

World Human Rights Cities Forum 2018

Overview

- Period: October 18-21(Thu-Sun), 2018(4days)
- Venue: Kimdaejung Convention Center, Gwangju, Republic of Korea
- Hosts: Gwangju Metropolitan City, Gwangju Metropolitan of Education
- Organizers: Gwangju International Center, UCLG-CISDP
- Theme: Whom Do We Live With? Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Peace

World Human Rights Cities Forum(WHRCF)

WHRCF has been held annually since 2011, marking its 8th anniversary of the event. The forum has become well known for those in attendance including major figures in the field and other parties interested in human rights cities. Collectively, these individuals carry out the vision of Gwangju throughout the course of the forum as a human rights city, the conditions of which are stated in Gwangju Declaration of Human Rights Cities.

The forum is held as a method for Gwangju City to share and learn as well as gain experiences for the benefit of planning and building a city dedicated to human rights and to ultimately complete this plan with other such cities. In this way, Gwangju shall strengthen its abilities to become more readily able to foster international collaboration. The forum has also become a significant platform for participating human rights cities to directly introduce their related endeavors to the greater international community. For both participants and attendees, the forum is an opportunity to learn all about the visions and strategies of human rights cities.

WHRCF Foundation

The May 18 Democratic Movement was a historic event in the democratization of South Korea. Over the years, the movement's significance on society has continuously expanded and its meanings and values have become further understood. In an attempt to nationalize and globalize these re-explored values of the May 18 spirit, Gwangju realized that recognizing democracy, human rights, peace and the "Gwangju Spirit" anew can contribute to world peace and to improvements in the state of human rights overall. Accordingly, Gwangju has decided to hold this World Human Rights Cities Forum, in order to make Gwangju a reputable international human rights city in the future.

WHRCF 2018

The 2018 Forum will delve into the issue of community by asking the question "Whom Do We Live With?" and approach this question with sub-topics of diversity, inclusiveness, and peace in mind. The awareness of our diverse neighbors can be the starting point of building a peaceful urban community. A community which recognizes the multiple identities of its citizens in the

current global context. A community where the urban policies and culture are determined by mainstream forces while abhorrence and discrimination against minorities are intensified. The 2018 Forum will also be the venue to discuss and explore the ways of implementation of the results of the two previous forums: Citizens' rights in an urban space as discussed in the 2016 Forum with the theme of "Where Do We Live?"; and Peace as the most important condition and value supporting human rights and democracy as discussed in the 2017 Forum with the theme of "Do We live in Peace?"

Programs

Following the opening ceremony, the 2018 Forum will hold an opening round table with members from the Human Rights Council, international human rights experts, and representatives of human rights cities. The plenary session will discuss actions to be taken regarding the theme of the forum with both Korean and international experts, activists, and other groups concerned with protecting human rights. During the closing ceremony, the 2018 World Human Rights Cities Forum Declaration will be adopted.

The thematic sessions will comprise of ten sub-sessions: immigrants/refugees, the disabled, the elderly, children, women, state-sponsored violence, the environment, village communities, peace, and social economy which are closely related to ordinary citizens' daily life. Lively discussion will take place on state-sponsored violence and women's rights, people with mental disabilities and sexual minorities, generational integration and human rights, immigrants/refugees and sexual equality, eradicating discrimination in village communities, and peace education. In particular, the 2018 Forum will have a session on 'City and Peace' to discuss the right to peace with the cities where military stations are located on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of Jeju April Uprising. For your reference, the English-Korean simultaneous interpretation will be provided for the opening ceremony, the opening round table, all plenary sessions, and all thematic sessions.

For the policy discussion, the policies will be introduced from the city of Barcelona on immigrants, religious diversity, and democratic autonomy in the "International Human Rights Policy Session". Additionally, human rights cities personnel from Gwangju, Seoul, Gangwon, Gyeonggi, Suwon, and Gwangmyeong will gather to have a dialogue in the "Korean Human Rights Policy Session".

In the Special Session, the preparatory meeting for the 'Asia Human Rights Cities Network' will take place with representatives from cities that have suffered from state-sponsored violence: Korea, Nepal, East Timor, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Additionally, a session entitled the 'Guidelines for Local Governments and Human Rights' will also be held. For the domestic sessions, a meeting of the 'Local Governments and Human Rights Network' as well as a 'Local Governments Human Rights Commission Workshop' will be conducted.

Immigrants in Gwangju and related immigrant human rights advocacy groups will participate in the 'Gwangju Global Congress' as well as the 'Human rights paper presentation'. In addition, the plaza 'Agora' will be made available so that visitors can freely share their thoughts and talk amongst one another. A range of other side events will be arranged such as the 5.18 Archives and Trauma Center tour, a visit to the May Uprising National Cemetery, and the Gwangju Biennale tour.

