

## World Human Rights Cities Forum 2016 Declaration

Building Human HABITAT Friendly Cities:  
Urban Development, Housing, and Environment

21-23 July 2016, Gwangju, Republic of Korea

We the participants of World Human Rights Cities Forum 2016 (WHRCF 2016),

*Expressing* our deep condolences and solidarity to all the victims and the bereaved family members of the terrorist attacks in Nice, France on 14 July and Munich, Germany on 22 July 2016, while not accepting any sort of violence forcing human beings into fear,

*Declaring* that the WHRCF will be a strong basis for solidarity among human rights cities beyond the national boundaries in order to reduce division, animosity, exclusion caused by religious or racial conflict and to avoid the repetition of such tragedies with clear understanding that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an essential commitment established after the tragedies of WWI and WWII,

*Reaffirming* the meanings of human rights cities and implementation promises proposed during WHRCF sessions 2011-2014 and recalling the urgency of 'Global Solidarity of Human Rights Cities for All' introduced at WHRCF 2015,

*Welcoming* the establishment of Asia Local Democracy and Human Rights Cities Network (Asia LDC Net) by civil and social organizations from the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan and Korea as a response to the importance of building a cooperative network among cities affirmed during WHRCF 2015,

*Welcoming* the development of active networking among local governments and human rights organizations in Korea as well as in many other places around the world, and the increasing number of conferences on human rights issues,

*Welcoming* the practices to efficiently implement proposals in the Final Report of the United Nations Human Rights Council Advisory Committee (Role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights) and the result of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Expert Workshop on Local Government and Human Rights to prepare Guiding Principles for Local Governments on Human Rights,

*Acknowledging* that balanced redistribution of resources by abolishing corruption and transparent budgeting, along with local governments fulfilling their duties, are crucial to protect and improve human rights as stressed during this year's session of the United Cities and Local Governments Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights,

*Promising* to continue to raise the question on the main theme of WHRCF 2016: Building Human HABITAT Friendly Cities, and to discuss the ways that human rights cities should identify and devise in order to realize the agenda on urban development, housing and environment,

*Affirming* that development simply based on growth without regard to human rights is not sustainable and that the goals of human rights cities are to build communities

based on fair governance for all the members of cities to be able to live with a higher standard of human rights,

*Promising* an active role of local governments to efficiently implement sustainable development goals (SDGs) in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015,

*Requesting* local governments to share perspectives on Right to the City and HABITAT III, which has been accepted as a main agenda for human rights cities during plenary session, at 5<sup>th</sup> UCLG Congress and United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (UN HABITAT III) in October 2016 and implement the results thereafter,

*Identifying* that the participants in the following sessions of 1) City and Gender, 2) City and Child/Youth, 3) Disabilities and Human Rights, 4) the Elderly and Housing are stake-holders of a human rights city, and the themes in the following sessions of 1) City and Environment, 2) Social Economy, 3) Urban Regeneration, and 4) Education Policy and School Autonomy are key agendas of implementation to strengthen a human rights city, while respecting the results of eight thematic sessions of the 2016 Forum,

*Requiring* that issues discussed in Migrants/Refugees and Human Rights session need to be urgently addressed in order to prevent wider conflicts of humankind and calls for stronger attention of local governments for stronger solidarity and tolerance of global civil society,

*Recognizing* the human rights cities concept and its institutionalization led by local governments are only possible through healthy criticism and check, based on mutual collaboration and respect, from the civil society and human rights movements,

*Remembering* kind smiles and hospitality of the citizens of Gwangju during WHRCF 2016 and to positively act upon our discussions,

1. *Promise* to lead the way for human rights cities, through stronger solidarity and tolerance, to help humanity regain freedom from the fear and terror arising from religious and racial conflicts;

2. *Envision* the local communities where human values are most respected as a goal for future cities, and recognize that citizen's participation and happiness are prerequisites for urban development;

3. *Will contribute* to spread the concept of 'local governments and human rights' currently under discussion at the United Nations so that it becomes general guiding principle in every city and request members of the United Nations Human Rights Council, including Republic of Korea, to adopt a resolution during their upcoming session in September calling for the research of guiding principles for local governments and human rights as a follow-up effort of the 2015 report;

4. *Endeavor* to facilitate identification and sharing of detailed cases of human rights city policies and further institutionalize the concept through WHRCF 2016;

5. *Execute* objective assessment of the discussion results and tasks of WHRCF 2016 and use them as basis for WHRCF 2017.