



Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis d'Afrique
United Cities and Local Governments of Africa
المدن والحكومات المحلية المتحدة الإفريقية
Cidades e Governos Locais Unidos de Africa



Africités 6 Summit

Dakar, Senegal, 4 to 8 December 2012

Mercredi 5 Décembre 2012

9:00 AM, Grand amphitheatre

Building Africa from its territories: which challenges for local governments?

Thematic session 2AM 01: Associations of Inhabitants

Coordinated by the International Alliance of Inhabitants, with the participation of ENDA TM

08.00 AM 5 December 2012

Coordinating Panel:

Chair: Cheikh Sarr, Mayor of Guédiawaye

Introduction: Mr Mike Davies, IAI

Rapporteur: Mr Malick Gaye, ENDA TM

Witness: Mme Yvette Claudine Ngonou, Maire de Yaoundé 5, Cameroun

Panelists:

Mr Sidiki Daff, CERPAC, Senegal

Ms Kate Tissington, Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa (SERI)

Speaker to be confirmed, Abahlali baseMjondolo, South Africa

Mr Peter Muzambwe, Amandla Centre, Zimbabwe

Mr Kone Massa, No-Vox, Mali

Mr Ibrahima Sarr, Association inter bidonvilles, ACIDAK, Senegal or/Abdourahmane Kane, Mouvement And Soukali Médina Gounass, Guédiawaye, Senegal

Each panellist will have a maximum of 10 minutes to present.

Programme: (3 hrs)

10 minutes for introduction

10 minutes for witness

60 minutes for panellists' presentations

30 minutes discussion on presentations

60 minutes to discuss the Proposals for submission to the Political Session of the UCLGA (draft attached)

Housing and Forced Evictions

Urban housing policies are a crucial factor in determining the nature of our cities. Under neo-liberalism, land is perceived primarily as a commodity for exploitation and it has been stripped of any sense of a 'public good'. Urban territorial constraints and land grabbing often leads to both land speculation or to 'urban clean-ups' resulting in evictions of the poor, usually to peripheral areas, far from social and economic infrastructure and opportunity. Inhabitants' Associations have come to be one of the primary tools for community resistance to such evictions. Therefore it is important to highlight struggles for pro-people housing policies including the development of an Urban Social Pact that will provide an alternative to the neo-liberal paradigm. Programmes, such as the "[Zero Eviction Campaign](#)" and the use of debt swaps for "[Popular Funds for Housing](#)", involving inhabitants organisations and local authorities, offer practical alternatives for progressive policy makers to achieve democratic policies to address the urban crisis. Also in this respect the [Urban Social Forum's](#) call "[Defending the common goods for the future of cities and territories](#)" is a fundamental perspective.

Democratisation

Genuine and comprehensive democratisation of African States can only be achieved through an organic, bottom up approach which values and promotes the participation of citizens in political processes. Empowering and educating citizens to engage in an informed and responsible manner will avoid the disruptive results of a populist and reactive politics which undermines the stability and harmony of society. Social movements are a fundamental aspect of this process and provide a grassroots dynamic to promote genuine democratisation. The challenge for governments at both national and local level is to engage with social movements and associations in a manner that is respectful and productive, one that avoids paternalism or cooption. The challenge for social movements is how to engage with governments in a productive and non-threatening way while maintaining their independence and capacity for critical positions. Methodologies of engagement will only be identified through dialogue and the exchange of ideas and experiences.

Decentralisation

As African States emerge from the post-colonial epoch, they are maturing and becoming increasingly sophisticated and complex. The age of the 'Big Man' is passing and the idea that one person can manage the complexities of modern government is increasingly untenable: decision-making must be delegated if states are to manage the multiple demands of ever-growing populations. Devolution of power to provincial and local government is important but carries many risks, such as regionalism, fragmentation, inefficiency, corruption, etc. Many of these negative phenomena already exist in centralised States so the challenges arising from decentralisation are not entirely new. If decentralisation includes empowering local communities to articulate and address the issues that they regard as important and to monitor the operations of local authorities, many of these problems can be overcome.

Participation

Representative democracy has become synonymous with periodic elections between which the elected representatives often have little or no contact with their electorate. Constitutional measures to improve accountability have been instituted in countries such as Kenya but the most effective mechanism to ensure accountability lies within articulate and forceful social movements that demand accountability from their elected representatives.

The Thematic Session will look at examples of residents interactions with local and national authorities across the continent to see how these three factors are developing across Africa.

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