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## UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

The right to housing is the right to live in peace, security and dignity.



## RIGHT TO HOUSING

SEPTEMBER ISSUE

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shift

### THE SHIFT

**A new worldwide movement to reclaim and realize the fundamental human right to housing.**

In the first week of June, the Special Rapporteur, in partnership with United Cities, Local Governments and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, took a big step in launching The Shift. A group of diverse stakeholders gathered in Ottawa, Canada to hammer out The Shift's short and long-term goals, and key points of action.

During the two-day meeting, it was agreed that this bold new initiative is necessary if we want to challenge housing as a commodity and reclaim it as a human right to ensure the most disadvantaged groups can live and participate in their communities of choice.

**Future Shifters are everywhere!** The Shift will develop and grow a global community of people by linking all those invested in the right to housing, from grassroots movements, to private sector businesses, to international human rights organizations.

The Shift will harness the energy and activities that are taking place across the globe to highlight and expose the ways many stakeholders are rejecting the current housing paradigm that results in the expulsion and displacement of people from their homes and communities. These activities might be led by peoples movements, politicians, academics, lawyers, artists and may take place in courtrooms, in government hallways, or on the streets.



If you are a #Shifter and are interested in learning more about The Shift, or if you are undertaking an activity that might be a ShiftEvent, please let us know: [info@unhousingrapp.org](mailto:info@unhousingrapp.org), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#). #MakeTheShift

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## CHILE

In April, Leilani conducted a mission to Chile to assess the progress of the full realization of the human right to housing for those living in Chile. While there, she met with senior government officials, civil society and community organizations, and local residents in Santiago, Antofagasta, Valparaiso, Viña del Mar, and Temuco.

In between earthquakes, of which she experienced three(!), Leilani was able to uncover a diverse range of housing issues. [In her preliminary findings](#), Leilani noted that, 'Inequality is one of the hallmarks of Chilean society, and this is starkly apparent in the housing situation in the country.' The strong market driven approach to housing consistently employed by the government has created a sharp division between neighbourhoods based on quality of housing and services available, ultimately leading to the segregation of people based on socio-economic status. Moreover, the Rapporteur was shocked at the treatment of those living



### HOW WE LIVE

This is Lida, her daughters are Lurbin, Beberlin and Kimberly and they live in Trujillo, Honduras. Lurbin, who Lida is holding, has cerebral palsy and epilepsy. After their home was burnt down last year, the organization *Fundacion Manos Chicas, Corazones Grandes (Small Hands, Big Hearts)* helped the family build a new home. The organization also helps provide Lurbin's treatment. Having a safe and stable place to call home is fundamental to the success of Lurbin's health and happiness, and to the general well-being of her family.

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many of whom are older  
who receive no government

ations, Leilani states,  
a human right, signalling  
housing is a commodity I  
Chile will continue to  
which is unacceptable.'

ssion will be presented to  
s 35<sup>th</sup> Session in March



COUNTRY MISSION - CHILE

FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES,  
ACCESS TO SAFE AND SECURE  
**ADEQUATE HOUSING**  
WITH COMMUNITY SERVICES AND  
SUPPORT  
IS OFTEN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN:

**LIFE AND DEATH,  
SECURITY AND ABUSE, AND  
BELONGING AND ISOLATION.**

**The Right to Housing for Persons with  
Disabilities**  
UN Report by Leilani Farha  
UN Special Rapporteur on the right to housing

**NEW REPORT - THE RIGHT TO HOUSING FOR PERSONS WITH**

## DISABILITIES

Leilani's new report to the UN General Assembly focuses on the right to housing of persons with disabilities. Around the world, the right to housing – a place to live in dignity and security, and to be included in community life with access to services and supports – remains beyond reach for most persons with disabilities. Action to realize and protect the right to housing for persons with disabilities have been largely ignored by legislative and policy initiatives globally.

The report considers how the “disability human rights paradigm” developed through the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities breathes life into the right to adequate housing. Leilani highlights fundamental principles of a human rights approach to disability, such as dignity, substantive equality, accessibility and participation, as well as the over-riding obligation to realize the right to housing to the maximum of available resources, and correlates them to the key features of the right to adequate housing. She reflects on how persons with disabilities can more effectively claim the right to housing, how courts and tribunals can better address it, and reviews some effective policy and legislative initiatives that are necessary to implement this right.

The report concludes with key recommendations highlighting the transformative potential of the disability human rights paradigm and how it must be better harnessed in order to realize the right to housing of persons with disabilities in accordance with commitments of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

Leilani will present this report in front of the United Nations General Assembly on October 23rd, 2017 in the afternoon. Livestream the presentation here: <http://webtv.un.org/live-now>

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## INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS RESEARCH IN MANILA AND JAKARTA

This month, Leilani and her Sr. Aide Bruce Porter, traveled to Manila and Jakarta to research informal settlements in the region for their upcoming report on the Right to Housing and Informal settlements. This report will be published in the fall of 2018.

While there, Leilani was featured as a key speaker at an event in Jakarta's Goethe Institute to discuss the human right to housing. To watch this event click on the link: <https://t.co/tAq2guIiW3>

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## HAVE YOUR SAY ON LEILANI'S UPCOMING REPORT

Leilani invites you to share your input for her upcoming report on human rights

## **HOUSING NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

Oct. 30th. See link for more Info:  
<https://www.housing.org.za/Housing/Pages/HRbasedHousingStrategies.aspx>

### **Johannesburg, South Africa:**

On June 8th, 2017, the Constitutional Court of South Africa issued a ground-breaking decision, setting aside the eviction of 184 residents living in a block of flats in Johannesburg's inner city. In their decision, The Court stressed 'the fundamental importance that a person's home has to the realization of almost all human rights.' The Court stated that all evictions leading to homelessness are unlawful, even when they are carried out with the consent of those affected. It is a strong statement that all individuals facing eviction must be provided with alternative housing.

This decision will have a positive impact on the millions of people across South Africa who are currently living with insecurity of tenure or inadequate housing. Judges will be obliged to protect their interests in the face of eviction until it is assured that no-one will be left homeless.

### **Lagos, Nigeria:**

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, the High Court of Lagos ruled that forced evictions without adequate notice or

resettlement constitute cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in violation of the right to dignity, which is constitutionally protected in Nigeria. This case creates an important precedent signalling that on a go-forward basis forced evictions without adequate notice or resettlement is a violation of the right to dignity, an absolute right in Nigerian constitutional law from which there can be no exceptions. This decision came after nearly a year of evictions, culminating in the most violent eviction ever conducted by the Lagos state government, against the Otodo Gbame waterfront community, on April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 which resulted in the death of one resident. There are over 270,000 residents of other waterfront communities who have been living under threat of eviction, who will now be protected by this decision as long as it is enforced.

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

23 October – Leilani will be present her new report on the Right to Housing for Persons with Disabilities in front of the United Nations General Assembly  
2-3 November – The Shift kick-off meeting for United Cities, Local

## IN THE NEWS

["Liberals will dole out \\$11.2B over decade for housing strategy - and plan to declare housing a right"](#), National Post, September 19, 2017

["Bulldozer in the ring – the abandoned slum dwellers of Mumbai"](#), Priyanka Borpujari, The Hindu, June 18, 2017

["Saudi razing of Shia quarter condemned by UN human rights monitors"](#), Steven Chase, The Globe and Mail, May 28, 2017

["Explainer: the financialisation of housing and what can be done about it"](#), Dallas Rogers, Emma Power, The Conversation, March 22, 2017

["Sleeping rough costs society \\$10,000 per person per year – report"](#), Melissa Davey, The Guardian, March 16, 2017

["As a global commodity, housing has lost its currency as a universal human right"](#), Gregory Scruggs, Citiscope, March 14, 2017

["UN expert warns on global housing crisis"](#), Richard Johnston, Public Finance International, March 3, 2017

["Housing should be seen as a human right. Not a commodity"](#), Patrick Butler, The Guardian, February 28, 2017


["UN report lays bare the waste of treating homes as commodities"](#), Dawn Foster, The Guardian, February 28, 2017






*Leilani Farha (Enric Vives-Rubio)  
Chile Skyline (Carlos Perucca)*

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**Share how you live and you  
could be featured in Leilani's  
next newsletter.**

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Leilani Farha*