

**Global call from local authorities
in support to the UN Binding Treaty**

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Cities for Human Rights:



**Join your voice to support a
historical process to fight against
corporate impunity.**

Cities are on the front lines of today's most urgent challenges, dealing with the climate crisis and rising global inequality. Local governments from across the world are increasingly committed to the advance of human rights and the right to the city. However, the absence of regulation of key players such as transnational corporations is causing major distortions to human rights access by many city residents, from the right to housing to the right to water or a healthy environment, among many others. Faced to this worsening scenario, which is increasingly challenging the power of action of the local authorities and communities worldwide, **local governments reaffirm their commitment to a shared vision, that of "Cities for Human Rights, not for Profit"**.

A historical process

In 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Council established [an inter-governmental working group](#) to elaborate a Binding Treaty to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. Every year since then, States are invited to the United Nations to participate in a new round of negotiations on the Treaty.

What is at stake?

The challenge is the adoption of a legally Binding Treaty to end corporate impunity and regulate corporate activities against environmental destruction, human rights abuses and violations. A UN Treaty would enable States to **universally agree on the elements regulating the conduct of transnational corporations in international human rights law**, and to lay the ground for an effective access to justice for those who suffer from corporate malpractice.

While the social, environmental, and climate emergency calls for bold action in this regard, some States shy away or even oppose such a Binding Treaty. Nevertheless, several States from the Global South have been strongly defending the process and leading the way in order to adequately regulate transnational corporations operations.

The COVID-19 crisis - which has increased vulnerability and suffering by workers and affected communities throughout global value chains - is a stark reminder of why we cannot delay in addressing transnational corporate human rights violations at the international level.

The role of cities and local governments

Local authorities are increasingly confronted with human rights violations arising from corporate power. From the financialization of housing to the pollution of the urban environment, the impacts of the gig economy or the deprivation of the right to water, more and more local governments in every corner of the world can relate to how corporate impunity affects the lives of fellow city residents. Most of the time, they are not able to address these human rights and Right to the City violations.

In response to this scenario, cities and communities are joining forces through networks and common initiatives, increasing local democratic spaces and building concrete alternatives to the current economic and urban development models that reinforce exclusion and inequalities. In order to allow these initiatives to flourish and to advance towards a Right to the City paradigm that understands cities as common goods that belong to all inhabitants, and in which all can produce and enjoy the services and opportunities they have to offer, local governments join the Global call in support of the Binding Treaty and call on all relevant stakeholders to support this initiative as well.



At this historical turning point, local government representatives - from Mayors to city councillors - decide to join forces with thousands of social movements, affected communities and non-governmental organisations, unions, human rights and environmental defenders and members of parliament from Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and Europe, to urge States - and regional organisations - to actively engage in this UN process. They call on them to work towards an effective and legally binding international instrument, to ensure that people's civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights, are guaranteed worldwide and prioritised over private profits.

As elected representative, join your voice to this global movement seeking to stop corporate impunity and to protect human rights and the environment!

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FIRST SIGNATORIES

Ada Colau, Mayor - **Barcelona**, Spain | Musa Hadid, Mayor - **Ramallah**, Palestine | Michèle Rubirola, Mayor - **Marseille**, France | Willy Demeyer, Mayor - **Liège**, Belgique | Jeanne Barseghian, Mayor - **Strasbourg**, France | Sahra Mirow, City Council Member - **Heidelberg**, Alemania | Christophe Teisseire, City Council Member - **Paris**, France | Nuria Parlon, Mayor - **Santa Coloma de Gramenet**, Spain | Eric Piolle, Mayor - **Grenoble** - France | Idoia Buruaga, Mayor - **Elorrio (Basque Country)**, Spain | Danielle Dambach, 2nd Vice-Chair - **Strasbourg Eurométropole**, France | Iago Martínez, City Council Member - **A Coruña**, Spain | Caroline Saal, City Council Member - **Liège**, Belgique | Anne Vignot, Mayor - **Besançon**, France | Léonore Moncond'huy, Mayor - **Poitiers**, France | Emmanuelle Pierre-Marie, Mayor XII District of **Paris**, France | Martine Aubry, Mayor - **Lille**, France | Alde Harmand, Mayor - **Toul**, France | Patrice Leclerc, Mayor - **Gennevilliers**, France | Jean-François Caron, Mayor - **Loos-en-Gohelle**, France | Guy Dallard, Mayor - **Domas**, France | Henri Bouchet, Mayor - **St. Martin le Colonel**, France | Marc Gricourt, Mayor - **Blois**, France | Bertrand Kling, Mayor - **Malzéville**, France | Maryse Caujolle, City Council Member - **Blagnac**, France | Marie-Pierre Bes, City Council Member - **Blagnac**, France | Xavier Normand, Mayor - **Castanet-Tolosan**, France | Dominique Gambier, Mayor - **Déville-lès-Rouen**, France | Pascal Legoux, City Council Member - **Châtenoy-le-Royal**, France | Dominique Poinard, City Council Member - **Champforgeuil**, France | Mourad Laoues, City Council Member - **Chalon-sur-Saône**, France | Françoise Verjux-Pelletier, Departmental Councillor - **Saône-et-Loire**, France | Marie-Noëlle Le Carrer, Deputy Mayor - **Givry**, France | Christine Leclercq, City Council Member - **Mont-Saint-Aignan**, France | Annie Sassignol, Mayor - **Champforgeuil**, France | Philippe Brugère, Mayor - **Meymac**, France | Nathalie Appéré, Mayor - **Rennes**, France | Johanna Rolland, Mayor - **Nantes**, France | Joël Bigot, Mayor - **Petite Couronne**, France | François Vauglin, Mayor - **XI District of Paris**, France | Bertagnoli Kevin, City Council Member - **Besançon**, France | Sonia Zdorovtsoff, Deputy Mayor - **Lyon**, France | Cedric Van Styvendael, Mayor - **Villeurbanne**, France | Mathieu Klein, Mayor - **Nancy**, France | Bernd Zieger, City Council Member - **Heidelberg**, Alemania | Zara Dilan, City Council Member - **Heidelberg**, Alemania | Lluïsa Moret i Sabidó, Mayor - **Sant Boi de Llobregat**, Spain | Anna Vadillo García, City Council Member - **Gelida**, Spain | Alba Martinez, City Council Member - **Sant Boi de Llobregat**, Spain | José Luis Sánchez Martín, Mayor - **Miranda de Azán**, Spain | Lluís Mijoler, Mayor - **El Prat de Llobregat**, Spain | Mario Téllez Molina, City Council Member - **Vila-seca**, Spain | Jonatan Fornés Martínez, City Council Member - **Santa Coloma de Gramenet**, Spain | Sergi Morales Díaz, Second Deputy Mayor - **Mataró**, Spain | Txelo Auzmendi, Mayor - **Asparrena (Basque Country)**, Spain | Aizpea Otaegi, Mayor - **Oretea (Basque Country)**, Spain | Ander Oroz, Mayor - **Ansoain (Basque Country)**, Spain | Joan Basagañas Camps, Mayor - **Sant Just Desvern**, Spain

