Legal NGOs welcome UN Human Rights Council resolution on adequate housing

Today SERI, CALS and the CLC welcome the news from Geneva that a key United Nations (UN) resolution on the right to housing was adopted this morning at the 25th Session of the Human Rights Council.

Yesterday we expressed concern about the South African government’s perceived attempt to ‘water-down’ the resolution - on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living - with a number of last minute amendments. Today the resolution was adopted without a vote or any changes to the text.

The resolution is important as it reiterates the international human rights law commitment to safeguard the right of access to adequate housing. It recognises that security of tenure enhances the enjoyment of the right to adequate housing and is significant to the enjoyment of many other socio-economic and civil and political rights. The resolution specifically reinforces safeguards against arbitrary eviction or the displacement of people with insecure tenure.

The resolution outlines the difficult context in which millions of people around the world struggle for security of tenure and access to adequate housing, especially in urban areas. This includes the extremely high number of people living in unserviced urban settlements and the millions of homeowners who have been affected by mortgage foreclosure on their homes. Further, in recent years there has been “an increase in private housing rentals for the urban poor without a balanced framework to protect tenants and owners, and that rental options for the urban poor are still insufficient and inadequate.”

We are encouraged that the South African government continues to protect and support the right to adequate housing and is using its role constructively within international arenas in order to promote this right globally.

- Read the text of the resolution (as orally revised and adopted without a vote) here.
- Watch the adoption of the resolution at the UN Human Rights Council (28 March 2014) here.

Contact

Jackie Dugard, senior researcher at SERI: jackie@seri-sa.org / 084 240 6187
Bonita Meyersfeld, director at CALS: bonita.meyersfeld@wits.ac.za / 011 717 8622 / 076 755 0257