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Urbanas y Educación para la
Convivencia y la Paz**

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COMMITMENT TO THE AGENDA OF CITIES FOR COEXISTENCE AND PEACE



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Over the past few years, the international community has recognised the urban development trend and violence as two factors conditioning sustainability in our societies. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015, encourages us to 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable' (SDG 11) and 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies' (SDG 16). Likewise, the New Urban Agenda, adopted in 2016, insists on sustainable development as one of humanity's greatest challenges in the next few decades.

The 1st World Forum on Urban Violence and Education for Coexistence and Peace, held in Madrid in 2017, opened a new line of work that revealed the deep connections between the two SDGs mentioned above, as well as the potential of cities as privileged settings for the fulfilment of all 17 Goals via the establishment of the culture of peace.

In cities, institutions are closer to the people, and this makes it easier to take political action. Today, half the world's population lives in cities. By the year 2030, there will be as many as 5000 million people living in cities. The building of Cities for Coexistence and Peace is directly related to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

The Municipal Movement is strongly committed to the attainment of the aforementioned goals – a commitment with deep roots and a long tradition. Cities are ideal spaces to implement governance models that are closer to the people, with more direct and shared decision-making processes. In other words, cities are the right place to implement true democracy.

The New Urban Agenda and the World Charter on the Right to the City both emphasise the importance of cities in our lives and, accordingly, the obligation to take care of them. Both documents tell us that cities are the places where we spend our lives, live together, and enter into relationships with all kinds of people; where we wake up, go for a walk, love, grow up, go shopping, have fun and fall ill; where we strive to have decent lives; and where we are treated as equals in our specificity and difference. This makes cities collective spaces where cultural richness and diversity reign supreme – spaces that belong to their inhabitants, who have equal rights to the city, irrespective of their gender, age, health, income, academic achievements, nationality, ethnicity and religion, migration status, political ideas or sexual orientation.

Violence reveals unsuspected vulnerabilities in cities. Vulnerability is a feature common to all human beings, even when its circumstances and impact can vary. Vulnerability and interdependence reach us all.



We need to make a distinction between our vulnerability as human beings (a radical type of vulnerability) and vulnerability as a social construct. Vulnerable groups are not vulnerable by nature. Their vulnerability stems from inequality and discrimination. Therefore, their protection must take into account what has made them vulnerable.

Anger is an individual trait emerging as a response to real or perceived threats. It can be tamed by education and socialisation. Aggressiveness is not necessarily vented through violence – a complex social construct made of attitudes, actions, words, structures and systems that inflict physical, psychological or social pain and environmental damage, preventing a group or individual from realising their full potential.

When two or more people, groups or institutions have incompatible goals (incompatibility being real or just a perception), there is conflict. The goals can be material (economic interests, territorial claims, exercise of rights, and so on) or immaterial (values, beliefs, cultural patterns, etc.). Their incompatibility leads to temporary or permanent disagreement and antagonism.

Coexistence in cities thrives in the midst of conflict. Conflict is inherent to man, to human relationships and man-world bonds. If conflict is unavoidable, then making violence equivalent to conflict makes the former appear as inevitable too. This conclusion makes us incapable of educating for the eradication of violence. Making a distinction between violence and conflict is crucial in educating to create a mindset that makes it possible to build a culture of peaceful coexistence.

Expressions of violence

Rather than the opposite of war, peace is the opposite of violence. The Cities for Coexistence and Peace should aim at the eradication of all forms of violence: *direct violence* (from war to crime to terrorism to gender violence), *structural violence*, stemming from political and economic injustice (the type of violence underlying the inequality that leads to poverty, hunger and unhealthy living conditions for large sectors of the population) and *cultural violence* (violence at the symbolic level, originating in beliefs and ideology, and found in science, art or law, as well as in the language used in education and the media; in sum, violence that legitimises the other forms of violence).

Direct, structural and cultural violence feed off one another in flows of legitimation that contribute to build the insidious and persistent culture of violence. It is in cities that these forms of violence can be seen most clearly.

Even in the absence of direct violence, peace is incomplete if we can still identify cases of interpersonal, structural or cultural violence.



Accordingly, the 2nd World Forum on Urban Violence has dealt with different expressions of violence, in an effort to prevent and eradicate them: violence against women, aporophobia and social exclusion, violent extremism, cyber-bullying, violence in sports, the plight of displaced persons and refugees, violence against children, racism and xenophobia, violence as a result of inequality, the impact of armed conflict, LGBT-phobia, corruption, the need for inter-faith dialogue, cruelty to animals and violence against nature.

According to the human security paradigm, all human beings are interrelated in a global scenario threatened by the lack of development, education or health, economic inequality and the violation of human rights.

Seen from this perspective, peace is a process whereby the various forms of violence are reduced and the levels of social justice are increased. This approach requires policies that ensure that everyone can take part in their own individual development.

Cities as spaces of coexistence and peace

A mature, democratic society should consider as one of its strategic endeavours the design of policies leading to the eradication of violent behaviour and raising awareness of the fact that violence – and its ultimate form: taking someone else's life – is the worst possible expression of lack of humanity.

We need political programmes for the development of strategies and tools helping citizens solve conflicts, clashes and frustrations peacefully by giving them the skills and competencies required to make a better, violence-free, world.

When we educate men and women to abhor violence, to feel incapable of hurting someone else, we are building a better society – and, more importantly, saving lives.

MEASURES FOR THE CITIES FOR PEACE AGENDA

1. Fighting interpersonal violence

World Health Organization statistics indicate that, globally, interpersonal violence results in 1.5 million deaths every year. Interpersonal violence, defined as the intentional use of physical force or power by one person against another, is the leading cause of death among young people.

The percentage of GDP spent on fighting violence and crime in developing countries is 2.5 to 10 per cent, an enormous amount of money that could be used to meet basic needs like food, health or education (Institute for Economics and Peace).



In daily life, people experience different types and levels of direct violence. Rates of exposure to violent behaviour vary with the gender, race, religion, culture or identity of the victims. Violence happens in sporting events or children's tournaments, in primary and secondary schools, in homes where the elderly are neglected or ill-treated, in buildings between neighbours, in social media, in public spaces, on TV or in film.

In order to alleviate the suffering caused by violence, it is necessary that we do something about the underlying social structures – language, art, religion, ideology, media, science, leisure and the rules legitimising the marginalisation, exclusion and expulsion of those perceived as different, reinforcing beliefs that justify and encourage different forms of violence.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Engaging local organisations in cities or districts in the design and development of responses to the range of challenges and conflicts arising from diversity in coexistence.
- Encouraging citizen diplomacy as a strategy for peaceful conflict resolution.
- Using social work methodologies, like mediation, participation or reconciliation, to facilitate coexistence and dialogue.
- Designing coexistence plans based upon respect for diversity; addressing the violence affecting certain groups for political, religious, sexual, ethnic or nationality reasons.
- Implementing mechanisms that people can use to file discrimination complaints with the local authority.
- Promoting ethics in the use of ICT through campaigns that favour sympathetic attitudes, solidarity, understanding, cooperation, justice and equality, and discourage or reject pro-violence discourse.
- Promoting digital media literacy to empower vulnerable groups.
- Supporting activities carried out by local groups; preparing programmes of activities to teach the values of peace and non-violence.
- Implementing prevention programmes and budgets oriented towards education, mediation, cooperation, participation, democracy, transparency, respect for human rights and care, and other aspects that may help transform expressions of violence into a culture of peace.



2. Defending the city in times of war

In 2017, there were 33 armed conflicts, most of them coded as major for their intensity level, which means they caused more than 1000 deaths during one calendar year.

Contemporary armed conflicts are not declared wars; instead, they tend to be informal, irregular and in the hands of private parties. They take place in micro-territories marked by extreme violence where territorial, economic and social control is at stake. In present-day armed conflicts, civilians have become the objects of attack or the hostages of armed groups that use the civilian population and resort to terror and fear to achieve their aims. War is the manifestation of the worst forms of violence, and it has found its own place in urban environments.

The widespread use of explosive weapons in cities, towns and villages causes thousands of injuries and fatalities among civilians, also damaging or destroying essential infrastructure and livelihood. Furthermore, during war, people often suffer the effects of poverty, lack of safety, malnutrition, delayed or no access to medical care, pillage and hostility within the community.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Preventing social polarisation by encouraging the establishment of spaces where people and groups representing opposing views can meet, always respecting the rights of others.
- Implementing mediation tools and building consensus in the process of finding solutions to problems.
- Establishing mechanisms to prevent the media from spreading fake news or creating myths that lead to confrontation, discrimination or criminalisation while stirring up hatred, social division and polarisation. The representations of the enemy should be restricted, along with the polarising dynamics that produce divisions along the lines of 'us' and 'them' that result in social fragmentation and lack of cohesion.
- Protecting and preserving vital facilities so that they cannot be used for military purposes.
- Encouraging local organisations to play an active role in the post-war reconstruction of cities badly damaged during armed conflict.
- Supporting organisations and programmes aimed at restoring social coexistence and seeking truth and reconciliation; establishing mechanisms to keep armed conflicts and violence away from urban environments.



- Promoting educational mechanisms and initiatives that prevent fighting in urban areas and foster cooperation and solidarity in cities where armed conflict has taken place.
- Promoting the practice of diplomacy in the Cities for Peace.

3. Preventing and countering violent extremism

Violent extremism undermines the efforts to achieve peace and security, violates human rights and hinders sustainable development. No country, region or town is protected against the effects of violent extremism.

For instance, according to UNDP reports, 33,000 fatalities are estimated to have been caused by violent extremism in Africa between 2011 and 2016.

Violent extremism is a concept. No-one is born a violent extremist – they are made and fuelled. Just as there are multiple causes and a number of paths leading to radicalisation and extremist violence, there are also different solutions and strategies to fight this form of violence.

It is not enough to counter violent extremism – we need to prevent it, and this calls for forms of 'soft power'. A persuasive discourse needs to be used in social media to get rid of threats arising from distorted interpretations of reality based on fundamentalism and ignorance and fuelling hatred.

Disarming the process of radicalisation must begin with human rights and the rule of law, with dialogue across all boundary lines, with the empowerment of all young women and men, and with education for coexistence and peace.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Delivering education programmes that build young people's resilience to violent extremist messaging and foster a positive sense of identity and belonging.
- Creating an enabling environment for the empowerment and democratic participation of youth, in order to ensure that young women and men have opportunities to become active global citizens.
- Mobilizing stakeholders to take effective action, both online and offline, to prevent and respond to violent extremism and radicalisation.
- Developing media protocols to report on terrorism by determining what images should be shown and what messages should be conveyed to combat stigmatising beliefs about certain groups and reduce fear and radicalisation.



- Avoiding repression or human and civil rights violation in response to political violence.
- Establishing the necessary instruments, with the participation of an array of stakeholders, to implement measures to avoid political, racial or religious language leading to the radicalisation of vulnerable individuals.
- Drafting protocols and action plans to respond to terrorist attacks; assisting victims and people affected by violence; establishing crisis response teams made of emergency medical staff, firefighters, psychologists, etc.
- Creating multidisciplinary teams for following up actions for the prevention of violence.

4. Fighting racism, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance

Big cities are no longer places where migrants are easily integrated. A few decades back, migrants would find their own place, feeling they were just like any other resident. Currently, however, this is no longer true. Ambitions have become homogenised while the capacity to fulfil them have become heterogeneous. In other words, we are equal in terms of what we want but unequal in terms of what we can achieve. At the same time, new megalopolises include a range of cultural communities intent on sticking to their forms of expression while helping to build a common future. Cities have grown as melting pots where identities are forged out of a multiplicity of languages, traditions and religions. Diversity can, in the absence of adequate education programmes, cause fear of the unfamiliar, thus leading to intolerant attitudes and weakening social cohesion and solidarity bonds.

Hate crimes occur when a perpetrator targets victims because of their membership in social groups defined on the basis of background, social status, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, religion, language, disability, ideology, physical appearance, etc. In sum, hate or bias crimes are prejudice-motivated crimes based on discrimination and intolerance, and can be fuelled by political discourse when it reinforces stereotypes and myths about the 'other'.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Making efforts to eradicate social and economic inequality, for example, by working for the fulfilment of the SDGs and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the World Charter on the Right to the City.
- Taking measures to protect people who are targeted by racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance or discrimination in social, work or cultural environments on the grounds of race, colour, religion, etc.; eliminating all conditions causing or reproducing racial discrimination.



- Planning and developing urban spaces for the development of multiple identities, the coexistence of a number of socioeconomic layers and the mingling of cultures; preventing the segregation of migrants into ghettos, maintaining meeting points in public spaces such as gardens, squares, broad streets, parks, etc.; supporting coexistence and ensuring respect for the rights of all social groups.
- Fighting discrimination and exclusion; eradicating places in the city where the rights of individuals are partially or totally lost.
- Banning incitement to intolerance and hatred in the media based on sex, race, ethnicity, religion or background; supporting public campaigns to make cities more tolerant and understanding, places where differences are celebrated rather than rejected.
- Supporting organisations that welcome individuals belonging to different social groups; creating meeting places that facilitate dialogue and acceptance.
- Respecting the right to proportional representation in public organisations so that national, regional and local agencies mirror social diversity in terms of gender, culture, religion, identity, etc.

5. Addressing migration issues

According to the World Migration Report 2018, published by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the estimated total of 244 million people living in a country other than their country of birth in 2015 was almost 100 million more than in 1990, when it was 153 million. Similarly, in a report released by UNHCR, worldwide forced displacement hit a new high in 2017, with nearly 70 million displaced persons.

While most international migrants leave their countries of origin for economic or family reasons, many have fled their countries to escape conflict and persecution or natural disasters. In general, displaced persons and refugees make a comparatively small percentage of the total number of migrants. However, they catch public attention and require collective action, since they are highly vulnerable and need help and protection.

World urbanisation prospects indicate that the global population living in cities is expected to rise to 66 per cent by 2050 from 30 per cent in 1950. This will certainly lead to social tension and to sustainability, housing and infrastructure challenges, making it necessary to expand the infrastructure for supplying water, energy and sanitation, and to improve or increase access to health care and education, employment and security.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:



- Introducing and promoting measures for the integration and empowerment of migrants, getting civil society organisations involved in the efforts.
- Implementing plans in schools, health care facilities, cultural centres and public spaces that facilitate contact between different cultural communities, promoting coexistence, mutual acceptance and respect.
- Promoting campaigns and actions that minimise hostility to and fear of migrants and refugees, encouraging sympathy and solidarity by drawing attention to the causes of the global situation that forces people to leave their homeland; launching campaigns that lead to cultural exchanges.
- Promoting an ethical use of social media and working with alternative media to disseminate positive narratives of migration that contribute to build bridges between countries, societies and cultures.
- Supporting programmes through public communication channels to fight false narratives, hoaxes, clichés, stigmatisation, criminalisation and discrimination against migrants.
- Setting up organisations to coordinate the work of agents who make decisions on migration policies, urban planning and public services.

6. Fighting organised crime

Every year, countless lives are lost as a result of organised crime. Health problems, drug-related violence, death due to firearms, and unscrupulous behaviours by human traffickers and migrant smugglers are some of the issues. Women and girls make 71 per cent of the victims of human trafficking at the global level.

The global economy can be considered to consist of three interrelated spheres. First of all, there is the formal economy – the realm of taxes, market-social justice balance (universal education and access to health care, social welfare, unemployment, etc.), and redistribution of income and wealth. Then, there is the informal economy – the environment where most people live and survive. It comprises all the economic activities that are not regulated or protected by the state (no taxes, no welfare, no protection). Finally, there is the underground economy – a term referring to illegal economic activity, usually accompanied by violence (theft, extortion, illicit trade, mafia protection, etc.). These indefinite forms of violence associated with crime affect and interfere with the economy, just as the violence of war affects a war economy, with the aggravating factor that they are more pervasive, non-territorialised forms of violence.



This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Controlling small/light arms trafficking.
- Banning the use of weapons by civilians.
- Protecting the population from organised criminal groups.
- Implementing programmes and taking positive action for the social inclusion of youths: education, occupational training, cultural and sporting activities, recreation, skill-building programmes, and other options to promote life in society.
- Implementing public policies to help marginalised youths lead decent lives within the law, i.e. to offer alternatives to organised crime and gangs.
- Analysing, understanding and addressing the structural and social causes of organised crime in order to give adequate, relevant, long-lasting responses, i.e. tackling the problem at its roots.
- Supporting police investigations and legal proceedings.
- Setting up collaborative organisations and promoting the exchange of information between local, regional, national and international administrations.
- Fighting the naturalisation of the existence of criminal organisations, mafias or gangs, protection money, and collaboration with criminals.
- Enforcing and ensuring respect for relevant domestic laws and international treaties.

7. Preventing and fighting corruption

Every year, about 2.6 trillion dollar (more than 5 per cent of the global GDP, according the World Bank) is stolen through corruption. In developing countries, the money lost to corruption is estimated to be ten times the amounts channelled into official development assistance (UNDP). According to the Global Corruption Barometer 2017, one out of three people thinks corruption is one of the big issues in their country, politicians and officials being perceived as the most corrupt individuals.

Corruption has become a social scourge in the private and public spheres in most societies, both rich and poor. Politically, it gnaws at the foundations of democracy. Economically, it translates into increased costs for goods and services. In the legal domain, it undermines the rule of law. Socially, it annihilates ethical and spiritual values like solidarity or justice. Acts of corruption are



among the many forms of violence occurring in urban spaces. Corruption can be avoided; mechanisms need to be set up to prevent corruption.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Promoting a governance model based on transparency and accountability in the public sphere; encouraging a culture of transparency.
- Applying personal political accountability protocols in political parties and public administrations, and firmly sticking to them.
- Implementing protocols to regulate the so-called 'revolving door' effect in politics and taking measures for conflict of interest prevention and management.
- Designing measures to eradicate patronage, patrimonialism and nepotism in the relations between politics, business and public administration.
- Banning companies with reasonable indications of associations with criminal capital or a history of corruption from public tenders for the provision of services.
- Regulating political party funding; preventing the public administration from being co-opted through financial contributions to politicians or political parties.
- Taking aggressive legal measures to stop the plundering of the public treasury through the diversion of funds to the private sector.
- Promoting an honest value system that ensures respect of the laws in force.
- Designing media campaigns to engage citizens in the fight against corruption.
- Eradicating the behaviours and discourses eulogising life outside the law.
- Promoting significant participation of social organisations in decision-making, planning and follow-up processes at the local level while strengthening municipal governance.

8. Fighting violence against women

According to the World Health Organization, 35 per cent of all women will experience either intimate partner or non-partner physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives. Studies show that up to 70 per cent women have suffered intimate partner violence. Every year, 64,000 women and girls are murdered in the world according to UN Women statistics.



Gender violence is one of the forms of violence with the strongest social impact, in terms of both the proportion of the population affected and the level of social acceptance and naturalisation. Violence against women is exercised mostly in the private sphere, which makes it more difficult to detect and fight against.

The UNSC Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security, acknowledges the specific effects of armed conflict on women and girls, and highlights their key role in the transformation of conflict and the importance of women's participation in the design of a post-war agenda. However, sexual violence continues to be a weapon of war, the participation of women in peacebuilding processes continues to be low, and sexual violence against women remains outside court proceedings.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Taking the necessary measures to fulfil SDG 5: 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls'.
- Promoting masculinity models in which violence is not used as a way of subjugating and controlling women. The existence of violence ensures the continuity of the established social order.
- Designing and offering technical training to law enforcement officers (local and national police, etc.), municipal workers and the media in the field of human and civil rights, and on the ravages that gender violence wreaks in society at large.
- Carrying out media campaigns that raise awareness of the different forms of violence affecting women, drawing attention to how they diminish their dignity, undermine justice and constitute violations of their rights.
- Publicising the authority of outstanding women at the local level in monuments, statues, street names and other signs in the city.
- Analysing cultural policies (museums, tangible and intangible heritage, festivals, traditional and folk culture) from a gender perspective and make changes accordingly.
- Promoting policies leading to equal labour, equal pay, equal rights and equal access to politics.
- Creating gender parity in the design of local policies, urban development plans, social services and security schemes, so that women's voices can be heard and their perspectives can be shared; including women in all institutional areas in the public administration.



- Offering care spaces to women who are victims of violence: women's shelters, specialised medical care, psychological support, legal advice, etc.
- Supporting innovative projects and initiatives by women's organisations to protect women's rights, empower women and help them acquire competencies to increase their participation.

9. Guaranteeing the right to the city

Cities are commoditised spaces. Even if it can be an instrument for integration, urban development can also lead to the emergence of negative dynamics: tertiarisation, touristification, gentrification (expulsion), development of ghettos (exclusion), mobbing (bullying) and citizen control. As a result, cities can become the settings of the conflicting interests of citizens and the financial capital behind property investment.

Urban development is leading to the emergence of large urban areas that contain overlapping cities: on the one hand, impoverished areas characterised by an excess of deprivation and decay; on the other, modern, high-tech spaces connected to the global village. This inevitably results in conflict and social tension.

As organic systems, cities are the backbone of the social-economic metabolism. It is in cities that most energy resources are used, that most greenhouse gases are emitted, that most solid waste is produced (about 70 per cent). Energy security and the effects of climate change are among the most urgent challenges faced by cities.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Implementing local government models that ensure social cohesion and protect human rights.
- Designing programmes that include public spaces and proximity services: housing, decent jobs, health care, education, etc.
- Creating urban centrality spaces and ensuring neighbourhood integration to prevent some neighbourhoods from becoming ghettos or 'bedroom suburbs'.
- Developing public transport networks to connect the suburbs to the city centre.
- Designing and implementing cultural policies that take cultural rights into account, as set forth in the Agenda 21 for culture (2004) and the Culture 21: Actions document (2015).
- Implementing environmental quality programmes in the city (water, air, green areas, etc.).



- Designing strategic plans to mitigate the effects of climate change and make cities more resilient to them.
- Putting in place regulatory frameworks for the development and rehabilitation of public spaces that are safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable.
- Designing housing policies that ensure access to decent housing while fighting the forms of violence and discrimination involved in arbitrary eviction.
- Designing urban planning policies that ensure access to drinking water and adequate sanitation, healthy food, adequate waste management, sustainable mobility, health care services, education, cultural rights, green areas and communication technologies, while taking into account the special needs and rights of women, children, youths, seniors, disabled and vulnerable citizens.
- Promoting the protection of the city's cultural and natural heritage (both tangible and intangible assets), safeguarding cultural infrastructure, traditional art and knowledge, while encouraging participation and the exercise of citizenship.

TOOLS FOR ACTION

Implementing care rather than security policies

The people affected by lack of security, impoverishment and marginalisation tend to vent their discontent in demonstrations and other acts. In the absence of adequate channels for collective action or organisational capabilities, the outlet for social unrest is often violence and crime.

Human beings are vulnerable. We are born and grow up depending on others; we get ill, grow old and die. The neglect of the elderly, the loneliness of children and the exclusion of the disabled are forms of violence in our cities. Caregiving tasks, usually allocated to women, must have visibility, be universal and be socialised through community action.

This issue will be addressed by the Cities for Coexistence and Peace by:

- Promoting violence-free zones and ensuring citizen safety at neighbourhood level, especially for vulnerable groups living in the city, by means of public policies that go beyond purely punitive and *security-focused* approaches to conflict and take into account the causes of violence.
- Implementing people-oriented care policies that help to get past poverty, inequality and discrimination; offering assistance to victims of violence, including actions for recovery and social inclusion. The policies should take into account gender issues and the



differential impact of the various forms of violence (including armed conflict) on women and men.

- Replacing punitive policies with preventive measures.
- Relying on a judicial system that puts an end to impunity and delivers justice as a response to crime, and on community policies that deliver protection and support to citizens in general and victims of violence in particular.
- Identifying and eradicating the elements that mark the discourse of a society characterised by militarised security – a society that produces inequality, threats and fear; building instead a peace-making culture, based on policies that encourage individuals to take care of each other and of nature, making us less individualistic and more relational.
- Promoting education in mutual care and mutual support.

Working with national governments in the development, implementation and monitoring of action plans to prevent violence

We need to enhance cooperation, coordination and information sharing between the different levels of government, encouraging the enforcement of the laws and treaties that protect human rights and prevent urban violence.

- Institutionalising coordination mechanisms for local and national governments to share diagnoses, complementary action measures and resources to prevent and redress the various forms of violence in cities.

Developing local action plans to deal with violence and conflict in cities

- Analysing the different forms of violence in the city (direct, structural and cultural violence) and the actors involved.
- Identifying the underlying causes of violence and the relevant actors.
- Designing proposals for action to deal with all forms of violence.
- Establishing a follow-up schedule.
- Making the culture of peace the cross-cutting theme of the policies developed by local governments.



- Getting social organisations in the city involved in every stage of the process, from diagnosis to implementation.
- Making the instruments, material and human resources available for plan implementation.
- Setting up a follow-up committee.
- Designing an indicator system to assess coexistence and peace, as well as the impact of public policies.

Working in coordination with international peacebuilding agendas

Two years ago, the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Security Council came together to express their commitment to building and sustaining peace. In the twin resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, they emphasised that Member States needed to work better together to sustain peace at all stages of conflict and in all its dimensions and stressed that sustaining peace was imperative to preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict.

Moreover, the UN Secretary-General has been working on the development of new approaches and tools to enable the UN System to support member states and the civil society when it comes to building fairer, more peaceful societies. In his report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (2018), the UN Secretary-General considers the prevention of conflict to be as important as peacebuilding endeavours in the aftermath of conflict. He has also insisted on the need to develop participatory approaches involving the civil society and local communities for the building of peace, the prevention of violent extremism and the eradication of environments that are the breeding ground of terrorism. Finally, he has urged peacekeeping operations and UN national teams to develop community engagement strategies in collaboration with local and national stakeholders, especially youths and women.

The World Forum on Urban Violence and Education for Coexistence and Peace and the Commitment to the Agenda for Cities for Coexistence and Peace could be the cornerstone where all local efforts to prevent violence and promote peace rest, in a continuous and systematic process that strengthens the global agenda to build fairer, more peaceful societies jointly with the UN System.

Accordingly, the Cities for Coexistence and Peace should enter into a dialogue with the UN System in order to better coordinate their efforts with the international agenda and initiatives for coexistence and peace.



ELEMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHEN SETTING FORTH THE GOALS TO BE ATTAINED

- Our goals should undo the causes of structural and cultural violence (values legitimising or justifying violence).
- They should be preventive, anticipatory, in that they prevent conflict from escalating into violence.
- They should be redressing, in that they deal with the consequences of violence in victims when it happens.

It is the role of local governments to manage social conflict. In this role, it is their mission to facilitate participation of all stakeholders in diagnosis, decision making and the implementation of agreements.

This Commitment to the Agenda for Cities for Coexistence and Peace is meant to initiate a process involving local governments around the world, and institutional, social, economic and academic stakeholders to set in motion public policies and cement territorial alliances aimed at saving lives and transforming cities into places where we can feel at home and be happy.