HOUSING. IT’S A HUMAN RIGHT.

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widows’ or of old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25 (1)

“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.”

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 11 (1)

Adequacy = legal security of tenure + availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure + affordability + habitability + accessibility + location + cultural adequacy.

UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, OC 4

“Shelter for a human being, therefore, is not a mere protection of his life and limb. It is home where he has opportunities to grow physically, mentally, intellectually and spiritually...The right to shelter, therefore, does not mean a mere right to a roof over one’s head but right to all the infrastructure necessary to enable them to live and develop as a human being.”


THE URBAN CONTEXT – CURRENT TENSIONS

By 2025, 20% of the world’s population will live in unsafe, inadequate or unaffordable housing

- 100 million people live in the streets globally while millions of homes remain empty.

- Displacement and Gentrification
- Increased Economic Opportunities
- Improved Transportation and Mobility
- Spatial Segregation and Social Exclusion
- Environmental Improvements
- Risks to Cultural Heritage

FUTURE CITIES AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

HAS INTERNATIONAL LAW CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN CITIES?

HOW CAN INTERNATIONAL LAW BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION MOVING FORWARD?

TO WHAT EXTENT SHOULD THE RIGHT TO HOUSING DEFINE ‘SUCCESSFUL CITIES OF THE FUTURE’?

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS IN FOSTERING INCLUSIVE CITIES?

Kaara Martinez
PhD Candidate, Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge
km655@cam.ac.uk