PRESENTATION

1.- Background

The *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City* (Saint Denis, 2000) is the result of the commitment made by several European cities meeting in Barcelona in 1998 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Based on the assumption that most of the population today lives in urban areas, the cities that attended the meeting decided to formalize their political commitment to protecting human rights at the local level, and to highlight the key role of cities in safeguarding human rights. A European conference is held to share the progress made by signatory cities every two years. The following events have been organized to date:

- 1998, Barcelona (Spain)
- 2000, Saint-Denis (France)
- 2002, Venice (Italy)
- 2004, Nuremberg (Germany)
- 2006, Lyon (France)
- 2008, Geneva (Switzerland)
- 2010, Tuzla (Bosnia-Herzegovina)

After the conference in Geneva (2008), the most active cities in the network (Barcelona, Saint-Denis/Plaine Commune, Lyon, Geneva and Nantes) decided to entrust the promotion of the Charter to the international organization of cities, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), through its Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights.

2.- *From the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City to the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City*

The UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights, initially under the political leadership of the Provincial Council of Barcelona (Spain) and subsequently the city of Nantes (France), has also been working since 2006 on the production of a municipal charter of human rights with a worldwide scope, the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City*. UCLG formally adopted this charter in 2011 at its World Council in Florence, which was attended by over 400 mayors from all over the world.

The main differences between the *Charter-Agenda* and the *European Charter* lie, on the one hand, in the different geographic scope of each document (one is global, while the other is European) and, on the other hand, in the agenda or local action plan that the Charter-Agenda contains. As a result, in the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* each right is accompanied by an action plan that is a benchmark for use by local governments when taking concrete steps for human rights implementation.

3.- Phase shift: from European conferences to global meetings

In view of the recent adoption of the *Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* by UCLG and the existence of other human rights charters adopted in cities such as Montreal (Canada), Mexico City (Mexico) and Gwangju (South Korea), the concept behind the eighth Conference of the *European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City* is a global meeting to discuss the various instruments and experiences aiming at promoting human rights that are currently taking place at local level.

This involves a shift in the way these events have been organized in the past. They will change from a Europe-wide conference focused on a single instrument, the *European Charter for the Safeguarding Human Rights in the City*, to another global conference for sharing the work done by cities to promote human rights, with the support or not of municipal human rights charters.

In order to give this point of transition some degree of symbolism, the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights invited Saint-Denis, the city where the *European Charter* was adopted in 2000, to host this event. As a result of this, Saint-Denis will organise the 1st *World Summit of Local Governments for the Right to the City* with the neighbouring city of Aubervilliers and the Intercommunality of Plaine Commune from 10 to 12 December, 2012.
Future of Prevention."