The Latin American Secretariat for Popular Housing (SELVIP), meeting in the Seminar "Rethinking the cities from the grassroots" on 7–9 June 2000 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil and in preparation for the World Assembly of Urban Inhabitants, hereby publicly presents its proposals and reaffirms its commitment to the struggle and building of just and democratic cities.

We want livable, inclusive, educational, healthy, sustainable, solidarity, safe, democratic, productive and enjoyable cities.

To build them requires structural changes that remove our cities from the neoliberal path which has only deepened the social inequities and the concentration of wealth, towards a more just society where wealth and land are shared by all.

We want to present some of the tools of this citizen mutirao-mutual-aid crusade:

- popular participation at all levels, with public policy management and social control mechanisms, through councils, democratic budgets,
- and fiscalization and decision-making channels in regards to the use of public resources, that orient citizens and impede corruption;
- self-managed programs in which the organized civil society is a subject of public policies;
- stimulate the organization and the recognition and respect of the cultural identity of all peoples; and the promotion of the self-esteem and identity of the inhabitants with their city;
- recognize public spaces as citizen spaces for all, reverting their abandonment and appropriation in favor of private spaces;
- democratization of the city, guaranteeing the decentralization of opportunities, reverting the process of territorial exclusion and occupying the barren spaces of the consolidated city for popular housing;
- housing policies that guarantee the full implementation of the right to housing as a human right, through regularization of the settlements, nonexcluding legislation, and urban housing production;
- understand that dignified housing is the house with quality and comfort, with all infrastructure and public services, close to social recreational and cultural facilities, transportation and employment;
- education policies that form the citizen to be conscious of his or her rights and provide training for production;
- combat social exclusion with inclusive policies and employment generation;
• creation of policies that revert gender inequities, as self-managed processes in which women are the protagonists;
• combat urban violence, through the valuation of public space and through inclusive policies directed especially to youth with training, opportunities, recreation and sports;
• construction of sustainable urban and production policies;
• defense of the urban environment, integrating humans and nature and building balanced ecological alternatives.

We call on the population, public authorities, universities, popular movements, churches and labor unions to join this broad mutual-aid crusade.

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