

Handout 14.3

Selected international legal provisions guaranteeing the right to housing

Article 25 (1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

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, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control (emphasis added).

Article 5 (e) (iii) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination:

In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in Article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

- (e) Economic, social and cultural rights, in particular:
 - (i) The rights to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration;
 - (ii) The right to form and join trade unions;
 - (iii) **The right to housing;**
 - (iv) The right to public health, medical care, social security and social services;
 - (v) The right to education and training;
 - (vi) The right to equal participation in cultural activities (emphasis added).

Article 14 (2) (h) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

- (h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to **housing**, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications (emphasis added).

Article 27 (3) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and **housing** (emphasis added).

Article 31 of the European Social Charter (Revised) 1996:

With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed:

1. to promote access to housing of an adequate standard;
2. to prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination;
3. to make the price of housing accessible to those without adequate resources.

Article 8 (1) of the Declaration on the Right to Development:

States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realization of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, **housing**, employment and the fair distribution of income. Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process. Appropriate economic and social reforms should be carried out with a view to eradicating all social injustices. (emphasis added).

Note: For information about the work carried out within the framework of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), as well as the text of the **Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlement in the New Millennium**, see www.unhabitat.org.