

University of Padua

European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation

A.Y. 2016/2017

'City' and 'Human Rights' in a Pot

Impacts, Opportunities and Challenges of the Multi-Actor Structure of
'the Right to the City'

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Abstract

The Right to the City is a complex term to understand and realize in terms of its content, context and implications. The Right to the City is a claim for an ideal that does not exist today. This claim refers to a unitary, collective, and diffuse right to include all rights and full exercise of them in a socially just, inclusive, democratic, and sustainable city. This thesis is going to provide an analytical analysis and comparison of key actors who take place in the Right to the City issue by examining comparatively their impacts, opportunities and challenges in order to clarify complexity of this structure, including conceptualization and efforts in different levels by human rights and democratization context. This thesis is based on the argument that using and conceptualizing the term "Right to the City" from different perspectives that belong to actors in different scales such as supranational, international, regional, national and local institutions/governmental bodies/NGO's/social movements creates an ambiguity. Main findings of this thesis are as of the following: the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities are closely related to each other. On the other hand, there are certain differences in between conceptualization of right(s) and city affiliations of them. The Right to the City is exercised with its original notion in the Global South by predominantly urban social movements, especially in Latin American countries. Whereas, Human Rights Cities are more widespread and convenient to the European context of urban life in which human rights are exercised and protected by local administrative units. It clarifies the distinction between two different understandings of the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities because of the fact that they have *sui generis* historical, political, economic, social, environmental and urban spatial backgrounds.

Key words: the right to the city, human rights cities, collective right, democratic cities, social justice, and sustainable cities

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Introduction

Urbanization is the most recent phenomenon, which affects deterministically different layers of political, social, economic, spatial, cultural and environmental spheres of life. However, urbanization is not a new term. It has been an issue for hundreds of years that historical roots go back before the industrialization. We might say that political, economic, cultural and religious centers as city-states of the history were the first samples of cities, as we know today. In this respect, rural areas were strictly connected to these centers with their agrarian production outputs as a political and economic center, which provides greater market and trade opportunities. Since the beginning, this connection was based on the mutual interest principle. These politically power-holder centers were providing protection and regulating economic exchange environment for who produced agrarian goods. These great centers were also famous with their artisanship and craftsmen sectors. Artisanship and craftsmen were producing and selling their hand-made or semi-workshop products in the same spatial sphere during this long period of time.

After industrialization emerged as a main capital production method, pace and types of urbanization (cities) drastically changed. Industrialization, which had started on the mid 18th century in Europe mainly, needed more and more labor force and raw material, as it was never done before. This fact was charming thousands of people through newly developing city centers that provided great opportunities for those masses such as employment and wage-labor. So, as a matter of fact, thousands of people moved to cities to find jobs and be member of these newly founded club 'industrial production labor'. This had led a huge growth in urban population who seeks jobs, better life conditions and opportunities. In parallel with that growth, world population had also increased enormously during these years up to now. New socio-economic classes were emerging at the foreground whereas some was called as capital-owners who had capital and production units while the others were called labor. By the time, clashes between two resulted in class struggle. Class struggle was questioning poor living conditions between the rich and labor force. Therefore, it was a resistance against the system that produces inequalities and unfairness. There was a huge difference in urban public services provided to capital owners and the others. This historical story telling does not only belong to the 19th century but also it is still a

reality in cities of today. Approximately one billion people live in slum areas without proper water, sanitation, electricity, sewage, public transportation or education opportunities at the moment. Living conditions of a huge population are far from being decent. This is one of the biggest challenges of this era, 21st century.

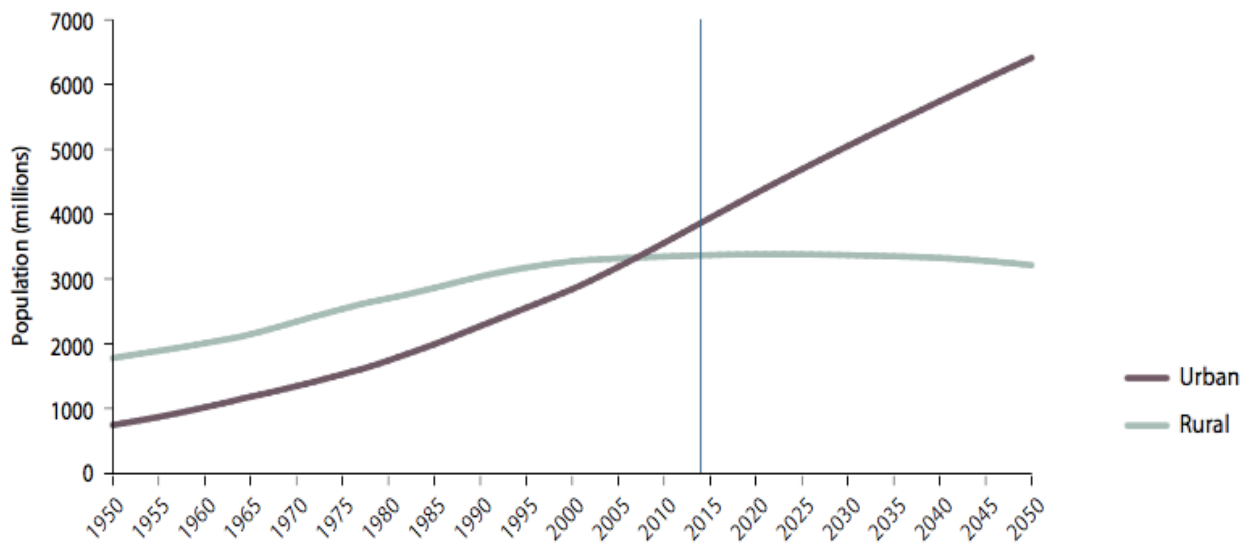
Urbanization has gained so much importance and significance with shifts and developments in political, economic, social, spatial and environmental spheres especially during last 40 years. The scope of these shifts and developments are broader than it is expected to be in terms of global, international, regional, national and local points. It can be easily claimed that globalization, which had just emerged right after the collapse of welfare state policies, had played a key role in this phenomenon. Capital, people, goods, and information have spread to whole globe in a short period of time. Thus, demand for urbanization and urban areas has increased rapidly in order to create habitats and exchange markets for these flowing capital, people, goods and information. Localities gained also much more importance because of the fact that they carry a certain potential for above mentioned flows. In other words, inter-dependent relationship between urbanization and globalization shapes and determines the existing political, economic, social, spatial and environmental structures, but also the upcoming future with its risks, threats and opportunities.

For the first time in world history, urban population has reached to 54 per cent - which is close to 4 billion people- in 2015 according to recent Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report of UN Secretary-General.¹ In 1950, this number was only 30 per cent (746 million people) and by 2050, 66 per cent of the world's population is projected to be urban – which is going to approach at almost 6.5 billion people- as it can be easily seen in the figure below.²

¹ 'Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals 2017 Report of the Secretary-General Submitted to the Economic and Social Council' (UN Office of the Secretary-General 2017) (E/2017/66).

² 'United Nations ECOSOC World Urbanization Prospects Report 2014' (The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat 2014).

Urban and rural population of the world, 1950–2050



Moreover, not only rapidly growing urbanization trend makes it difficult to deal with, but also number of displaced people around the world has reached up to 65.3 million according to statistics in the Report of Global Trends - Forced Displacement in 2015 prepared by UNHCR.³ All these population flows are targeting urbanized areas of the world in order to find shelter, food, and better life standards. The reasons may vary such as war conditions, climate change, political instability, lack of economic resources why this huge percentage of people, which can be 21st most populous country in the world if they were formed a single country, are displaced and seeking for a new places to settle down. Understanding these numbers, percentages and statistical references is really important to structure upon this qualitative thesis research.

Henri Lefebvre used and invented the term ‘the Right to the City’ for the first time in 1968 as a provocative motto for social movements in that specific era:

³ ‘Report of Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2015’ (UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2016).

*'... the right to the city is like a cry and a demand. This right slowly meanders through the surprising detours of nostalgia and tourism, the return to the heart of the traditional city, and the call of existent or recently developed centralities.'*⁴

Later on, he elaborated on the definition of the Right to the City as follows:

*'The right to information, the rights to use of multiple services, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in urban areas; it would also cover the right to the use of the center.'*⁵

Understanding the Right to the City with its all insight meanings and spectrum is really difficult. The definition still needs a further explanation and elaboration. Moreover, there are a lot of actions, demands and policy implementations throughout the world in terms of the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities. However, according to preliminary research done during this thesis process, it has been found that there is no adequate and holistic research on the Right to the City and its praxis from the Human Rights and Democratization perspective. The Right to the City is a much broader concept, which could be affiliated and linked to many fields of social sciences such as political science, economics, sociology, and urban studies.

In this manner, many critical urban theorists/scholars have contributed and made it clearer as it is going to be mentioned and discussed broadly in the Conceptual Framework chapter of this thesis. For this reason, direct quotations in the above are given only to make an introduction to the term, which is an evolving and developing concept with different dynamics and approaches all around the world. Different geographical features and developments result in different contextual understandings and policy implementations about this evolving topic.

This thesis is going to provide an analytical analysis and comparison of key actors which are mentioned below and who take place in the Right to the City issue by examining comparatively their impacts, opportunities and challenges in order to clarify complexity of this structure, conceptualization and efforts in different levels.

⁴ Henri Lefebvre, 'The Right to the City' in E. Kofman and E. Lebas (eds), *Writings on Cities* (Blackwell 1996).

⁵ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, vol 142 (Blackwell 1991).

Namely, these key actors are UN Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat), UNESCO, World Urban Forum, World Social Forum, Habitat International Coalition (HIC), Cities Alliance for the Right to the City, European Union, Global Platform for the Right to the City, Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG-CSIPD), Brazilian National Urban Reform Forum, and Just Space London. All in all, these twelve actors have different structures, approaches and understandings and scope of the Right to the City. I believe that it is an adequate qualitative method to analyze different multi scale actors as such supranational, international, regional, national and local institutions/governmental bodies/NGO's/social movements to reach a conclusion that to what extent their work/efforts/actions comply with each other.

In accordance with above mentioned facts, Research Question of this thesis is as follows: do multi-actors work/efforts/actions compete or comply with each other in terms of the Right to the City? Main hypothesis of this thesis is based on the argument that using and conceptualizing the term "Right to the City" from different perspectives that belong to actors in different scales such as supranational, international, regional, national and local institutions/governmental bodies/NGO's/social movements creates an ambiguity. There is no coordination in the implementation and praxis of "the Right to the City" approaches, policies and efforts in different scales. So, this thesis examines and analyzes this argument.

I expect to reach a clarification in terms of "the Right to the City" efforts and works that is being held in different parts of the world by different scale actors. It can be an academic contribution through the ambiguity of the praxis of the concept.

Possible limits can be the short timeframe or restricted data collected from the interviews. Trying to reach variety of actors to make interviews is a difficult process. Some replies whereas some does not, as a natural fact of interviews. Limited timeframe also created restrictions on busy contacts. That is to say, arranging interview dates and times is not easy to deal with.

This thesis contains seven chapters such as Introduction; Methodology; Analysis of Documents and Interviews; Impacts, Opportunities and Challenges; Conclusion, Bibliography, and Annexes.

Methodology

In this thesis, there are two main research methods that have been used to collect data. These two methods are based on the qualitative research merits and characteristics. One of them is document analysis that belongs to different actors and the other one is interviews with possible contact persons from these actors.

First of all, theoretical framework has been established to define and elaborate on common and different aspects, perspectives and spectrum of the Right to the City in the next chapter. In this process, main aim was to reach to main pillars of the Right to the City conceptualization, which is developed in the academia and realized by different actors coming from multi-scale structures.

Secondly, in order to understand and analyze this realization phase of the Right to the City, blueprints, enforced/drafted laws or regulations, policy documents, policy implementation guidelines, manifestos, reports have been taken into consideration and analyzed, that belong to above mentioned multi-scale actors in the 4th chapter. While doing this analysis and comparisons, the main path was to follow and seek for discourse analysis and approaches to the Right to the City and what kind of implementation tools has been used to realize the term. Main documents which were analyzed UN Habitat III Conference Policy Unit 1 Paper, UN Habitat III Conference Quito Declaration – New Urban Agenda, World Charter for the Right to the City, European Charter for Safeguarding Human Rights in Cities, Pact of Amsterdam – Urban Agenda for EU, Brazil City Statute, and Mexico City Charter.

Then on, thirdly, I am planning to reach and collect qualitative data from some of those actors in different scales by interviews. These interviews will provide adequate data for our analysis on impact, opportunities and challenges in the forthcoming chapters. Twelve interview questions were organized in 5 chapters to gather relevant

data and information from contacted actors. First chapter in the interview questions was introduction, which is designed to receive data about the contact person's personal history and position in the organization. Second chapter was given the title Definition of the 'Right to the City', which tries to understand whether there is an accepted and agreed upon definition of the term and affiliations with other main concepts such as sustainability, social justice etc. Third chapter was designed to understand and gather information on Relations with Other Institutions/Movements/NGO's. Fourth chapter was focusing on the Praxis and Achievements of the Right to the City. Lastly, fifth chapter was asking about Future Projections and Plans of the organization. In these consecutive five chapters and twelve questions (Annex 1), it has been tried to reach a qualitative data, which will provide a basis for our analysis and later analytical and scientific discussion in terms of human rights and democratization within the contribution of urban studies discipline.

In this process, I have tried to reach more than 20 organizations that are dealing with the Right to the City directly or indirectly. However, as a matter of fact only few of them replied me back. Global Platform for the Right to the City, Cities Alliance for the Right to the City, Habitat International Coalition (HIC), Just Space London are the ones that have been succeeded to accomplish interviews. Skype Interviews have been managed to complete with Global Platform for the Right to the City and Cities Alliance for the Right to the City. Habitat International Coalition and Just Space London have sent their typed answers to interview questions via electronic mail service.

We have managed to make interview with Rossbach from the Cities Alliance for the Right to the City on 25th May 2017 via Skype call. It lasted around one hour. On the following days, we have made an interview with Rodrigo Faria from Global Platform for the Right to the City on 9th June 2017. It also lasted around one hour. Both were so influential in terms of their praxis and heterogeneous structure to deal with the concept and provide framework for the pursuit of social justice through the empowerment of the Right to the City.

Conceptual Framework

In this chapter of the thesis, main aim is to create a theoretical basis that will be used in the following chapters in order to analyze and discuss different approaches through the praxis of the Right to the City that has been exercised by multi level actors in different scales. Impacts, opportunities, and challenges will be elaborated in the final analysis. Therefore, first of all, the concept –Right to the City- will be explained by referring to the Critical Urban Theory thinkers and scholars starting with Henri Lefebvre. Secondly, Human Rights Cities as a concept will be clarified in terms of their historical evolution theoretically. Thus, possible misconceptions and confusions are going to be prevented for analysis and discussion parts. Thirdly and lastly, similarities and differences between the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities will be framed.

To begin with, since the relation between the cities and human rights has been increased lately, it might be assumed that same trend would be valid also for city inhabitants. However, this is not the case. The rights relation between cities and inhabitants of them goes back to hundreds of years back in the history.⁶ People's rights and freedoms and the institutions to guarantee them can be seen in certain cities from the Ancient Greek to the city-states of middle ages, already far back from the creation of the nation states.⁷ After the foundation of the nation states during 18th – 19th centuries, provision, promotion and protection of rights and freedoms became main component of the nation states in a certain extent (egalite, fraternite, solidarite) as *raison d'être* of nation state.⁸ Fundamental rights and freedoms became universally recognized and their need to protection by international documents, treaties gained momentum. Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the World War II, which was destructive for all means, the nation states became key actors to promote, protect and respect to these universally recognized rights and freedoms by signing these treaties for their

⁶ Engin F. Isin, Peter Nyers and Bryan S. Turner, *Citizenship between Past and Future* (Routledge 2008).

⁷ Edward L. Glaeser, *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier and Happier* (Penguin Press 2011).

⁸ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge University Press 1992).

citizens in the international treaty mechanisms and systems.⁹

There was a global resurrection all over the world after the World War II, in which the war destructed current systems, mechanisms and qualities of every city and inhabitants of it. It had a great impact on increase in urbanization processes and population growth. Moreover, national governments and authorities have taken more passive roles to fulfill their requirements in terms of certain rights in urban sphere due to economic reasons. In addition to this, aforementioned in the first chapter of this thesis negative effects of the rapid urbanization over citizens' lives and qualities in urban sphere were threatening all merits of economic developments and welfare policies. For this reason, this ongoing problematic system, so-called capitalism-, was questioned by social uprisings and protests during 1960's as a general phenomenon almost all over the world.¹⁰ The resistance had risen from streets with a demand for better conditions, lives, qualities and rights in the urban sphere. Henry Lefebvre, French philosopher, had invented the term '*le droit a`la ville*' under these conditions belonging to that period of time. His work and contribution will be discussed widely in the following sub-section: the Right to the City.

A new form of the capitalism after 1970's, so-called neoliberalism, had threatened welfare state merits and achievements even if they were not fully promising for a decent life. In line with rising globalization, neoliberal policies had urged and awaken the public agenda and demand for the Right to the City. Urban life of inhabitants is under threat of the global capital flows continually. So, more and more communities became vulnerable to uprising interventions and deteriorations by neoliberalism and globalization. It is needless to say that it is not fair and just if we only criticize globalization and stress its negative effects. Globalization resulted in a way that people and societies from different backgrounds and geographical locations became open to reactions and reflections, which would come from each other. Circulation of the information has reached to unpredictable levels. In other words, globalization also affected ratio of communication and interaction frequency of the people. For concepts like the Right to the City, it was much more easy to become widespread throughout

⁹ Barbara M. Oomen, 'Introduction: The Promise and Challenges of Human Rights Cities' in Barbara M. Oomen, Martha F. Davis and Michele Grigolo (eds), *GLOBAL URBAN JUSTICE The Rise of Human Rights Cities* (Cambridge University Press 2016).

¹⁰ *ibid.*

the world, as same problems and interventions threaten people's lives politically, economically, socially, spatially and environmentally at the same time in different scales.

These abovementioned consequences of neoliberalism and globalization hand in hand triggered many repercussions of demands for rights in different ways throughout the world. In order to introduce another perspective in this respect might be useful to understand rights and urban relationship. Legal positivism determines the state as legitimate power on citizenship rights. However, everyday life citizenship includes both *de jure* by the state and reflections of urban policies at local level, which are implemented by local authorities. Therefore, not only demand for rights in urban context but also inclusive planning and/or participatory democratic governance of cities brings a new commitment to the citizenship: '*insurgent*'.¹¹

The Right to the City, Human Rights Cities, urban rights, and rights in urban context are all examples of these newly established commitments that give key role to cities and inhabitants of those. In this thesis, the emphasis will be based on the praxis of Right to the City and Human Rights Cities. The widespread use of these terms had begun during 1980's with urban social movements in Latin America. Inhabitants of cities were demanding for better housing, public services and infrastructure. However, academic discussion came later on, in the last decade of the 20th century. Academic environment responded to these uprising urban demands very lately. Even if it was a late response, especially critical urban theorists contributed to the conceptualizations with their radical approaches.

In this historical resonance, two United Nations conferences in 1990's played a crucial role to create and stimulate an agenda about the Right to the City: the Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and Habitat II (Istanbul, 1996).¹² It can be said that institutionalization of the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities has started during those years. Habitat International Coalition and Brazilian National Forum for

¹¹ Eva Garcia Chueca, 'Human Rights in the City and the Right to the City: Two Different Paradigms Confronting Urbanisation' in Barbara M. Oomen, Martha F. Davis and Michele Grigolo (eds), *GLOBAL URBAN JUSTICE The Rise of Human Rights Cities* (Cambridge University Press 2016).

¹² *ibid.*

Urban Reform (FNUR) prepared draft documents and mobilized social networks, civil society organizations and also national and international governmental bodies. Their slogan was '*for just, democratic, and sustainable cities and villages*' that had given pace to the institutionalization process with increase in attention to the concept internationally.¹³ Furthermore, local associations and networks were also active to engage with the Right to the City and/or Human Rights Cities phenomenon that became so popular and prestigious to assign.

From 2000 on, this aforementioned mobilization in different levels such as local, national, regional and international has started to gain formal bodies such as UN Habitat III Conference Policy Unit 1 Paper, UN Habitat III Conference Quito Declaration – New Urban Agenda, World Charter for the Right to the City, European Charter for Safeguarding Human Rights in Cities, Pact of Amsterdam – Urban Agenda for EU, Brazil City Statute, and Mexico City Charter. They will be analyzed in the third chapter.

a. The Right to the City

To begin with, The Right to the City is an evolving and developing concept since the Henri Lefebvre has firstly mentioned it in 1968.¹⁴ During the years until 1990's it was a stable concept, which was waited for a long time to be explored again by Critical Urban Theory school. It was not discussed widely until those days. The nature of the concept needed further reflections and elaborations to widen its influence on social movements, local, regional or national urban policies and global arena.

First of all, it is really crucial to understand how Critical Urban Theory affirms 'city'. City has a transformative characteristic feature with its capability to be used as political or ideological medium. City is formed by urban space, where social power clashes have taken place since its formation. This reality makes the city a form of arena that all of political, ideological, social, and economic conflicts occur. Thus, critical urban theory does not accept the city as its physical appearance and entity. It

¹³ Margit Mayer, 'The "Right to the City" in Urban Social Movements', *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

¹⁴ Lefebvre (n 4).

looks for further meanings, relations, and linkages while it is trying to open a new arena that could be changed, shaped, and affected by actors with different interests in the city. In other words, critical urban theory idealizes and conceptualizes another city, which is fair, socially just, and sustainable in terms of its qualities, services and relations rather than existing structure of capitalist way of affirmation of cities and its function.¹⁵

At this point, Lefebvre argues an affirmative approach to the ‘city’.

“...from this point on I will no longer refer and to the city but to the urban.”¹⁶

He claims that there is no more need for an ontological distinction between urban and rural. The society is now at a stake of ‘*complete urbanization*’ process that deteriorates existing differentiations and peripheral links between urban and rural.¹⁷ Therefore, using the term city is not risky for critical urban theorists in terms of its conceptualization. That is to say, the Right to the City comprises all human settlements that inhabit human beings including their social affiliations. For this reason, there is not any reason to investigate deeply the terms used in the entitlement. The vital point is coverage zone articulated with the entitlement by using the Right to the City. Furthermore, city is not a term that defines a single social or economic unit because of the fact that there are hundreds of ways and approaches to define it. According to critical urban theory, once again, urban is defined by the societal norms and standards.¹⁸

Peter Marcuse raises a question and asks that ‘what right’ the Right to the City contains?¹⁹ At a first insight, the answer can be directed through rights existed and/or violated in the city. However, this explanation is not adequate and enough. The Right to the City contains all rights that are necessary and prerequisite for a ‘*decent life*’.

¹⁵ Neil Brenner, ‘What Is Critical Urban Theory?’, *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

¹⁶ Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Robert Bononno tr, University of Minnesota Press 2003).

¹⁷ Christian Schmid, ‘Henri Lefebvre, the Right to the City, and the New Metropolitan Mainstream’, *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ Peter Marcuse, ‘Whose Right(s) to What City?’, *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

Marcuse is very radical in terms of the holders of the Right to the City. He states that this right has already been given to and exploited by *'the financial powers, the real estate owners and speculators, the key political hierarchy of state power, the owners of the media'*.²⁰ Therefore, these rights and the Right to the City should be promoted as soon as possible to change lives' of the disadvantaged, poor, deprived; and segregated people who are not given this right. All of these rights for the promulgation of a decent life should be realized and provided in an individual liberal understanding of the specific term 'right'. However, there is a need for further claim to demand for a better political system in an equitable society that materializes an urban life with all assets in contrast to individual liberal right understanding.²¹ So, in this sense, it is a right that goes beyond the existing legal provisions of rights. The Right to the City is a unitary right that envisions a holistic approach and understanding of rights. In this manner, Marcuse claims that *'It is the right to the city, not rights to the city'*.²² Moreover, it is not a claim for only *a right to individual justice*. It goes further by including individual justice into its body and demands for a right to *social justice*.

In terms of the definition of the Right to the City, it is important to understand first elaboration phrase of Lefebvre as follows:

*'the right to the city is like a cry and a demand. This right slowly meanders through the surprising detours of nostalgia and tourism, the return to the heart of the traditional city, and the call of existent or recently developed centralities.'*²³

This phrase draws a framework that is really complex and difficult to understand. There is an exact need for further elaboration to understand it. For this reason, after almost two decades, he enriches the definition in his later writings as follows:

*'the right to information, the rights to use of multiple services, the right of users to make known their ideas on the space and time of their activities in urban areas; it would also cover the right to the use of the center.'*²⁴

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

²³ Lefebvre (n 4).

²⁴ Henri Lefebvre (n 16).

So, Lefebvre articulates the Right to the City with new dimensions such as space, time and urban areas in here. He creates an urban area where everybody is free to accomplish his or her desires. In addition to this, Lefebvre's 'right to urban life' brings an imagination to the foreground, in which political, economic and social affiliations are reorganized in the scope of city and its further meanings.²⁵

David Harvey, who is one of the most prominent scholars of the critical urban theory, defines the Right to the City as it is more than a request for rights enshrined by international treaties. It is a unitary, collective, diffuse right related to the city. In addition to this point, Harvey emphasizes how this city is being shaped and reproduced by as follows:

*'The question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from that of what kind of social ties, relationship to nature, lifestyles, technologies and aesthetic values we desire. The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the process of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.'*²⁶

Correspondingly, Harvey expands the scope of the Right to the City. He introduced a new kind of understanding in terms of the emphasis on the urbanization process. In this paradigm, inhabitants of cities can (re)shape their cities according to their collective interests rather than one capitalist owner's profit based interest who holds the power to change and affect lives of urban dwellers directly. The mechanism for this ideal is very basic: inclusive-participatory planning that relies on to the slogan 'city belongs to the citizens of it'. At this point, Margit Mayer argues that the Right to the City cannot be slid over through weak urban governance tools and mechanisms.²⁷

In order to realize this right, priorities should be determined by the deprived, poor,

²⁵ Mark Purcell, 'Excavating Lefebvre: The Right to the City and Its Urban Politics of the Inhabitant' [2002] *GeoJournal*.

²⁶ David Harvey, 'THE RIGHT TO THE CITY' [2008] *New Left Review*.

²⁷ Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse and Margit Mayer, 'Cities for People, Not for Profit: An Introduction', *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

and excluded people who are 99 per cent claiming streets, parks, city commons to prevent interventions from capitalist logic and projects.

There is an antagonist view belongs to Marcuse to this naiveness of one's desires in the urban scope which is introduced by Harvey.²⁸ argues that the desire for reaching an ideal urban life is unknown. Person's desire may not contain belief in inclusive participatory city, homelessness, and/or '*controlled gentrification*'. Politics should initiate the goodwill of common understanding of cities and urban life. So, the Right to the City is a concept that cannot be truly fulfilled by social or political medium only. According to Goonewardena, a newly established conceptualization of politics is a requirement to reach that city which is drawn by the Right to the City. This can be only possible via putting everyday life to the center of this newly arranged radical politics. Political parties, states, assemblies, private sector, and NGO's are not enough adequate to fill out this gap.²⁹

b. Human Rights City/Cities

The concept of 'human rights city' firstly realized and defined by the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning (PDHRE) in 1997 in order to engage human rights into local governance units as importance of cities were increasing in terms of the promotion and protection of human rights at local level. At that time PDHRE defined 'human rights city' as follows:

"a society where all citizens have made a pledge to build a community based on equality and nondiscrimination; [where] all women and men are actively participating in the decisions that affect their daily lives, guided by the human rights framework; where people have consciously internalized the holistic vision of human rights to overcome fear and impoverishment, a society that provides human security, access to food, clean water, housing, education, healthcare and work at livable wages, sharing these resources with all citizens—not as a gift, but as a realization of

²⁸ Tom Slater, 'Missing Marcuse: On Gentrification and Displacement', *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

²⁹ Kanishka Goonewardena, 'Space and Revolution in Theory and Practice: Eight Theses', *CITIES FOR PEOPLE, NOT FOR PROFIT Critical urban theory and the right to the city* (Routledge 2012).

*human rights. A Human Rights City is a practical, viable model that demonstrates that living in such a society is possible!”*³⁰

The abovementioned definition initiated strong commitments and manifestation of a will to equip existing cities with human rights understanding. Therefore, PDHRE organized a training and development program for ‘Human Rights Cities’ all around the world. This intense program was given to 30 cities and 500 representative of youth civil society organizations. As a result, human rights city became a global phenomenon in which cities more and more request for recognition as a human rights city while they were adopting human rights principles in municipal level.³¹ Meanwhile, international and regional organizations including NGO’s prepared global charters to provide a human rights city principles/guidelines in collaboration with each other. For instance, European Charter for Safeguarding Human Rights in Cities, Global Charter-Agenda for the Right to the City can be seen as appropriate examples in this manner.

Later on, The Gwangju Declaration on Human Rights City (2011), which was enforced at the World Human Rights Cities Forum on 17 May 2011, brought a new and broader dimension to the ‘human rights city’ framework. This forum held in collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and different stakeholders from all around the world. In the abovementioned declaration, human rights city is defined as *‘both a local community and socio-political process in a local context where human rights play a key role as the fundamental values and guiding principles.’*³² Moreover, borderlines of the human rights governance are determined in a shared responsibility with all stakeholders in the city. *‘The principle of democracy, participation, responsible leadership, transparency, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment and rule of law’* are determined as main components of

³⁰ Housing and Land Rights Network and Habitat International Coalition, ‘Human Rights City/Community’ <http://www.hlrn.org/img/documents/Right_where_you_live_final.pdf> accessed 10 July 2017.

³¹ UN Human Rights Council, ‘Role of Local Government in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights – Final Report of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee’ (2015) A/HRC/30/49.

³² *ibid.*

the human rights governance at local level.³³ Collaboration with actors and key players should not only include ones in the local context but also international ones according to the declaration.³⁴

In this context, some cities declared that they are carrying the human rights city benchmark by adopting local policies for promotion and protection of human rights in a non-discriminatory manner regardless of person's age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion. Rosario (Argentina), which is the first 'human rights city' as declared itself in 1997, followed by these cities: Bandung (Indonesia); Barcelona (Spain); Bihac (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Bogota (Colombia); Bongo (Ghana); Copenhagen (Denmark); Graz (Austria); Gwangju (Republic of Korea); Kaohsiung (Taiwan Province of China); Kati (Mali); Korogocho (Kenya); Mexico City (Mexico); Mogale (South Africa); Montreal (Canada); Nagpur (India); Porto Alegre (Brazil); Prince George's County, Maryland (United States); Saint-Denis (France); Sakai (Japan); Thies (Senegal); Utrecht (the Netherlands); Victoria (Australia).³⁵

Human Rights Cities will be used as a singular concept from now on, in next chapter of this thesis in order to refer to one conceptualization and context rather than referring to hundreds of human rights cities cases that might have differentiations in their nature of fact.

c. Difference between the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities

The Right to the City and Human Rights Cities might be thought as similar concepts that have been used in the academia and process of institutionalization of human rights. However, there are certain differences between them. This section of the thesis is designed to give relevant information on those differentiations. Before starting to investigate difference, it should be recognized that the main subject of this thesis is 'the Right to the City' and its multi-actor structure rather than Human Right Cities. However, both of them are converging to each other in many respects. For this reason, definition and historical background on Human Rights Cities elaborated in the Conceptual Framework. In other words, clarifying these two complex and convergent concepts is really fundamental to make an analytical comparison between different

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ The Gwangju Declaration on Human Rights City 2011.

³⁵ UN Human Rights Council (n 31).

actors and their implementations/definitions through these terms. So, as it will be discussed later in the fifth chapter, overall analysis and comparison of different stakeholders will enable revealing their efforts regarding impacts, opportunities and challenges in terms of the Right to the City.

The Right to the City is a claim for an ideal that does not exist today. This claim refers to a unitary, collective, and diffuse right to include all rights and full exercise of them in a socially just, inclusive, democratic, and sustainable city. So, the Right to the City might be seen as an umbrella right to provide an environment in which every person is able to accomplish his or her own desires in accordance with the common interest. In this manner, city is an abstract space of fulfillment of rights and protection of commons, which are created via social and economic interactions. In final analysis, the Right to the City is a demand for further fulfillment of one's rights and desires in scope of urban life.³⁶

In contrast, Human Rights Cities as a concept does not demand for further implications of rights as the Right to the City does so. Human Rights Cities accept already enshrined legal provisions on plural rights in accordance with international treaties or conventions. It can be argued that their charming feature is localization of human rights. In other words, Human Rights Cities emerged as a complimentary functioning of central/national governments in terms of human rights provisions because of the fact that it has been recognized that globalization created more linked and active local units by surpassing national governments. Jurisdiction is not limited to national or international bodies anymore. Cities and local governments explored that they can also provide, promote and protect rights with their local policies. For instance, in Montreal (Canada), urban dwellers have right to apply to Office of Ombudsman for their complaints about problems or violations of enshrined rights whereas the responsible actor is the local administration in here whether it has implemented policies in accordance with rights of inhabitants or not.³⁷

In final analysis, it might be said that Human Rights Cities as a phenomenon is in pursuit of protection and promotion of plural rights in parallel with participatory

³⁶ Marcuse (n 19).

³⁷ Benoît Frate, 'Human Rights at a Local Level: The Montréal Experience' in Barbara M. Oomen, Martha F. Davis and Michele Grigolo (eds), *GLOBAL URBAN JUSTICE The Rise of Human Rights Cities* (Cambridge University Press 2016).

democratic mechanisms to limited extent. On the other hand, the Right to the City is more social movements and civil society led pursuit of a right to an ideal city through '*social and political agency*' where democratization of decision-making processes are led by anti-capitalist motivations.³⁸ While doing this, '*insurgent citizenship*'³⁹ terminology occurs to explain what kind of social and political relationship are being formed via this democratization processes. Therefore, the Right to the City relies on bottom-to-up approaches whereas Human Rights Cities relies on up-to-bottom that is a significant difference that affects the content and methodology of their struggle.

Analysis of Main Documents and Interviews

In this chapter, the main elements and supplements of thesis research are going to be elaborated. In previous chapters, the general background information and wider conceptual framework are given to reach this chapter in which analytical comparisons are going to be made. For this reason, each organization and document will be taken into consideration separately in subsections of this chapter. Their historical developments, definitions of concepts, progress and achievements will be mentioned one by one. Thus, in the next chapter brief discussion is going to be made to evaluate main findings and discuss impacts, opportunities, and challenges.

A-) UN HABITAT III Conference, Preparatory Committee Policy Unit 1 Paper on 'the Right to the City and Cities for All'⁴⁰

Basically, there are three main pillars of the Right to the City according to UN Habitat III-Quito Preparatory Committee Policy Unit-1 entitled 'Right to the City and Cities for All' and consisted of 20 experts from a variety of fields, including academia, government, civil society and other regional and international bodies. These three main pillars are spatially just resource distribution, political agency, and social, economic and cultural diversity. In addition to this, policy unit paper examines five main thematic cross-sectional confrontation points, which could be challenging for

³⁸ Schmid (n 17).

³⁹ Eva Garcia Chueca (n 11).

⁴⁰ Policy paper 1: Right to the city and cities for all 2016.

implementation of the Right to the City, namely as follows ‘*urban spatial strategies, urban governance, urban economy, social aspects, and urban environment*’. Then on, main points of pillars raised during this cross-sectional analysis come to the foreground to elaborate on.⁴¹

The first pillar elaboration consists of ‘*land for housing and livelihoods, and the de-commodification of urban space; urban commons, public space, and biodiversity; access to basic services and infrastructure, and controlling pollution; unplanned and informal settlements habitation; resilience, climate change, disaster and risk management.*’⁴² In the second pillar ‘*inclusive governance; inclusive urban planning; citizenship; enabling participation, transparency, and democratization*’ are taken into consideration.⁴³ The third pillar includes issues such as ‘*recognition of social actors — including gender — for migration and refugees; embracing identity, cultural practice, diversity, and heritage; safer cities, livelihoods, well-being, and welfare; poverty risk and employment vulnerabilities; inclusive economy and solidarity economy.*’⁴⁴

Principles and Approaches of the Right to the City are examined very broadly in the paper. It might be summarized like that the Right to the City contains all civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights as they have been regulated in different international human rights conventions, covenants, and treaties. The Right to the City is a call for a universal, interdependent, and interrelated exercise of human rights in the scope of cities should be considered as commons where respect and protection mechanisms to human rights are valid and functioning for all inhabitants. In other words, there should be full exercise of citizenship that applies to everyone. Approach of the policy unit paper is very broad including key elements such as; ‘*the social dimension of land, property, and urban assets in cities and human settlements; transparent and accountable political participation and management of cities; inclusive economies, with rights to work and secure livelihoods; responsible and sustainable management of the commons (natural environment, built and historic*

⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

*environment, cultural assets, energy supplies, etc.); sufficient, accessible and quality public spaces and community facilities; cities without violence, particularly for women, girls, and disadvantaged groups; the promotion of culture as a lever of social cohesion, social capital, self-expression and identity, memory and heritage, and a balanced relationship between cities and towns within national jurisdictions, and between human settlements and their rural hinterlands.*⁴⁵

In terms of the definition of the right to the city, Policy Unit used the original contribution of the definition of Lefebvre by not mentioning his name and updating it to today's terminology:

*'...As the right of all inhabitants present and future, to occupy, use and produce just, inclusive and sustainable cities, defined as a common good essential to the quality of life.'*⁴⁶

In addition to this short definition, it has been claimed that further implications of the Right to the City bring duties and responsibilities for governments and citizens to *'claim, defend, and promote'* this right.⁴⁷ The Right to the City is a 'collective right'. Therefore it can be easily associated with *'the diversity of all inhabitants on the basis of their common interest'*.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the Right to the City is a 'diffuse right' that means it belongs to present and future generations. It cannot be used as a beneficiary for exclusive right means. In terms of the locus of the Right to the City, it can be implemented in every human settlements such as *'metropolis, city, village, or town that is institutionally organized as local administrative unit with district, municipal or metropolitan character'* because of the fact that it is a diffuse right, which could be applied to not only urban space but also rural or semi-rural settlements.⁴⁹

Key elements are listed and directly quoted in the below, which play fundamental role to complete premise *'the city as a common good'* in a holistic approach. Furthermore, there are certain legislative protection mechanisms that are designed to regulate national, regional or local laws in accordance with these elements promoting the Right to the City as a *'collective and diffuse right'*.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*

⁴⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

(a) A city free of discrimination based on gender, age, health status, income, nationality, ethnicity, migratory condition, or political, religious or sexual orientation;

(b) A city of inclusive citizenship in which all inhabitants, whether permanent or transitional, are considered as citizens and granted equal rights; e.g. women, those living in poverty or situations of environmental risk, informal economy workers, ethnic and religious groups, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, the differently abled, children, youth, the elderly, migrants, refugees, street dwellers, victims of violence and indigenous peoples;

(c) A city with enhanced political participation in the definition, implementation, monitoring, and budgeting of urban policies and spatial planning in order to strengthen the transparency, effectiveness and inclusion of the diversity of inhabitants and their organizations;

(d) A city fulfilling its social functions, that is, ensuring equitable access for all to shelter, goods, services and urban opportunities, particularly for women and other marginalized groups; a city that prioritizes the collectively defined public interest, ensuring a socially just and environmentally balanced use of urban and rural spaces;

(e) A city with quality public spaces that enhances social interactions and political participation, promotes sociocultural expressions, embraces diversity, and fosters social cohesion; a city where public spaces contribute to building safer cities and to meeting the needs of inhabitants;

(f) A city of gender equality which adopts all necessary measures to combat discrimination in all its forms against women, men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in political, social, economic and cultural terms; a city which takes all appropriate measures to ensure the full development of women, to guarantee them equality in the exercise and fulfillment of fundamental human rights, and a life free of violence;

(g) A city with cultural diversity, which respects, protects, and promotes the diverse livelihoods, customs, memory, identities, expressions, and sociocultural forms of its inhabitants;

(h) A city with inclusive economies that ensures access to secure livelihoods and decent work for all inhabitants, that gives room to other economies, such as solidarity economy, sharing economy, circular economy, and that acknowledges the role of women in the care economy;

(i) A city as a system within the settlement and common ecosystem that respects rural-urban linkages, and protects biodiversity, natural habitats, and surrounding ecosystems, and supports city-regions, city-town cooperation, and connectivity.⁵⁰

In the final part of the paper, necessity for a new model for cities is highlighted that promises to prevent or mitigate negative impacts of the rapid urbanization by realizing ‘*sustainable and inclusive urbanization*’ whereas inhabitants of cities suffer from ‘*increasing inequality, segregation and poor living conditions, and the effects of environmental pollution and climate change*’.⁵¹ Furthermore, it is claimed that enabling ‘*cities for all*’ in accordance with the ‘*principles of equality, social justice, participation and sustainability*’ is really crucial to solve above mentioned problems. Consequently, decision making initiative to adopt and implement above mentioned policies, key elements, and principles depends on States’ will that is going to conform with existing treaties, conventions, and binding documents.

The disadvantage of this very well prepared and drafted policy paper is the fact that it is not a binding document for UN Habitat III Conference Committee. As it is going to be seen in the next subsection, New Urban Agenda has only one paragraph on cities for all and the Right to the City that is not affluent.

B-) UN Habitat III Conference, Quito Declaration, New Urban Agenda – Final Document⁵²

Resolution (A/RES/71/256) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 23 December 2016 was entitled as New Urban Agenda. This is a final outcome paper after a long-term process and work done by the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee, which was started with UN General Assembly resolution 70/210 of 22 December

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All.

2015 in order to end up with a cutting-edge, prominent, and updated document after the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) that would take place from 17 to 20 October 2016, in Quito, Ecuador with a huge variety of participation from different multi-level actors and stakeholders. During the preparation process of the New Urban Agenda, many formal consultations, advisory, and technical meetings had been done with all stakeholders and relevant actors in order to gather relevant informative perspectives in parallel with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (especially Goal 11 of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable).⁵³

Ten Policy Units had been founded to gather experts from different stakeholders to discuss and prepare foundation document for the New Urban Agenda, which was expected to answer existing rapid urbanization and inadequate housing problems in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Ten Policy Units⁵⁴ are namely as follows:

- 1.The Right to the City and Cities for All*
- 2.Socio-Cultural Urban Framework*
- 3.National Urban Policies*
- 4.Urban Governance, Capacity and Institutional Development*
- 5.Municipal Finance and Local Fiscal Systems*
- 6.Urban Spatial Strategies: Land Market and Segregation*
- 7.Urban Economic Development Strategies*
- 8.Urban Ecology and Resilience*
- 9.Urban Services and Technology*
- 10.Housing Policies*

After Policy Units distinguished efforts and works, each Policy Unit submitted its Policy Paper to the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee. Then on, Preparatory Committee had contemplated all informative work done by each Policy Unit, advisory meetings, national and local governmental consultations. As a result, the New Urban Agenda Zero Draft has been prepared and circulated to the Habitat III participants to

⁵³ United Nations, ‘Sustainable Development Goals No 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities’.

⁵⁴ Habitat III Conference Preparatory Committee, ‘New Urban Agenda Preparatory Process Policy Units’, *Policy Units* <<http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/preparatory-process/policy-units/>> accessed 5 June 2017.

sign and agree upon on 6 May 2016. Recommendations and amendment proposals had been taken from all stakeholders and representatives of the States. At the end, draft of the New Urban Agenda – Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All–, which is formed by 175 articles and 29 pages, presented, adopted and accepted as a final outcome of the Habitat III Conference.

The Right to the City has been mentioned and elaborated with a short paragraph in line with ‘Cities for All’ in the New Urban Agenda *Article 11* under the topic of ‘*Our shared vision*’ as of follows:

*[As Heads of State and Government, Ministers and High Representatives] We share a vision of cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all. We note the efforts of some national and local governments to enshrine this vision, referred to as “right to the city”, in their legislation, political declarations and charters.*⁵⁵

After this with *Article 12*, cities and human settlements put as an ideal achievement in which fundamental freedoms, equal rights and opportunities for all persons are provided in line with the international law regulations. Furthermore, in *Article 13*, main components of cities and human settlements are regarded broadly as such; fulfilling social functions (a), with enhanced political participation and cultural diversity, inclusive citizenship, and quality public spaces (b), free of discrimination and fulfillment of gender equality (c), with inclusive economies (d), sustainable urban development (e), transportation opportunities (f), resilient against natural or human-led disasters (g), and protection of the environment (h).⁵⁶

At the end of preparatory process of the New Urban Agenda, Policy Unit-1, which was committed to prepare a blueprint for the Right to the City, proposed broader

⁵⁵ Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All (n 52).

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

implications and affirmative framework. However, the final document of the Habitat III Conference in Quito, 2016, so-called New Urban Agenda, only mentioned the Right to the City once. The content of this paragraph (article 11), where it is mentioned, is really weak. In the paragraph given above with a direct reference to the New Urban Agenda, it can be easily seen that the vision is really limited. Drafting Committee preferred to use ‘cities for all’ approach rather than ‘the right to the city’. The phrase about the Right to the City is only a notification of the situation that signatory parties are aware of the right to the city efforts that have shown by national, and local governments. This phrase is so far away from recognizing the importance of the Right to the City against existing problems of cities and urban areas. Another subtraction is on very well defined characteristics of the Right to the City in the Policy Unit Paper. The Right to the City is a diffuse and collective right according to the Policy Unit Paper. However, there is no stress on this in the final document. In the final analysis, the New Urban Agenda cannot satisfy expectations, which were arisen before its adoption from different actors around the world.

C-) World Charter for the Right to the City⁵⁷

The World Charter for the Right to the City can be seen as an outcome document of uprising movements gathered under the title of ‘*internationalization of the right to the city*’ that emerged after the Earth Summit (1992 Rio) and Habitat II Conference (Istanbul, 1996) in order to respond to deteriorating effects of globalization on rights, urban spaces, and lives. Chueca claims that above mentioned fact is the underlying reason behind organizing events as such World Social Forums that started to take place in 2001.⁵⁸

The World Charter for the Right to the City (2005) is a major work of consensus reached by variety of urban social movements, NGO’s, experts, professionals, national and international forums and civil society networks after consecutive social and urban forums held in international level organizations as follows; World Social Forums and workshops led by the Habitat International Coalition between 2001 and

⁵⁷ ‘World Charter for the Right to the City’ <<http://rumboahabitat3.ec/en/news/news/182-world-charter.html>> accessed 5 July 2017.

⁵⁸ Eva Garcia Chueca (n 11).

2005. The main agenda of those formal and informal meetings with high-level and multi-actor participation was need for a prominent instrument that would try to prevent negative impacts of rapid urbanization claiming that rapid urbanization can only be managed by creating urban lives and spaces equipped with better living conditions, equity, social justice, democracy, and sustainability in parallel with international human rights provisions and protection mechanisms in terms of the city's civil and political rights; economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights of the city; and implementation of the Right to the City. (Preamble)

In World Charter Article 1, the main aim has been determined as *'through a city free of discrimination based on gender, age, health status, income, nationality, ethnicity, migratory condition, or political, religious or sexual orientation, and to preserve cultural memory and identity.'* In accordance with these commitments, the city at stake carries features that profoundly multi-cultural with various *'collective space'* applications for all inhabitants of it.

The definition of the Right to the City in the Charter as follows;

"...equitable usufruct of cities within the principles of sustainability, democracy, equity, and social justice. It is the collective right of the inhabitants of cities, in particular of the vulnerable and marginalized groups, that confers upon them legitimacy of action and organization, based on their uses and customs, with the objective to achieve full exercise of the right to free self-determination and an adequate standard of living." (Art.1)

The World Charter for the Right to the City includes direct or indirect medium of democratic management for all inhabitants in cities through enabling access to public services, policies and decision-making processes by doing so aiming transparency in local governing bodies, inclusive, participatory democracy in cities.

As a strategic principle, the *'social function of the city and urban property'* has been raised in the Charter in order to stress that priority to use and benefit from cities belongs to its citizens and inhabitants collectively in accordance with social justice terms. Moreover, the *social function of property* should be realized in order to prioritize collective social, cultural and environmental interests provided that all inhabitants have right to contribute via participatory democratic mechanisms and

principles in pursuit of collective interest rather and exclusive, individual interests. According to the Charter, social justice should be taken into consideration to provide access to urban spaces and services in equity and just framework. Other supplementary principles and commitments are also included into the Charter such as *'full exercise of citizenship, equality, non discrimination, special protection of vulnerable groups and people, private sector's social commitment.'*⁵⁹

D-) European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City⁶⁰

The European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City (Saint Denis, 2000) emerged as a result of collective efforts that had started with a special conference on "Cities for Human Rights", which was held in Barcelona in 1998 for the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At the end of the conference, mayors and politicians from different countries, who had a desire for further provision, implementation and elaboration on human rights in cities, took part in the Barcelona Engagement that would seek and guide for policy documentation in a certain time frame. Indeed, the before mentioned desire shown in the Barcelona was a demand for widening the framework of the European Urban Charter⁶¹ that was promoting basic rights in local level such as follows; *'the right to adequate housing, to health, to mobility, to safety, to a healthy and uncontaminated environment, to work, to sport and leisure, to multicultural integration, to quality urbanism, to political participation, to economic development, to natural wealth, to the harmonization of different aspects of life, to sustainable development, to services and goods, to personal realization, to inter municipal collaboration, to financial mechanisms and structures, and to equality.'*⁶²

After the Barcelona Engagement, draft version of the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City was prepared by different stakeholders including city representatives from Europe, related NGO's, and human rights

⁵⁹ 'World Charter for the Right to the City' (n 57).

⁶⁰ 'The European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City' (2000).

⁶¹ 'European Urban Charter' (1992) <<https://rm.coe.int/168071923d>> accessed 5 July 2017.

⁶² *ibid.*

professionals in short period of time as two years. Consecutively, the draft had been discussed, accepted and adopted in Saint Denis, France, in 2000.

After the adoption of the European Charter in 2000, follow-up conferences had been held in order to implement, and negotiate achievements by signatory cities, which are nearly 400 at the moment. These follow-up conferences had taken place in Venice, Italy (2002); Nuremberg, Germany (2004); Lyon, France (2006); Geneva, Switzerland (2008); and Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina (2010).

In the Charter, city is defined as domain of all relations through decent life whereas city is a place that all disputes and clashes have been occurring. On the other hand, solidarity as a principle might work as well to deal with all of these deficiencies regarding discrimination, unemployment, and limited access to services in the city scale.⁶³ The Charter gives an inclusionary view and space for all inhabitants (regardless of their nationality) of cities suggesting that they are first-degree holders of the rights mentioned in the Charter.⁶⁴ Furthermore, the Charter highlights certain principles on human rights that are *universality, indivisibility and interdependency*. Thus, certain mission to protect and guarantee human rights is given to all administration units in terms of cities. Nonetheless, promotion of social inclusion and protection of the poor or persons in need should be main objectives of cities, in principle and practice as well, according to the Charter.

The Charter includes below mentioned rights and principles in sequence:

- a) *General provisions: the right to the city; equality and non- discrimination; cultural, linguistic and religious freedom; protection of the most vulnerable groups and citizens; duty of solidarity; inter-municipal cooperation; and the principle of subsidiarity.*
- b) *Civil and political rights in the city: the right to political participation; right of association, assembly and demonstration; protection of private and family life; and the right to information.*

⁶³ 'The European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City' (n 60).

⁶⁴ UN Human Rights Council (n 31).

- c) *Economic, social and cultural rights in the city: the right to the public services of social protection; the right to education; the right to work; the right to culture; the right to a home; the right to health; the right to the environment; the right to harmonious and sustainable city development; the right to movement and to tranquility in the city; the right to leisure; consumers' rights.*
- d) *Right relative to democratic local administration: efficiency of public services; principle of openness.*
- e) *Mechanisms for the implementation of human rights in the city: local administration of justice (extra-judicial resolution of disputes and arbitration body); police in the city; preventive measures (mediators, municipal ombudsman and steering committee); taxation and budgetary mechanisms (participation processes).⁶⁵*

In order to be more precise in terms of the analysis of thesis research; the Right to the City is regulated and mentioned in the Article 1 as follows:

'The city is a collective space belonging to all who live in it. These have the right to conditions which allow their own political, social and ecological development but at the same time accepting a commitment to solidarity.'⁶⁶

The Right to the City definition is not well established but still it matters on collective space acknowledgement and provision of political, social and ecological development for inhabitants. Interestingly, it does not mention economic dimension of the Right to the City. As it can be understood easily, the definition of the Right to the City is very restricted and vague. In the following articles, equity or social justice emphasis does not exist. So, the Right to the City understanding and scope of the Charter is very weak. Limited understanding of the Right to the City can be inferred from this Charter. There are many missing points to target current urbanization problems and challenges. Nevertheless, there are certain merits of the Charter for improving the framework for human rights to the city scale in a holistic approach. In other words, the Charter is more emphasized on provision and protection of civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights. This situation suits very well to

⁶⁵ 'The European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City' (n 60).

⁶⁶ *ibid.*

the Human Rights Cities domain and scope rather than the Right to the City.⁶⁷

E-) Pact of Amsterdam - Urban Agenda for the EU⁶⁸

Urban Agenda for the EU - Pact of Amsterdam adopted at the Informal Meeting of EU Ministers Responsible for Urban Matters on 30 May 2016 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Pact of Amsterdam is an answer to an urgent need and requirement for framing a general approach through solutions of existing problems of urban areas and potential ones in the future in terms of the European Union scope.

One of the significant objectives in above-mentioned manner is reducing socio-economic gaps between urban areas and regions by developing integrated approach through the European Union.⁶⁹ Three pillars to implement this Agenda are introduced, which are better regulation, better funding, and better knowledge (via knowledge exchange). Furthermore, will to contribute in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially to Goal 11, which aims to '*make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable*', is explicitly mentioned. In addition to that, participant parties support the 'New Urban Agenda', which was being prepared in terms of the Habitat III Conference during the time of this specific meeting in Amsterdam.⁷⁰

In the Urban Agenda for the EU, priority themes are designated under the EU 2020 Strategy for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth as follows; '*Inclusion of migrants and refugees, air quality, urban poverty, housing, circular economy, jobs and skills in the local economy, climate adaptation (including green infrastructure solutions), energy transition, sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions, urban mobility, digital transition, innovative and responsible public procurement.*'⁷¹

Consecutively, policy recommendations are explained and given in accordance with those above mentioned priority themes. However, 'rights' are not mentioned or

⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁸ European Commission, 'Urban Agenda for the EU - Pact of Amsterdam'

<http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/themes/urban-development/agenda/pact-of-amsterdam.pdf> accessed 4 July 2017.

⁶⁹ *ibid* 7.

⁷⁰ *ibid* 8.

⁷¹ *ibid* 9.

promoted even as a single word. It is really questionable that why European Union hesitates to use rights or promulgate it in terms of urban scope whereas the main component of the EU is human rights since its establishment. The document is based on duties given to multiple actors but the content is vague and lacking to meet the need of urban dwellers. Even, there is not any reference to the European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City, which was drafted and adopted by most of the European cities in accordance with European Convention on Human Rights and other constitutional human rights conventions and declarations.⁷²

F-) United Cities and Local Governments

United Cities and Local Governments [The Global Network of Cities, Local and Regional Governments] is a major organization founded by local and regional governments in 2004 in order to establish an international network for cities, municipalities, local and regional governments, which would represent and protect benefits of its members.⁷³ This network mainly makes advocacy on behalf of its members one by one, which are more than a thousand at the moment, to communicate with world and represent this huge community in the international arena. According to the recent report, UCLG has represented 7 billion people, which is almost 70 per cent of the world population, and be present at 140 states in 193 UN member states.⁷⁴

After its foundation, UCLG gained so much importance and influence on international arena and policies of the United Nations that was a main aim to reach and contribute UN's efforts globally in terms of development in local and regional governments. UCLG became a common voice for billions of urban dwellers. Moreover, UCLG plays crucial role in global and international decision making processes on behalf of its variety of members. The huge network of cities, local and regional governments represented by UCLG makes local governance easy to act, react and learn from each other's experiences.

⁷² 'The European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City' (n 60).

⁷³ '9 Years Making History: 2004-2013' <<https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/9-years-making-history-2004-2013>> accessed 5 July 2017.

⁷⁴ UCLG, 'Who We Are?' (2017) <https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/uclg_who_we_are_0.pdf> accessed 8 July 2017.

UCLG's organizational structure contains 12 Committees on specific subjects, 6 working groups, and 2 taskforces in global sphere.⁷⁵

One of the most significant and effective organ of the UCLG is the Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (CISDP). UCLG-CISDP has created a guideline document for inclusive cities (For a World of Inclusive Cities) and the Inclusive Cities Observatory which provides reachable 65 case studies in a virtual environment in terms of '*community development, access to public services, gender equality, environmental protection and poverty eradication, among other issues.*' UCLG-CISDP works as a communicative mechanism for local and regional governments that connects them to directly UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the European Union (EU) Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and the Council of Europe (CoE). The promotion of advocacy tools and medium is a great success of the UCLG-CISDP.

Furthermore, the most important and significant achievement and role of UCLG-CISDP is their advocacy on the human rights and cities issue. It is claimed that promotion of the European Charter for Safeguarding of Human Rights in Cities⁷⁶ is one of their main priority. Moreover, UCLG-CISDP has created a broader document on human rights and cities relationship entitled as the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City⁷⁷, which was adopted in 2001, during their World Council in Florence with participation of more than 400 mayors from different parts of the world. The Global Charter-Agenda contains 12 articles in sequence: *Right to the City (i), Right to Participatory Democracy (ii), Right to Civic Peace and Safety in the City (iii), Right of Women and Men to Equality (iv), Rights of Children (v), Right to Accessible Public Services (vi), Freedom of Conscience and Religion, Opinion and Information (vii), Right to Peaceful Meeting, Association and to Form a Trade Union (viii), Cultural Rights (ix), Right to Housing and Domicile (x), Right to Clean Water and Food (xi), and Right to Sustainable Urban Development (xii).*⁷⁸

⁷⁵ UCLG, 'Committees and Working Groups'
<<https://www.uclg.org/en/organisation/structure/committees-working-groups>> accessed 5 July 2017.

⁷⁶ 'The European Charter for the Safeguarding of Human Rights in the City' (n 60).

⁷⁷ UCLG CISDP, 'Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City' (2011).

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

The Global Charter-Agenda aims to enrich '*inclusive, democratic and solidarity-based societies in dialogue with urban dwellers*'. On the other hand, it tries to prevent possible reduction of rights in the city scope because of economic reasons, which is an uprising trend most of the world. Signatory cities are expected to realize local agendas and action plans to implement the Global Charter-Agenda and its obligations in terms of rights and participatory democracy. In this manner, Suggested Action Plan, which is attached to each right defined in the charter as a supplement, might work very well to provide know-how for cities and their governments.

The Right to the City is defined and mentioned in the Article 1 of the Global Charter-Agenda. Mainly, it characterizes '*right to a city*'⁷⁹ in which all city inhabitants possess this right with '*adequate living conditions*' and provision of '*good coexistence*' among all inhabitants and local authority. Furthermore, it describes a participatory right for everyone in the city in terms of the use of city space, which would provide urban dwellers an active citizenship in a pluralistic environment.⁸⁰

After above-mentioned definition, certain actions and mechanisms are recommended to implement the Right to the City in the Suggested Action Plan. These actions may be summarized as human rights training programs for local government staff, participatory monitoring mechanism throughout the human rights city and its supplementary policy tools such as local development plans, local action plans on human rights and its follow-up process by city inhabitants, informative tools for citizens in order to ease access to rights mentioned in the charter in general, and lastly, complaint mechanisms.

After all of these merits and achievements explained in detail, UCLG Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments was so active during the Habitat-III Conference process including the preparatory period. Their influence and impact on the New Urban Agenda (Quito Declaration) is explicit to see and consider in terms of the inclusion of the Right to the City, especially. The perspective of Cities for All and the Right to the City has been advocated strongly during the drafting and finalizing

⁷⁹ *ibid* 1.

⁸⁰ *ibid*.

processes of the New Urban Agenda with an integrated approach of multi-level governance.⁸¹

H-) Brazil's City Statute⁸²

The Right to the City concept has been adopted and exercised in Latin American countries up to two or three decades ago when it is compared to the European context because of the fact that urbanization processes and levels differ from each other. People are highly mobilized in Latin American countries via urban social movements claiming urban reform to upgrade their housing conditions, basic urban services and urban life qualities in parallel with a demand for democratization in local administration units due to massive expansion of favelas starting from 1970's.⁸³

Brazil has a leading and prominent role in pursuit of the Right to the City and its implementation and protection through legislative organs. The first development was the recognition of the '*social function of property*' (article 5.23), in the newly enacted Federal Constitution in 1988. This enactment was providing a legal authority to restrict private property rights when it confronts with a conflict in terms of the public interest. The second development is regulation of a federal law entitled 'City Statute of Brazil', which was adopted in 2001. City Statute of Brazil brings a new framework and guideline principle to urban planning processes by creating new policy mechanism to engage and realize the Right to the City. The detailed analysis will be followed herein after. The third development in Brazil is establishment of a new Ministry in 2003 that would deal with urban matters and challenges as it is called Ministry of Cities. The fourth and last development is foundation of participatory mechanism in 2006 called the Council of Cities that would enable city inhabitants to participate and monitor urban decision-making processes in the national scope.⁸⁴

The National Urban Reform Movement in Brazil influenced and triggered the process of Brazil's City Statute (2001) enforcement with their experienced and highly

⁸¹ UCLG, 'Our Habitat III Achievements Report' (2017)
<https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/habitat_iii-eng-2a_edicion-2017-web_1.pdf>
accessed 5 July 2017.

⁸² The Statute of the City 2001.

⁸³ Eva Garcia Chueca (n 11).

⁸⁴ *ibid.*

mobilized civic power since the first achievement had been reached in 1988 that is Federal Constitution regulation on social function of property mentioned before in this chapter. In order to consider and discuss City Statute of Brazil in a more detailed way, Article 2 of the Statute should be examined in the scope of analysis for this thesis research. Article 2 explains the main guidelines for urban policies that are implemented by local authorities. These guidelines are aiming to promote, provide and protect socially just and fair cities that would enable low income and high income population to benefit from same and common opportunities and services in urban areas.⁸⁵ The claim for the Right to the City emerges from the statement as: ‘ *(i) to guarantee the right to sustainable cities, understood as the right to urban land, housing, environmental sanitation, urban infrastructure, transportation and public services, employment and leisure, for current and future generations; (ii) democratic administration by means of participation by the population and the representative associations of the various sectors of the community in the formulation, execution and monitoring of urban development projects, plans and programmes.*’⁸⁶

Realization of the concept ‘diffuse right’ is exercised with this regulation under the Brazil’s City Statute Article 2 that promulgates a right to present and future generations of cities in parallel with sustainable development notion of environment that belongs to urban dwellers of today and the future.⁸⁷

Brazil’s City Statute is a great achievement of third-party collaboration in terms of the abovementioned regulation on the Right to the City. Urban social movements, international NGO’s, and National Federal Government played a crucial role to realize this legislation with its broad definition and framework.

⁸⁵ Cities Alliance, ‘The City Statute of Brazil: A Commentary’ (10 March 2010) 91–93 <http://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/citiesalliance.org/files/CA_Images/CityStatuteofBrazil_English_fulltext.pdf> accessed 4 July 2017.

⁸⁶ The Statute of the City (n 82).

⁸⁷ Policy paper 1: Right to the city and cities for all (n 40).

I-) Mexico City Charter⁸⁸ For the Right to the City

The Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City (2010) is adopted by Mexico City Federal District unit as an example of being the first municipality that enforced the right to the city at local level.⁸⁹ The Charter is a collective output of the collaborative effort shown by the Popular Urban Movement (El Movimiento Urbano Popular), Habitat International Coalition – Latin America (HIC-AL), and Mexico City administrative organs. Each party put their informative approaches and perspectives in accordance with their area of interest and professions. Consequently, the Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City is prepared regarding collective needs of inhabitants in a three years period between 2007 and 2010.

Main objectives designated in the Charter are *‘construction of an inclusive, livable, just, democratic, sustainable and enjoyable city’*; *‘contribution to advance processes of social organization, strengthening of the social fabric, and construction of active and responsible citizenship’*; and *‘contribution to the construction of an equitable, inclusive, and solidary urban economy that guarantees the productive insertion and economic reinforcement of the popular sectors.’*⁹⁰ Moreover, the Charter recognizes *‘social demands and struggles’* as a main determinant of the document. All of the mechanism is linked to six significant components: *‘full exercise of human rights in the city; social function of the city, of land and of property; democratic management of the city; democratic production of the city; sustainable and responsible management of urban and peri-urban commons (natural, public heritage and energy resources); and democratic and equitable enjoyment of the city.’*⁹¹ Correspondingly, various actors are inclusively expected to join and contribute to the realization of aforementioned components including social movements, civil society organizations, district municipalities, and local administrative bodies.

The understanding of the Right to the City goes beyond to not only defending human rights but also as a collective and diffuse right that promotes a power to shape the city for today and future as urban dwellers demand and desire. Therefore, city is seen as a

⁸⁸ Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City 2010.

⁸⁹ Eva García Chueca (n 11).

⁹⁰ Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City (n 88).

⁹¹ Eva García Chueca (n 11).

transforming and improving phenomenon. Definition of the Right to the City is given as following:

*'The Right to the City is the equitable usufruct of cities within the principles of sustainability, democracy, equity, and social justice. It is a collective right of the inhabitants of cities, conferring to them legitimacy of action and organization, based on respect for their differences, expressions, and cultural practices, with the objective to achieve full exercise of the Right to Free Determination and to an adequate level of life. The Right to the City is interdependent of all the integrally-conceived, internationally recognized human rights, and therefore includes all the civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights regulated in the international human rights treaties.'*⁹²

This definition is the utmost conceptualization of the Right to the City with its all components, principles, guidelines and commitments through all recognized human rights in the international treaties. For this reason, implementation of the Charter may require multi-actor action and effort in terms of the wide conceptualization of the term. Moreover, it is really admirable that the Right to the City does not stay as a title. It appears as a collective and diffuse body of rights. In here, inclusion of urban social movements, civil society organizations and also good will of the local administration might be crucial point to be considered as an prominent example of participatory decision-making and policy making process. This kind of best praxis of the concept is really rare and significant to follow-up.⁹³

J-) Habitat International Coalition Interview with Isabel Pascual

Isabel Pascual is communications officer of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) General Secretariat. HIC originated at Habitat I in 1976 and is a founding member of the Global Platform for the Right to the City.

⁹² Mexico City Charter for the Right to the City (n 88).

⁹³ Ana Maria Sanchez Rodriguez, 'The Right to the City in Mexico City: The Charter' in Barbara M. Oomen, Martha F. Davis and Michele Grigolo (eds), *GLOBAL URBAN JUSTICE The Rise of Human Rights Cities* (Cambridge University Press 2016).

According to HIC, the Right to the City as the right of all inhabitants (present and future; permanent and temporary) to use, occupy, produce, govern and enjoy just, inclusive, safe and sustainable cities, villages and settlements defined as common goods.

In terms of the question asking affiliations with other concepts, HIC works in the defense, promotion and realization of rights related to habitat, that means human rights related to housing and land in both rural and urban areas. Particularly around these 4 themes: gender equality, sustainable environment, social production of habitat, housing and land rights.

Isabel says that HIC is part of the Global Platform for the Right to the City, in terms of the relations with other organizations. HIC is a founding member of this platform.

Moreover, HIC has participated with other organizations in:

- *World Charter for the Right to the City* (2005)⁹⁴, a political tool elaborated in a collective way within the framework of the I World Social Forum.
- The network of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) adopted the global *Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City* (2011)⁹⁵ and convened the 1st UCLG Global Summit for the Right to the City (2012) to promote a broader approach and a common understanding among regional and municipal authorities. During 2013, the United Nations Human Rights Council has mandated (Resolution 24/2 adopted in September based on official document A/HRC/AC/9/6⁹⁶) its Advisory Committee to prepare a research-based report on the role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights, including human rights mainstreaming in local administration and public services, with a view to compiling the best practices and main

⁹⁴ Available at <http://portal.unesco.org> and www.hic-net.org

⁹⁵ Electronic version available at <http://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/right-to-the-city/world-charter-agenda>

⁹⁶ For more details, see

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/AdvisoryCommittee/Pages/AboutAC.aspx> In order to provide additional arguments and support this initiative, HIC presented a written statement “Advisory Committee study on human rights and local government,” at the 23rd HRC session, A/HRC/23/NGO/85, 24 May 2013, at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G13/139/46/PDF/G1313946.pdf?OpenElement>.

challenges, and to present a report in September 2014. HIC is part of these two very relevant initiatives.

- The debate around the formulation of a specific urban target and a territorial and urban approach to the Sustainable Development Goals Post-2015.
- The UN III Conference on Housing and Urban Development (2016), known as Habitat III⁹⁷.

Isabel argues that, there is a further need for coordination. The Right to the City is an umbrella for the entire human rights fights. It is a claim of urban social movements to guide urban policies to be more equitable and inclusive, as an alternative to current policies and planning practices that lead to segregation, privatization and inequitable distribution of public goods and services.

These main elements of the Right to the City paradigm and the social practices related to the production and enjoyment of a democratic, inclusive, sustainable, productive, educational and livable city have been part of the debates, proposals and concrete experiences of social movements, national and international civil society networks, trade unions, academic institutions and human rights activists in different countries for the last 50 years. Urban reform principles and the Right to the City are now present – explicitly or implicitly – both in theoretical and legal framework and also work as a platform for action and practical framework in many regions.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ The Conference was established by the UN General Assembly (Resolution 66/ 207) as well as its modalities, preparatory activities, and format (Resolution 67/216). According to the official site, “The conference will generate a ‘New Urban Agenda’ for the 21st century which will recognize the changing dynamics of human civilization. This ‘New Urban Agenda’ will focus on policies and strategies that can create more sustainable and equitable urban spaces. By establishing this new Agenda, Habitat III will shape the urban development agenda for the next 20 years. (...) Habitat III will be an official UN conference. The Habitat conferences are the only UN conferences strictly on urban issues, and take place only once every 20 years. Only a UN conference such as this has the convening power to bring together the actors needed to lay new groundwork for a changing urban agenda. As an official UN conference, Habitat III offers enormous potential to link its process and outcomes with national legislation, which will determine the future of our world’s cities. As the first implementing conference of the post-2015 agenda, Habitat III will influence how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are fulfilled, and will be an opportunity to shape how they are implemented.” Source: <http://unhabitat.org/events-3/habitat-iii/>

⁹⁸ *Cities for All: Proposals and Experiences towards the Right to the City* (Santiago de Chile: Habitat International Coalition, 2010), at: <http://www.hic-net.org/content/Cities%20fol%20All-ENG.pdf>.

Isabel thinks that one of the biggest achievements of HIC's advocacy work is the historical inclusion – although somehow reduced and watered-down – of the Right to the City in the New Urban Agenda recently adopted as the main output of the Habitat III Conference (Quito 17-20 October 2016). But the Right to the City was already an important content in many documents produced in the multiple Habitat III-related events/processes (regional and thematic declarations, policy papers, etc.), including the several drafts of the New Urban Agenda previously prepared and the final text eventually agreed by the states in Quito. This was only possible because the Platform was able to establish a collaborative advocacy work carried out by different members in the official Habitat III preparatory meetings and also at other partner organizations' and parallel/alternative events and workshops. This collaborative work is reflected in the Platform's statements, declarations and campaigns; participation; and cultural diversity and expressions.

The most difficult aspect of the Right to the City is understanding that the Right to the City refers to urban and RURAL areas, not claims to the benefit of urban inhabitants only. Nor does it mean that any person has to be "urban," as a condition for eligibility to enjoy these rights. Furthermore, the habitat discourse has evolved significantly since the Charter's 2005 version's ultimate inclusion of wider and more-diverse territorial regions, referring also to rural areas as city "surroundings."

The easiest aspect of the Right to the City is to mobilize people and organizations. The right to the city is an umbrella for all human rights initiatives.

Isabel answers the question about the right to the city and its consideration as a human right as follows; the right to the city is a collective right, not a human right. As a collective right, it pertains to all inhabitants, in all their diversity, on the basis of their common interest to participate in shaping and benefiting from their living environment.

In terms of the relationship of the Right to the City and Human Rights, Isabel stresses that the right to the city encompasses all human rights (civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights) as enshrined in existing international human rights treaties, covenants, and conventions. In accordance with the Vienna

Declaration (1993), the right to the city calls for a universal, indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated implementation of human rights in urban settings and human settlements at large. The main implication of such approach is that the right to the city is indivisible, meaning that its full and effective materialization requires the respect, protection and fulfillment of all human rights without exception. Furthermore, democracy is one of the principles of the Right to City, according to HIC. The democratic and participatory management of the city is necessary in order to fulfill the Right to the City.

In the future, HIC is going to continue to fight for the Right to the City and other human rights related to habitat. Additionally, HIC will continue supporting the Global Platform for the Right to the City. This platform is currently undergoing a planning process, in order to clarify the Platform's role and goals in the years to come.

For Isabel, these main actions in the below are necessary to further promote and provide the concept Right to the City in the future;

- Networking, many organizations are working around this theme. It is important to work together.
- Debates in order to build collectively the concept of the Right to the City
- Research, in order to analyze all the initiatives around the Right to the City.
- Advocacy, in order to include the Right to the City and its elements in international, national and local policies.
- Communication, this is crucial in order to spread the message, share and make all the initiatives visible around this theme.

K-) Just Space London Interview Richard Lee

Richard Lee is the coordinator of Just Space, a community led network of voluntary and action groups influencing planning policy in London.

Just Space does not have a consensus on the use and definition of the Right to the City. It is an attractive term to some of our academic supporters in London's Universities, and some community groups who have involvement in global social

movements like the World Social Forum. However, the majority of the grassroots groups do not identify with the term and there have been complaints that it is a top down term imposed by academics. Furthermore, In Community Led Plan for London, which is a guideline document for Just Space London a paragraph has been included that said Just Space was asserting the rights to the city for the people and communities of London (page 6). But it was not done as a prominent issue for mobilization.

Lee answers the question on affiliations with other concepts as such that Just Space uses the term justice more often. The “Just” in Just Space is in part an abbreviation of justice. Social justice is the most important notion, including economic and environmental justice. For Just Space, the word justice brings together the principles of fairness, recognition, inclusion and sustainability. It is also about the participation of all Londoners – including those under-represented or completely excluded – in the decisions that affect their lives.

Right to the City is not an issue for mobilization or alliance building, according to Just Space. Just Space works with academics who uses the term generally. However, Just Space is not happy with this much use of the term. Thus, they ask them not to use it or to only use it moderately when carrying out collaborative research with community groups. They have collaboration with some community organizations that define themselves as radical and who like the Right to the City, but it is not a connecting point.

Lee argues that there is a need to be an effort by those who use the Right to the City to be grounded and practical in their demands. This would enable more conversation and collaboration with the grassroots.

Lee did not answer the questions on Praxis and Achievements of the Right to the City, stated that their efforts are not directly related to the Right to the City. Hence, Just Space uses human rights and legal rights to some extent in their Community led Plan namely Legal Framework for Londoners Right to Sustainable, Inclusive and Fair Planning.

In the future, the biggest issue for them is the right to participation in which they connect this deeply with the democratization of the city. In the UK context there is an ongoing devolution of powers from the nation State to the city regions and Just Space argues that this must include the devolution of powers to the citizen level, expressed through grassroots associations rather than NGO's.

L-) Cities Alliance Interview with Anaclaudia Rossbach

This interview has been accomplished on 25th May 2017 via Skype meeting. The contact person is Anaclaudia Marinheiro Centeno Rossbach, who works in the Cities Alliance for the Right to the City – Cities without Slums. First of all, she introduced the Cities Alliance and explained the structure of Cities Alliance, which is not an NGO. Cities Alliance is a global agency hosted by United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Before UNOPS, World Bank was hosting to Cities Alliance. Hosting mechanism of third-party gives an international legal entity to the Cities Alliance. Cities Alliance is governed and formed by a multilateral assembly including national governments, local governments, NGO's, research institutions, universities, and private sector. Rossbach is responsible from Latin America as a regional scope.

Main motto and slogan of the Cities Alliance is 'Equality in Urban Areas'.

Cities Alliance mainly makes advocacy work especially through New Urban Agenda, the Right to the City, and Sustainable Development Goals No. 11. In other words, promoting events, conferences, panels, and discussion boards, publications, which are based on informative strategy of the Cities Alliance, are main outputs and scope of their work. Moreover, Cities Alliance provides technical assistance to national and local governments in order to design their urban policies in parallel with the Right to the City and social function of the land principles. For instance, Cities Alliance have contributed to the legislation in Paraguay and Jamaica. Rossbach states that the Right to the City has really strong support and basis in Latin America.

Even if Rossbach was the member of National Urban Policy Unit among ten policy units, which were assigned to prepare and collect different views, visions, and approaches and represent them in a document that was going to be discussed widely during the Habitat III Conference; she claims that Policy Unit 1 on the Right to the

City⁹⁹ accomplished a great and admiring job during this process. She mentioned these many times that final document prepared by the Policy Unit 1 on the Right to the City is really seminal work and need to be recognized as a great achievement of all stakeholders and advocacy units because of the fact that the content and context of the document was not limited one specific area. The document consists of very specific insight informative framework on the notion of collective, and diffuse right. Moreover, it also includes political, economic, social, and spatial elements in a Cartesian way, which enables cross-section affiliations and possible policy recommendations on conflicts of those elements. It gathered all of the visions by going through regional consultations and integrating them to the outcome document. This document is so important to take into consideration according to her even if at the end of the day there is only one paragraph in the New Urban Agenda. She sees that one paragraph as a victory that will enable more discussion and elaboration widespread in a clearer way.

Rossbach shares her experience on Brazil's diminishing advocacy effort for the Right to the City during the Habitat III preparatory process and conferences held in Quito, Ecuador. However, as it is mentioned before the final document is found poorly related to the Right to the City. Most of activists and advocacy actors were disappointed because of the fact that it does not refer to the Right to the City explicitly whereas Policy Unit final outcome document had integrated all of the key elements in it. So, as a result, the final document is criticized from many perspectives and approaches with its omitted understanding of the Right to the City. However, personal view of Rossbach is so interesting on this issue. She argued that subject as a Right to the City was the most popular, discussed and debated issue in Habitat III correspondingly there was not any common understanding on it. Not only the concept of the Right to the City had been discussed but also vital role of the UN Habitat was also so much criticized and taken attraction from different stakeholders and actors.

Rossbach attended to the UN Plenary Meeting where New Urban Agenda Policy Unit Documents were presented and discussed. The Right to the City was taken high attentions and considerations during the session. She shared her insights from this

⁹⁹ Policy paper 1: Right to the city and cities for all (n 40).

important meeting as follows; African Countries were following Brazil's stance and attitude towards the Right to the City even if it was seen as a threat providing that it is against to live in rural areas, which is a total misconception and misunderstanding.

Rossbach highlights the example of Brazil in terms of incorporated culture of the Right to the City, which had started in 1988 with the recognition of social function of the land in Brazil, which was triggered by strong political social movements and grassroots. This development and recognition brought broader understanding of social mobilizations throughout the urban movements. In accordance with this, Rossbach argues that social mobilizations are rights oriented in Latin America generally in order to resist and build up their own solutions against limited access to public services such housing, water, electricity, sanitation, sewage, education.

Therefore, in Latin America it is really easy to implement and exercise the Right to the City. Moreover, major consensus on housing policies, urban policies, major recognitions through favelas had been achieved after the City Statute in Brazil, legislated in 2001. Whereas progressive and pioneer municipalities had already started to consider participatory urban planning, slum upgrading (favelas) in 1990's. In order to be more precise, for example, slum-upgrading projects in Brazil reached up to 2 million families. It had cost nearly 11 billion \$ (US Dollars) investing in urban infrastructure, social facilities, schools, and housing units. However, these projects were dealing with private public property issues and conflicts, which were solved with the help of social function of the land principle. This is a great achievement of the Right to the City.

Rossbach thinks that Global Platform for the Right to the City is very important to consider and appreciate. Global Platform has a heterogeneous structure that enables consultancy between many actors. However, Global Platform needs further planning and empowerment.

Before UN Habitat III, UN Habitat was skeptical to the Right to the City. However, UN Habitat established the Policy Unit on it and enabled an open floor discussion about it. So, the attitude of the UN Habitat shifted not slightly but in means of recognizable approach. Furthermore, Right to Housing is big theme of UN Habitat.

For this reason, people are afraid of that Right to the City will overtake its position and significance with its uprising popularity.

According to Rossbach, the most difficult aspect of the Right to the City is recognition of social function of land, which is the key element of the Right to the City. If this has not clearly established and defined, problems may occur. It is a pre-requisite for the Right to the City praxis. Otherwise, fragmentation and segregation in urban would continue and result in factual situation in which people suffer from lack of services, access to services and quality of urban life.

The easiest aspect of the Right to the City is access to public space because of the fact that it is clear to everybody.

When it is asked as an interview question to her that is there any possibility for the Right to the City recognized as one of Human Rights, she answered in 20 years there might be some development as such, which is a necessary thing to go further, according to her. In addition to this democracy is another key pre-requisite of the Right to the City in their praxis in Cities Alliance.

Cities Alliance plans to accomplish cooperation and collaboration with grassroots movements in the near future. Their publications will also empower national, regional and local policies for the Right to the City. Furthermore, Cities Alliance gives a significant importance to major contributions, which are real investment projects through the Right to the City including micro credits, bank loans for major infrastructure investments. In order to reach that certain point, there is a certain need for capacity building and assistance.

M-) Global Platform for the Right to the City Interview with Rodrigo Faria

This interview has been accomplished on 9th June 2017 via Skype meeting. The contact person is Rodrigo Faria, who works in the Instituto Pòlis, in São Paulo, Brazil and Global Platform for the Right to the City (Global Platform) at the same time. Policy Institute is an NGO dealing with urban issues and studies. Efforts of the Institute are really appreciated by Latin American societies and communities. Right to the City as a main theme is not a recent issue in the Policy Institute. Therefore, the

Policy Institute established the Global Platform for the Right to the City two years ago in order to meet an urgent need for advancing and developing the concept and its implementation in a more organized way whereas Sustainable Development Goals Meeting in 2015 and Habitat III Conference in 2016 were approaching in terms of the time scale.

There is a special team for the Right to the City in organizational chart of the Policy Institute that is consisted by lawyers generally. Rodrigo Faria particularly is responsible from the international communications and relations coordination in the specific advocacy work of the Global Platform for the Right to the City.

Organizations from different levels and scales are represented and formed the Global Platform for the Right to the City even if their main scope is indirectly related to the Right to the City. Global Platform seeks to gather all relevant organizations through the world that is directly or indirectly related or interested in the Right to the City. Main function of the Platform is articulation and mobilization. Policy Institute had played very key role to discuss and enhance the Right to the City in international arena events such as conferences, workshops, meetings, and forums before the establishment of the Global Platform. Later on, all of these duties have been transferred to the Platform. For instance, main theme of the World Urban Forum in 2010 was determined as the Right to the City, which was a great achievement of the Policy Institute, according Rodrigo Faria. Moreover, he wants to point out that there is an existing legislation of the Right to the City in Brazil, which was led and succeeded by the Policy Institute. In 2001, City Statute of Brazil was regulated in order to give a path to the Right to the City (mentioned before). It was a great step for urban social movements, grassroots, communities, local NGO's, and also representatives of the federal government in Brazil.

In terms of definition of the Right to the City, there is a common understanding and definition in the organization. However, it is open to discussion and evolution because of the fact that it is an evolving and changing concept by the time with different visions. It has to be dynamic and open-to-discussion in order to catch up changing features of cities, urbanization, and the world. In Global Platform, urban realities in Latin America and Europe are more visible and leading phenomenon. Moreover, as a

main aim Global Platform tries to gather and integrate different urban realities and contexts from Africa, Asia, and rest of the world.

Global Platform has agreed upon the definition as follows;

‘Cities are common good. People are entitled to produce, use, occupy the city.’ This definition is mostly influenced from Lefebvre. Moreover, inside the organization, there are views and process of two-folded structure of academia and social struggle, in which they are feeding each other in terms of theory, practice and exercise manners.

Questions as follows do we have resilient cities or ecological transition? Which one is better social justice or inclusionary participation? For this reason, conceptual affiliation of the Right to the City with other terms and concepts is tricky because of the fact that different visions on urban realities and agenda in the Platform result in deeper discussions through the question what really connects variety of organizations under the call of the Right to the City? Therefore, in their documents and publications, the Platform tries to include all visions, views, and thoughts. This year, they have priority to discuss main goals, principles and strategy of the Platform.

Global Platform has a significant responsibility to meet the need on further coordination in terms of the Right to the City at different levels with variety of organizations in this area. Global Platform became very fundamental for these different aimed organizations to share and discuss their visions on the Right to the City. Rodrigo Faria states that it is really important to have this coordination under the Global Platform especially. However, this coordination should take place at regional level rather than international one.

In Africa, urbanization was sold them as future aim to develop and reach welfare. But many people do not want it. It is not adequate to their culture and society.

There is a different context in Africa. European or Latin American approach cannot be enough for Africa. Global Platform tries to expand their basis and work and efforts to enable them integrate into Platform.

Rodrigo Faria says that there are three great achievements, which Global Platform has succeeded in 2 years. The first achievement is to reach wide variety of organizations

around the world. In addition to that, constructed trust in between them is a great success and accomplishment, which have resulted from establishing an adequate connection between different organizations in the area. The second achievement is to update and open floor to discuss the Right to the City concept providing that sometimes it is not easy to integrate and engage with different visions and approaches on implementation and understanding. This is the reason why there are different inputs and approaches to the concept from variety of countries. The third achievement is inclusion of the Right to the City as one of the main three discussion topics during the Habitat III process. Many people heard the Right to the City for the first time in their lives during this immense campaign and discussion environment. Thousands of people were attracted and informed in this manner whereas people showed great interest to understand and learn the Right to the City with its dimensions. This obvious impact on social level can only be seen in the near future. Slogan of Cities for All and the Right to the City is in the final document at least as a shared vision even if it is only one paragraph.¹⁰⁰

According to Rodrigo Faria, the most difficult aspect is connecting different urban realities, needs, and agenda in one single banner namely the Right to the City providing that there is a tension between conceptualization and reality. Rodrigo Faria says that the easiest aspect is the situation, in which everyone has his or her Right to the City violated in a way. In other words, there is nobody who managed to reach 100 per cent accomplished and fulfilled this collective and diffuse right. However, it is not easy to solve and reach to an ideal end. In a time perspective, you have to communicate with general public and attract their attention, which is another challenge.

Rodrigo Faria finds the question on the Right to the City as one of human rights very complex. As there is an ongoing discussion in the Platform to rely on the existing human rights framework, most of the Platform members would agree that the Right to the City is a Human Right. However, it is still an open-ended question. In the future, there might be some progress in this issue. Moreover, according to him, the Right to

¹⁰⁰ Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All (n 52).

the City is a human right which nobody is aware of it whereas there is no need for treaties or conventions to mention this existing right providing that they do not make sense that much in daily lives of people. Consequently, social change and transformation needs time for realization in the political, economic, social, and spatial scale.

The Right to the City has a strong relationship with Human Rights in general in terms of right to adequate housing, right to food, right to water in general which are fundamental rights to exercise and fulfill the Right to the City. In terms of democracy, it is impossible to implement or exercise the Right to the City without democratic means and fundamentals. Thus, urban planning processes should be inclusive and participatory. This is a democratic key component of the Right to the City. Surprisingly, it is strange that in the New Urban Agenda democracy as a word never mentioned. This shows inconveniences of drafting international document how this is tricky and open to manipulation and distraction. .

Regarding the future plans, 2017 will be the decision-making and projection year for the Platform. Global Platform will continue to disseminate the Right to the City and try to reach and engage with deeper implementation levels in local levels in order to integrate broader experiences throughout their effort. One important and crucial future contribution might be spreading motto of the Right to the City as much as possible to strengthen and raise support and awareness on this issue.

Impacts, Opportunities, and Challenges

In this chapter, the main goal is to reveal impacts, opportunities and challenges of multi-actor structure of the Right to the City. The question raised (research question) in the beginning is going to dominate this discussion on whether work/actions/efforts of key actors compete or comply with each other. Additionally, one of the main arguments of this thesis is about the vagueness of the conceptualization of the Right to the City, in which different actors made their own definitions. This point also needs a clarification to make an analytical discussion and elaboration.

In brief, there is compliance between efforts of key actors in terms of the Right to the City in different scales. A competition between them is not found after all of the analysis. Each actor has its own agenda. On the other hand, there are common documents as Charters (mentioned in detailed above) that all actors rely on and initiate their actions.

a. Impacts

It is obvious that international meetings, conferences, working groups provide an environment that stakeholders can join and share their experiences. Interaction between other key players might trigger new ideas, projects, collaborations as it was happened after Rio Earth Summit (1992) and Habitat II Istanbul Conference (1996). In order to grasp merits and outcomes of that kind of events may require them. For this reason, as it is agreed by everybody, the Right to the City was one of the most attractive topics of the Habitat III Conference in Quito, Ecuador, which was held in 2016. The gatherings and new ideas might be occurred to develop mechanisms, policy tools, and implementations. By doing so, sharing experiences and learning from each other is the main goals to attend that kind of massive events. Its impact can be seen in the near future on upcoming decades even if the New Urban Agenda could not satisfy participant parties in Habitat III Conference and all over the world.

Interestingly, there are some actors that play very fundamental and crucial role. Global Platform for Right to the City, United Cities and Local Governments, Habitat International Coalition are key actors as leading NGO's in this manner. Especially, in the past, Habitat International Coalition initiated and collaborated with different scale actors by assisting policy implementations or preparatory processes for Charters both globally and locally. It can be said that HIC played a key role as an orchestrator in peculiar events. UCLG has a very big network in terms of more than 1000 municipal members both locally and regionally. Influential area of UCLG is beyond the borders and continents. UCLG also played key roles as an orchestrator in some relevant examples. Even if Global Platform is a recent organization founded in 2015, its capacity and body reaches to many different locals and geographical contexts. Their locus is going to expand and widen its territorial basis. Their participation and advocacy in general terms will bring merits and achievements more than expected in the future. They have know-how to deal with different actors and conditions

regardless of geographical location.

b. Opportunities

Henri Lefebvre firstly mentioned and invented the term ‘the Right to the City’, which is required and taken further elaborations and explanations in the following years from him and Critical Urban Theorists. Lefebvre in his later writings stressed that he is not referring to city that all we agreed on and perceived at first insight. He refers to the every human settlement regardless of their location, capacity, size, scale or structure. Thus, urban is a better use for his terminology. There should not be any misunderstandings or misconceptions regarding the urban and rural from now on. Rural areas are increasingly becoming parts of urban and linked to the urban, according to him.

Human Rights Cities as a concept is more simple and easy to understand when it is compared to the Right to the City. Human Rights Cities are committed to fulfill their requirements on human rights stemming from international and regional charters, agreements, or treaties. This commitment contains promotion and protection of enshrined human rights in cities by local policies. So, Human Rights Cities does not carry a mission to reach and demand for further exercise of rights and introducing a new political agenda against destructive system of certain mode of capitalism, so-called neoliberalism and globalization. Nevertheless, The Right to the City conceptualization demands for a further exercise of rights and shared jurisdiction of responsibilities and authority on urban life which can be produced, (re)produced, and occupied by urban dwellers.

Mainly, as a general fact, the Right to the City is being codified in different Charters, Guideline Documents, Blueprints and Policy Papers even if it is not ratified as a human right per se by UN’s international mechanisms and treaties. However, the Right to the City is being implemented in many local or national contexts in accordance with local, regional, national or international charters. In order words, the Right to the City is subject of many documents that give legal entity to the concept. From now on, the next step and emphasis should be directed through monitoring mechanisms and follow-up governance of these policies in different levels. This point might take criticisms from radical urban theorists but there is a need for a documented

guideline for the Right to the City. The concept cannot be released to space as it lands whenever and wherever it suits well. Moreover, an intention to write or draft a policy paper or charter for the Right to the City requires certain steps such as defining the concept and determining its scope and content. Therefore, it should be accepted that preparing a document on a very complex concept is not that much easy to deal with.

c. Challenges

The Right to the City has attracted very significant attention and gained fundamental importance in recent decades. This significance stems from existing urban crisis, which is caused by rapid urbanization and lack of decent conditions of urban areas. There is a high demand for a sustainable solution to change this destiny of cities. However, everybody adopts it to its certain ongoing system. Therefore, the Right to the City and Human Rights Cities have resonated different meanings, understandings and implementations in multi scale levels of governance throughout the world depending on urbanization process and *a priori* political, economic, social, spatial and environmental characteristics. For this reason, it is really difficult to reach a common understanding, implementation or struggle. Each document, organization, manifestation, and plan has its own unique characteristics. It is a natural result of high attraction through the concept in line with sustainability which is also discussable in a certain extent.

The Right to the City is a pursuit for inclusive, just, equal, non-discriminatory urban life where all distinguished human rights are provided, fulfilled, and protected. Moreover, the Right to the City is not only an ideal, but also a deeply struggle against capitalist mode of production, accumulation and intervention to urban life. The Right to the City is a process that requires a holistic understanding and reason to change existing structure of urban life in accordance with common interest which is open to manipulation and intervention. Furthermore, it is so obvious that the current system is prone to deficits and inequalities even if human rights are protected in binding documents such as specific covenants and conventions.

In terms of governance of the Right to the City, there is a multi-actor structure of different level organizations as it was proposed before. After overall analytical analysis and comparisons for this research, it has been found that there is a certain

need for a further coordination in terms of the Right to the City. However, nature of the concept does not let this kind of coordination.

There is a certain difference in between Global South and European understanding of the Right to the City, which depends on historical background of urbanization processes that had taken place in those territories. In the Global South, the Right to the City is defined in parallel with Henri Lefebvre's conceptualization; whereas in Europe, Human Rights Cities approach is more widespread rather than the Right to the City that demands for more radical understanding of politics and social matters. Moreover, the Right to the City is a claim to question capitalist accumulation, intervention and mode of production. It can be argued that these policy implementations in Global South are based on more bottom-to-up mobilizations. However, in European context, mobilization of policy implementations has a characteristic of up-to-bottom, for instance, municipal authorities declare that they carry the benchmark of the 'human rights cities'. In Global South, urban social movements, international NGO's, and national/federal/local governmental bodies work in collaboration.

Conclusion

This thesis tries to provide an analytical analysis and comparison of key actors who play significant roles in the Right to the City issue including supranational, international, regional, national and local institutions/governmental bodies/NGO's/social movements efforts in different scales and geographical locations. First of all, general historical background information is given in the introduction chapter in order to understand better under which conditions the Right to the City was emerged. Secondly, as methodology of this thesis, research on the relevant conceptual framework has been elaborated to basis of the conceptualization and main contribution from different academics. Thirdly, global charters, policy documents, national, federal and regional laws, local policy guidelines are analyzed. Moreover, Skype interviews with representatives of two prominent NGO's and two written interviews have been accomplished. Lastly, after all of this wide-ranged analysis, impacts, opportunities and challenges have been discussed as relevant data

have been collected through both conceptual framework researches, interviews with NGO's and document analysis.

Main findings are so relevant to the research question and main argument of this thesis. The conceptualization of the Right to the City differs one to another actor. Each actor includes its own understanding and approach to the implementation of the Right to the City. The vagueness of the concept does not stem from the academic elaborations or discussions. Critical urban theorists contributed to the Right to the City as they approach to politics, economy, society, environment, and urban space. Vagueness stems from different conceptualization frameworks drawn by actors from different scales and territories. There is an exact need for further coordination in terms of the Right to the City advocacy and implementation. This need can be met by the Global Platform as its importance and significance mentioned before. United Nations as an international governmental organ is not effectively active in these processes. The desire to integrate the Right to the City to UN system does not exist in the UN body. International NGO's achieve utmost merits and results by performing as orchestrators between different scales structures of governance. High mobilization of NGO's is admirable. Local governments and municipalities have great motivation to implement the Right to the City or Human Rights City policy frameworks through their local policies. They are aware of the importance and significance of the term.

The best affirmative definition of the Right to the City, which is given before, as follows: 'the Right to the City is a claim for an ideal that does not exist today. This claim refers to a unitary, collective, and diffuse right to include all rights and full exercise of them in a socially just, inclusive, democratic, and sustainable city.'

Definitions may vary in accordance with the contextual background. Thus, implications, policy implementations, and frameworks may differ from one to another. However, it should be noticed that urban areas deal with a crisis where their veins are blocked to reproduce themselves for a decent urban life. In this regard, the Right to the City and its political, social, economic, environmental and spatial agenda should be taken into consideration more and more accurately in order to solve

problems arising in urban areas. If these problems are not solved today or left to market conditions to solve them, a potential urban disaster is approaching in the near future. It should not be understood as a pessimist view. All projections and facts have shown this. In China, for instance, there are some cities where pollution rates are over thousands times than the nominal values that World Health Organization determined. As a last word in this thesis, 'Cities belong to its citizens!' can be the best option that fits to overall research and discussion.

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Annexes

Annex 1 - Interview Questions

Ch.1 - Introduction

1. Could you please shortly describe yourself and your position in your institution

Ch.2 - Definition of the ‘Right to the City’

2. Is there an official/agreed upon definition of the ‘Right to the City’ within your institution/movement/NGO? If yes, could you please refer to it?
3. There are a lot of concepts that can be affiliated with the ‘Right to the City’ such as citizenship, development, social justice, sustainability etc.

Does your institution/movement/NGO affiliate one of these or more in its specific work in terms of the ‘Right to the City’? If yes, could you please explain to what extent these affiliations have been considered?

Ch.3 - Relations with Other Institutions/Movements/NGO’s

4. Do you have any collaboration with other institutions/movements/NGO’s in terms of the ‘Right to the City’? If yes, to what extent and how this collaboration have taken place?
5. Do you think that there is a need for (further) coordination for the ‘Right to the City’ efforts at different levels?

Ch.4 – Praxis and Achievements of the Right to the City

6. What kind of achievements has your institution/movement/NGO succeeded in your work related to the ‘Right to the City’?
7. What is the most difficult aspect in praxis of the ‘Right to the City’? Could you please shortly explain why?
8. What is the easiest aspect in praxis of the ‘Right to the City’? Could you please shortly explain why?
9. Does your institution/movement/NGO consider the ‘Right to the City’ as a human right? If yes, could you please shortly elaborate on this?
10. According to your institution/movement/NGO, what is the relationship between the ‘Right to the City’ and human rights?
11. According to your institution/movement/NGO, what is the relationship between the ‘Right to the City’ and democracy/democratisation?

Ch.5 - Future Projections

12. Does your institution/movement/NGO have any future plans in this specific area? If yes, could you please refer to them?
13. What kind of contributions/actions do you think are necessary to further promote/provide this evolving concept of the ‘Right to the City’?