

## Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context

A Special Rapporteur is an independent expert appointed by the Human Rights Council to examine and report back on a country situation or a specific human rights theme. This position is honorary and the expert is not United Nations staff nor paid for his/her work. The Special Rapporteurs are part of the [Special Procedures](#) of the Human Rights Council.

Since June 2014, the Special Rapporteur on the right to housing is [Leilani Farha](#).

For more on Special Rapporteurs, please refer to [Fact Sheet N° 27: Seventeen Frequently Asked Questions about United Nations Special Rapporteurs](#).

### The right to adequate housing



Housing is the basis of stability and security for an individual or family. The centre of our social, emotional and sometimes economic lives, a home should be a sanctuary; a place to live in peace, security and dignity.

Increasingly viewed as a commodity, housing is most importantly a human right. Under international law, to be *adequately* housed means having secure tenure – not having to worry about being evicted or having your home or

lands taken away. It means living somewhere that is in keeping with your culture, and having access to appropriate services, schools, and employment.

The right to housing is interdependent with a number of other human rights: rights to health, to education, to employment, but also to non-discrimination and equality, to freedom of association or freedom from violence, and ultimately to the right to life.

Too often violations of the right to housing occur with impunity. In part, this is because at the domestic level housing is rarely treated as a human right. The key to ensuring adequate housing is the implementation of this human right through appropriate government policy and programmes, including national housing strategies.

### Focus of the Mandate 2014-2017

Deeply concerned by the large and widening gap between the standards that have been developed on the right to housing, the Special Rapporteur will focus her work on how international human rights norms on the right to housing can be transformed into domestic law and policy. Particular attention will be given to some of the most vulnerable populations: women, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, Indigenous peoples and people living in poverty.

Thematically, the Special Rapporteur will focus on supporting national-international interaction, clarifying the obligations of States with respect to progressive realization, resource allocation, and equality and non-discrimination with respect to the implementation of the right to housing. Further attention will be paid to: homelessness,

### Latest News

[Kosovo\\* / Right to housing: Deep gap between law and reality, UN expert says](#)  
28 May 2015

[Press Statement Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Ms Leilani Farha Visit to Serbia, including Kosovo](#)  
26 May 2015

[More press releases and statements](#)

### Mandate Highlights

[Questionnaire on Habitat III for upcoming report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to housing. Deadline: 30 June 2015](#)

[Keynote speech by Leilani Farha at Latin America & Caribbean Forum on "Housing for life", Monterrey, Mexico, 6 May 2015](#)

[Interview in italian- Alterconomia](#)

[Every time winter's extreme cold claims a life, we have failed the homeless by Leilani Farha in the Guardian -US edition, 3 March 2015](#)

[La lucha por la tierra se libra en las ciudades latinoamericanas, El Pais, 11 Febrero 2015](#)

[Report to the HRC 2015: Human rights and the obligations of local governments in housing](#)

### Special Rapporteur

[Ms. Leilani FARHA](#)  
(Canada), since June 2014

### Previous Special Rapporteurs

[Ms. Raquel ROLNIK](#)  
(Brazil), 2008-2014

[Mr. Miloon KOTHARI](#)  
(India), 2000-2008

### Contact

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### Current Topics

[Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda from the perspective of the right to adequate housing](#)

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housing strategies framed in human rights, access to justice and remedies for violations of the right, the right to housing in the context of the post-2015 agenda and Habitat III, and the roles of national and sub-national governments in the realization of the right to adequate housing.

For more details on her priorities see the [report](#) of the UN General Assembly in 2014.

**The right to housing is not just a rallying cry. It, like human rights more generally, offers concrete standards that can be implemented and measured for progress. The results can be transformative and can shift us away from charity toward social justice.**

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ISSUE IN FOCUS

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**Report on human rights obligations of subnational governments with respect to housing**

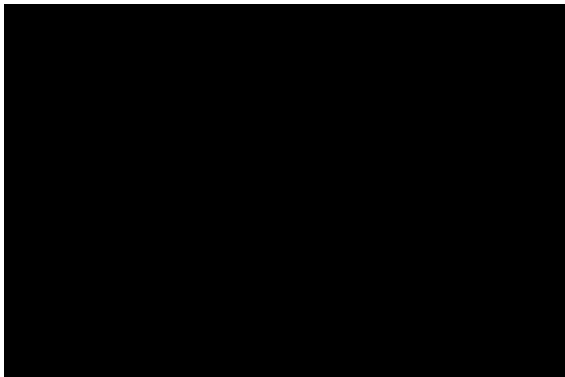


The report to the Human Rights Council ([A/HRC/28/62](#)) considers how local and other subnational levels of government can be fully engaged in the realization of the right to adequate housing. In the Special Rapporteur’s view, local and subnational governments have growing responsibilities to implement

the right to adequate housing, but face numerous challenges to do so. States must ensure that they have the capacity and resources needed to fulfil those obligations particularly in light of the trend towards decentralization of responsibilities.

The Special Rapporteur emphasizes the importance of international human rights mechanisms engaging constructively with local governments. The report finds inspiration from emerging human rights initiatives bringing together cities and subnational governments, civil society, community-based organizations and human rights institutions and underscores the benefit of interactive relationships with local struggles for the realization of the right to adequate housing.

VIDEO



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