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## **LETTER OF CANOAS TO THE RIGHT TO THE CITIES AND SOLIDARY METROPOLISES**

1. Whatever is the term used, the cities, the metropolises, the metropolitan areas, and the conurbation keep growing and are today the living place of most of the human beings. The size of the current agglomeration are so big that today we hear words like mega-regions, urban corridors and city-region. These new ways of urbanization happen all over the world. Life quality, welfare, possibility of individual and collective development, environment and biodiversity conservation, social inclusion, gender equality, democratic participation, human rights efficiency, democratic government are discussed in a new relation to the urban dimension. It is in the city of the XXI century that today focus the political, social, economic, environmental and cultural in which the future of humanity is at stake.
2. Under these conditions it is legitimate to oppose the logic that, in name of private and market interests, extend the social, economic and spatial segregation, accentuate the inequalities, create real and virtual barriers, ignore the cultural diversity, increase the insecurity, go against the promotion of public services, explore the local environment and threat the ecological balance of the planet. Our streets, our places, our neighborhoods, our public equipments, our homes are not the cards of an extensive urban and globalized "Monopoly" that submit to the rules of the future income mortgage, real estate speculation and competition between global megalopolises.
3. Going ahead in this way, the right to the city must illuminate the group of local practices, the public politics, and the reflection and common actions with the purpose of building solidary metropolises. That is, the right of each territory in these metropolitan spaces must guarantee the closeness and the fulfillment of the different human necessities (public services, labor market, green spaces, cultural centers, public places, dwelling). The solidary metropolis we wish does not accept forgotten spaces and population. It is the polycentricism that guarantees the right to the city in metropolitan regions. This is what brings us together to the "World Forum of Peripheral Local Authorities (FALP) to Solidary Metropolises" and motivates us to contact other local networks, as UCLG comission, the participative budget networks and also with social movements, like International Coalization to Habitat and the International Aliance to the Inhabitants, among others.



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4. As Popular territories, most of times peripheral and suburban, we represent a very important part of urban growth. Although our history and our future as Local Authorities are connected to central-cities, we cannot become only a simple further boundary. We represent a diversity of realities, subjectivities, sensibilities that are named urban agglomeration, metropolitan area or region, or simply metropolis. But, whatever is the word we use to qualify this reality, we all refuse to be invisible, we are convinced that our voices must be listened to overcome the challenges of our urban world.
  5. On the I Forum of Peripheral Local Authorities, in March, 2006, in the city of Nanterre (France), more than a hundred of peripheral local authorities from 20 countries got together. For the first time, they became protagonists – for the organization and for the content – of a global meeting of the municipal movement. Collectively, they made “A special look on the metropolis from periphery”. Starting from the diversity and wishes of the periphery – in particular from the popular peripheries – that the “Alternative Metropolization” came up, allowing us to break the only point of view of the metropolitan development, geo-centralized and depending on the market’s logic. The I FALP has turned the ambition of a solidary metropolis into a way of meetings, experiences exchanges and of collective claims. In Getafe (Spain), in June, 2010, the II FALP has adopted a political common declaration that reaffirmed that our voice, our participation and citizenship is necessary to build “solidary, sustainable, democratic and citizen cities and metropolitan regions”. This declaration keeps all its relevancy on the debate about metropolitan projects. With 300 hundred local authorities from 30 countries, the II FALP became a expansion of the network. In February, 2011, in Pikine, Senegal, an international assembly of FALP gave visibility, particularly through the problem of recurring floods that knew the outskirts of Dakar, the enormous needs and challenges which face the great metropolises of Africa, Latin and Central America, and a part of Asia in particular.
  6. Heir to this experience, the III FALP in Canoas (Brazil - Metropolitan Area of Porto Alegre), meeting on the theme "Rights and Democracy for solidarity and sustainable metropolis" considers its works, exchanges and conclusions as a contribution of thinking about the right to the city, as having the operational framework the local political practices to emerging the cities, the metropolis, the metropolitan areas under the political, social, democratic, economic, environmental, and cultural space. The right to the city means thinking about the everyday and the future of the city from the perspective of access and promotion of human rights, and its continued promotion - right to housing, education, health, culture, individual and collective development, democratic participation - for each and every one. The group of functions of the metropolitan city, its life and its uses, can not be the privilege of some, while others are excluded. This right to the city is effective whatever the place



**III FALP**

Fórum Mundial  
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of residence, social status, origin, nationality or creed, gender or age, seniority occupying the territory in question.

7. Our commitment to solidarity and polycentric metropolis, is the refusal of an urban civilization of "ghettos", of all institutional and economic tutelage. It is the affirmation of the role of citizens, of the recognition and visibility of the periphery in the debate and metropolitan construction, so that each and every one who lives in a territory that count and contribute to the common project. To achieve this, there is no standard model or design. The paths to inclusive, solidarity, sustainable and democratic metropolises, are to be invented for its citizens. To bring up this other possible world, it is necessary to promote the common production, solidarity with the cooperation of actors and institutional levels, it is necessary to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth and not allow local authorities to pay the price of the financial crisis, is essential to promote the development of an economy generating jobs, for example, the social and solidarity economy at the service of citizens.
8. With the Third World Forum in Canoas, our network "to FALP metropolis in solidarity", born ten years ago in the town of Alvorada (Metropolitan Region of Porto Alegre) within the Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion and the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre consolidates the path today. Informal forum for debate and exchange of experiences, built in the collective process by single will of local authorities in the network, has raised the voice of the periphery and the global debate within the Cities and Local Governments with its Committee "Cities Outskirts". The FALP Network has highlighted the new challenges of the global process of metropolis. Thus reinforcing our local interventions in the respective metropolitan areas, in order to modify the lines guidelines for social inclusion, appreciation of cultural identity, democracy, human rights, the polycentricity and respect for the environment, for the right of each and every one to metropolis.
9. Accordingly, we establish three challenges to strengthen the role of cities in the periphery. The first challenge is the collective construction of "Commitments for Metropolis in Solidarity, Democratic and Sustainable", with the participation of all FALP Network. The second, produce a World Report on the metropolitan areas with the look of Cities Periphery, reflecting the accumulation of contributions listed in the last ten years, with the collaboration of the Scientific Committee of FALP Network. And as a third point, we want to provide a platform of Practice Outskirts of Cities, allowing exchanges between local authorities through web portal and an annual publication.
10. Conducting these challenges, structuring and coordinating the activities of the FALP Network, we want a greater organicity that allows to continue the discussions in the previous editions and the deepening of our commitments. We will hold the next



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World Forum in the first half of 2016, preceded by an International Assembly. We will create a Mobilization Committee Intercontinental formed by at least ten local authorities from different continents. To organize our action, we shall constitute three departments: Permanent, Executive and Communication.

11. We will continue to strengthen the capacity of work and organization of the network, expanding our relationship with social movements and academia to assert our role in a cooperative and democratic governance of metropolitan areas. We are particularly convinced that to build more sustainable and solidary cities, the outskirts is the capital. For us, the center is everywhere.

Canoas, June 13rd, 2013.