

International Union of Tenants
International Tenants Day Monday 5th October, 2020

Concept note

Background

The International Tenants Day originated in 1986 when the French tenant organisation Confédération Nationale du Logement (CNL) proposed a special world day for tenants. The board of the IUT agreed and decided on May 22 1986, to designate the first Monday in October as the International Tenants' Day.

The IUT announces a theme each year but tenant organisations are of course free to choose their own topic/theme for this day.

World Habitat Day

The date chosen by the IUT Board was made against the background of the UN resolution taken in December 1985, by the UN General Assembly, to designate the first day of October every year as the World Habitat Day.

Every October, UN-Habitat and partners organise a month of activities, events and discussions on urban sustainability. This year, Urban October activities will begin with World Habitat Day on 5 October.

The purpose of World Habitat Day is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities, and on the basic right of all to adequate shelter. It is also intended to remind the world that we all have the power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities and towns. World Habitat Day was established in 1985 by the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution 40/202, and was first celebrated in 1986. It takes place on the first Monday of October.

The theme of World Habitat Day 2020 is *Housing For All: A better Urban Future*, and the Global Observance will be hosted by the city of Surabaya, in Indonesia.

International Union of Tenants, International Tenants' Day 2020

The day coincides with the United Nations' celebrations and IUT has chosen the same theme as the United Nations:

Housing for All: A Better Urban Future

Housing is a fundamental human right. It has also been central in the battle against the spread of the COVID-19 virus where it can be a matter of life and death. The spread of COVID-19 is spotlighting as well as worsening a pre-existing global housing crisis. Without adequate housing, it is impossible to carry out social distancing and good hygiene practices – and around 1.8 billion people, or more than 20 percent of the world's population, lack adequate housing.

Throughout the pandemic, many local and national governments have put in place mechanisms to protect those who are most vulnerable, including measures to address homelessness and evictions, as well as the provision of basic sanitary services.

However, long-term interventions, focusing on reviewing the current approaches to housing and land are crucial, as they could significantly shape the success or failure of urban areas to respond to extreme events and future post-disaster recovery.

The International Tenants' Day 2020 presents the opportunity to engage in a global discussion on the transformative impact of COVID-19 on the rental sector and to explore how to build societies back better, by leveraging the role of housing as a catalyst for progressively delivering human rights and as a foundation of people's wellbeing. Issues around housing must be at the centre of sustainable and inclusive urban development. Inclusive, affordable and adequate housing is the key to sustainable transformation of our cities and communities. The pandemic offers new opportunities for all stakeholders to participate.

Cities must integrate the vulnerable, poor and excluded in overall city development. Governments need to reshape policies, strategies and legislation for diverse housing solutions for all including the vulnerable, the poor and excluded as well as the key workers and middle income groups

The International Union of Tenants calls for:

- zero evictions from residential properties,
- affordable housing for all including the homeless
- direct financial assistance and rental payment funds for tenants.

IUT and the International Tenants Day 2020 will act as a hub to coordinate and share information about rental solutions and best practice for tenants, and we invite members to share their activities and campaigns with us.

IUT will produce a short film on the theme for the International Tenants' Day. which members can share and translate into their own language if they wish
Each local or regional organisation will be able to design their own activities and celebrations of the International Tenants' Day.

The IUT supports its members in making their own choice at a national or regional level as to which sub-themes they may want to promote.

Stockholm 16 September, 2020

About IUT: The International Union of Tenants (IUT) was founded in 1926 and is a non-governmental and not-for-profit umbrella membership organisation with the purpose of safeguarding tenants' interests and promoting affordable and decent rental housing across the world. Its members consist of 72 national and local tenants' associations in 47 countries. IUT head office is located in Stockholm with an EU representation office in Brussels. IUT considers housing as one of the fundamental rights, which needs to be addressed locally, nationally and internationally. Adequate housing is also one of the safeguards for peace and security.