, follow the present tendencies and fashions and envision The Future of Cities, Or radically change the paradigm to create The Cities of the Future.

It is The Future of Cities versus The Cities of the Future.

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It is to modify the present patterns with a revolution

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A new Urban Agenda must be a philosophy, that address all three pillars, and that are applicable to the whole urbanization processes.

A new Urban Agenda must avoid fixed rules or measures that constrain the process, as it happens in the present one.

It should have an open structure that can be molded according to the needs of a defined social and economic, environment,

But should be closed in relation to the application of the general philosophy and the adopted

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principles, and objectives to be pursued and measured.

A new Urban Agenda must move the focus of the design from the macro urban dimension to the person, to the human scale, to the micro dimension.

This could be the central and more important shift in the process of designing the city of the future.

The new paradigm must come to terms with this revolution.

A new paradigm must have the human scale and its vital space as departure point.

It must only be a philosophy, a set of principles, as

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the ones proposed in “The City We Need” document produced by the World Urban Campaign,

It must be a framework allowing constant innovation.

A new paradigm must not lock cities into a particular planning technology,

Must encourage social interaction and allow social inclusion and tolerance,

A new paradigm must move a step forward of the rapid urbanization process, previewing the future, and guide the urbanization process within the new framework.

A new paradigm must fulfil both, Economic, Social and Physical Environmental agendas

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Madame Chairperson

In Conclusion

The City of the Future should be

Human in scale

Environmentally sustainable

Economically powerful

Socially inclusive

Operationally efficient

Beautifully designed

The City of the Future is its people,

is its local community,

is the Urbanite

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