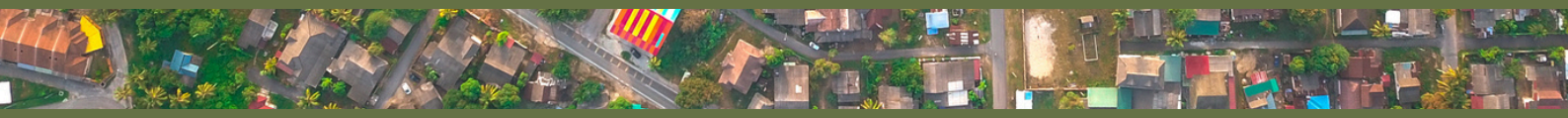


Land and the right to adequate housing

Hybrid side event on the margins of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly

Thursday 16 October 2025, 10:00-11:30 AM EDT



Venue: The New School, Arnold Hall, The Hirshorn Suite, Room I203. 55 West 13th Street, New York City, 10011.
Register here for in-person attendance

To join online: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83179583143
Password: 394185

It is necessary to move away from the idea of land as a commodified asset for investors to speculate over or as a State asset that can ignore the rights of those living on it. Land should be reframed as an essential component of the right to adequate housing. This is what the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing has argued in his latest report to the General Assembly.

Guided by this report, the panel will discuss challenges and good practices to ensure that land and housing are made accessible for the benefit of all.

Moderator:

- Ms. Jonathan Passmoor, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of South Africa to the UN

Speakers:

- Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing
- Ms. Grace Chikumo-Mtonga, President of Habitat International Coalition (HIC)
- Ms. Ombretta Tempra, Chief of the Land, Housing and Shelter Section at UN-Habitat
- Mr. Michael Fakhri, Special Rapporteur on the right to food
- Ms. Ramya J. Kudekallu, Human Rights and Atrocity Prevention Clinic, Cardozo School of Law



Read the report: A/80/351

INTERNATIONAL LAND COALITION | UNITED FOR LAND RIGHTS

Habitat International Coalition
Coalición Internacional del Hábitat
Coalition Internationale de l'Habitat
Coalizão Internacional do Habitat
التحالف الدولي للموئل
अंतरराष्ट्रीय पर्यावास गठबंधन
HIC

SPECIAL PROCEDURES
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Mr. Passmoor has 18 years' experience in International Relations having worked for the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Foreign Ministry) since 2007. He is currently the Counsellor for Human Rights, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development at the South African Permanent Mission.

About the speakers:



Mr. Rajagopal is the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing. He is Professor of Law and Development at the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). His current report to the General Assembly discusses the various dimensions of land and the right to adequate housing.



Ms. Chikumo-Mtonga was appointed president of Habitat International Coalition (HIC) in 2024. Prior to joining HIC, she coordinated lobby and advocacy programmes for housing networks and facilitated linkages with other service providers in an effort to contribute towards equitable access to housing, land and social amenities by the vulnerable and marginalized groups in Zambia.



Ms. Tempra is the Chief of the Land, Housing and Shelter Section at UN-Habitat. She leads the Intergovernmental Open-Ended Working Group on Adequate Housing for All, the UN-Habitat's global housing portfolio and coordinates the Global Land Tool Network and the Arab Land Initiative. She has over 20 years of experience in international urban development, land governance, housing, slum upgrading, displacement solutions, and the advancement of women's empowerment in developing and crisis-affected contexts.



Mr. Fakhri is the Special Rapporteur on the right to food. He is a professor at the University of Oregon School of Law where he teaches courses on human rights, food law, development, and commercial law. His next thematic report to the Human Rights Council will discuss the importance of land for the realization and protection of to the right to food.



Ms. Kudekallu is a human rights practitioner and clinical educator of law. Her research and advocacy focus on anti-discrimination and situational vulnerability, particularly how constructs of identity such as gender, race, caste, religion etc contribute to communities being targets of violence and discrimination. Prior to her work in the U.S., Ramya practiced at the Alternative Law Forum in India advocating for the democratization of urban spaces and ensuring all city inhabitants can participate in the vision and use of their cities.