



ACUERDO POR LA URBANIZACIÓN DE LAS VILLAS

**AGREEMENT FOR THE URBANIZATION OF VILLAS:
TEN POINTS FOR THE SOCIAL AND URBAN
INTEGRATION OF MARGINALIZED**

ACUERDOPORLAURBANIZACION.ORG

**"THE SIGNATORY ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTIES AFFIRM THE NEED TO
PROMOTE THE SOCIAL AND URBAN INTEGRATION OF VILLAS THROUGH
PROCESSES THAT RESPECT AND ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
FOLLOWING LINES OF ACTION."**



VILLAS MUST BE INTEGRATED URBANISTICALLY AND SOCIALLY WITH THE REST OF THE CITY

The city must fully integrate its villas, both socially and urbanistically, as well as address the current situation of segregation. Furthermore, members of these communities must be guaranteed the rights that are currently recognized in legislation and constitution of Argentina.

URBAN AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION BETWEEN VILLAS AND THE CITY¹

Villas first began to emerge during the 1930s. Since then, their residents have continued to build homes, to organize community services, and to develop infrastructures in various areas of the city. The Growth of the villas has continued both in times of crisis and in periods of economic recovery, illustrating the housing deficit which originates from a structural issue in the city, in particular having to do with the ownership of property.

Organizations based in the villas have been calling for complete eradication of these neighborhoods since the 1970s, a demand that was recognized in several jurisdictions of the country². However, to date, this process remains incomplete, and the actions that have been taken have often been characterized by abuses and exploitation of the affected populations. This contributes to the persistence of inequalities, preventing inhabitants of the villas from having access to a daily life of dignity, security, and integrity. The right to adequate housing is of vital importance, seeing as it directly affects the effective realization of other rights, such as those to health, education, and the right to work, which in turn bear on the conditions of social reproduction of the individual, the family, and the population as a whole.

The State has the unequivocal responsibility to urgently advance the social and urban integration of the villas with the rest of the city through plans created with public participation, thereby guaranteeing a number of basic human rights that are formally recognized in various international treaties to which Argentina adheres and whose provisions are essential to provide for all citizens, meaning a life with adequate and secure living conditions³.

¹ Clarification: in this document, despite typological differences, “villa,” “settlement,” and “neighborhood” will be used interchangeably with the understanding that we are referring to issues and possibilities that are common to these territories. In addition, throughout the text we will seek to precisely define the concepts of “urbanization,” “reurbanization,” and “urban integration.” We have chosen to define the terms in a convergent manner, recognizing that in the struggles experienced by different villas, these different terms have been used to articulate similar demands. We understand that for the inhabitants of these neighborhoods and their unique claims, in some cases, it is necessary to choose one of these words in particular in order to define their identity and perspective.

² In the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, refer to Law 148, among others; in the rest of the country, there are several norms surrounding land regularization; recently in the Province of Buenos Aires, the law 14.449 was passed, in addition to various programs at the local, provincial, and national levels.

The urbanization of the villas is a right which must not be reconditioned by opportunities for real estate development or large scale development in the affected neighborhoods. This process must aim to understand the city as a whole, complementing interventionary actions in the villas with new political policies on housing that utilize public resources to improve accessibility and inclusivity, thereby reversing the exclusive tendencies that have been present in the housing market and in projects of urban renovation of recent decades.

Understanding that the home environment can enable opportunities or place restrictions on the development of individuals and communities, (re)urbanizing villas will promote socio-spatial justice in affected areas, beginning with the recognition of a multicultural conception of the city that these neighborhoods express. Reurbanization, therefore, implies beginning from pre-existing configurations and constructions, and from there, plan for and work towards the full coexistence of these communities.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

The State must guarantee equality in the access to and benefit of rights guaranteed to all citizens. Therefore, it is necessary that certain measures are adopted and applied in order to protect women, children, and adolescents in particular, as well as to the LGBTQ community and other victims of violence or vulnerable sectors that live in these neighborhoods. The structural violence which these groups have historically suffered from should especially be taken into consideration.

For this reason, the design and implementation of public policies of urbanization must account for the diversity of the individuals that make up the community with the goal of avoiding the reproduction of inequality and discrimination. The incorporation of a perspective of gender and sexual identity presents an opportunity to remedy existing inequalities and improve the quality of life for vulnerable individuals.



URBANIZATION MUST TAKE PLACE WITH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The determination, planning, and execution of policies of urbanization must deepen democracy in the affected cities, guaranteeing the active participation of the inhabitants of each neighborhood in the process of decision-making in the context of an open and informed debate.

³ To cite a few of the most well known examples: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the American Convention on Human Rights and its expansion in the Protocol of San Salvador; and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF HABITAT AND STRENGTHENING OF SPACES FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Urbanization of the villas must take place with the active participation of the inhabitants and representative organizations of the neighborhoods. This participation should be present in decision making with regards to analysis of neighborhood issues as well as in the design, planning, execution, and evaluation of projects. This also implies respecting the regulatory frameworks currently in place (for example, the law 148 of the City of Buenos Aires and the law 14.449 of the Province of Buenos Aires), the specific laws of each villa, and any legislation that may arise in the future. It is indispensable that the process of urbanization respects those projects which generate habitable, self-constructed spaces, placing value on the knowledge and experience of the builders. For this reason, actions of urbanization should be taken with the consent of the representative organizations of each neighborhood so that its residents may become part of the process, and in doing so, ensure its sustainability. In order to strengthen local participation, the State should include community organizations in instances of decision making at every step of the urbanization process. Furthermore, the State must articulate to these groups the terms of intervention and execution of action in the neighborhood. In respecting existing norms and frameworks, the relationship can be deepened through elected neighborhood councils. Likewise, spaces for participation in each neighborhood will be strengthened through urbanization panels created by inhabitants of the villas along with social and political organizations.

In addition, these efforts should be reinforced through the financing of interdisciplinary teams, chosen by the participation of the organizations that will develop accompanying tasks and provide professional support.

Community participation includes several objectives, including involvement in the processes of creating urbanization programs as well as project management; additionally, it aims to promote empowerment in the demand and realization of each individual's rights. Under no circumstances should it be transformed into a supplementary element to delegate the responsibilities of other actors involved, especially those of the State. This implies that, among other conditions, citizens should be guaranteed full access to public information pertaining to the process of urbanization (for example, reports, censuses, budgets and work plans, as well as their levels of execution), the right to consultation prior to intervention in the neighborhood, and technical support that allows for effective participation in public policies toward villas.

RESPECT AND RECOGNITION OF AUTONOMOUS AND INDEPENDENT PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES CREATED BY THE COMMUNITY

Many villas have updated their community organizations and created new ones with the objective of addressing the different necessities that have been identified in each area. These organizations stimulate community participation in each neighborhood. In the process of urbanization, the State must recognize these diverse organizations that arise in each community, as well as obtain consent and articulate the specific actions that will take place in each neighborhood.



URBANIZATION INVOLVES THE PROVISION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND COLLECTIVE EQUIPMENT EQUAL TO THAT OF THE REST OF THE CITY

Urban infrastructure, for example public services and equipment, must ensure the physical and social integration of the villa into the urban environment, guaranteeing adequate access to public services, common or recreational spaces, educational establishments, health-related services, and connectivity with the rest of the city.

PROVISION OF PUBLIC AND DOMICILIARY INFRASTRUCTURE

The provision of public and domiciliary infrastructure must include in each territory: the supply of drinkable water, sewage drainage, energy (electric and/or gas), and information networks (mail, telephone, internet, television). These services should be operated from their installation by the same entities that are responsible throughout the rest of the city. Access to these services should be guaranteed to the population as a whole, ensuring that inability to pay should never be an impediment to their access. Networks which already exist in the neighborhoods, as well as those that will be incorporated in the process of reurbanization, should depend on the necessary support so that the provision of services can be realized in an adequate manner, keeping in line with projected population growth for no less than 20 years.

Within the public infrastructure, the necessary hydraulic projects must be completed to ensure pre-vention or minimization of flooding, plus those measures that aim to anticipate, prevent, and mitigate environmental risks. The design of each neighborhood project should include aspects related to urban biodiversity in order to guarantee the access to environmental goods and services of local ecosystems.

The service and frequency of collection of solid waste should be in accordance with the necessities of the sector. The neighborhoods should be included in the Plan de Gestión Integral de Residuos Sólidos (Integral Plan for Management of Solid Waste) that is implemented in the rest of the city.

CONSTRUCCIÓN O REVITALIZACIÓN DE EQUIPAMIENTOS COLECTIVOS

Buildings and/or establishments dedicated to education, health, culture, and sports should be constructed or improved. The activities offered in these spaces should be of good quality and should adapt to the necessities of those who attend them, especially those that are related to education and health. It is fundamental to bear in mind that the design and use of communal equipment and spaces should be the result of a participatory process and should especially take into account the perspective of gender. Additionally, it will be necessary to ensure the coverage of emergency medical, security, fire fighting, and civil defense.

GREEN SPACES AND PUBLIC AREAS

Public space can determine the quality of an environment, as it links the city and the citizens and helps foster socio-spatial integration. With this in mind, the existence of public spaces is vital⁴. These spaces should be: open and suitable for recreation, leisure, and physical or sporting activities; sized to scale in accordance with the community where they are located and with regards to the rest of the urban infrastructure; generators of collective neighborhood identities, through design, landscape, and accessories. Part of these public spaces may be designated to promote agricultural practices in each neighborhood, assisting with the creation of organic gardens with the care and participation of the community.

MOBILITY

Understanding that the dynamics of public transportation include, exclude, limit, facilitate, inhibit, or aid with use of and access to the city, it is necessary that total mobility is guaranteed to each individual, beginning with a system of roadways for urban integration and internal organization, reevaluating the preexisting system, and introducing new lanes and access points in order to ensure equal connectivity for vehicles and pedestrians. The dissolution of urban barriers that prevent integration of a neighborhood with its immediate and general surroundings is fundamental, whether that be in completion of work, opening of roads, or creation of pivotal public spaces. This also involves the full resolution of intersections and points of connection in the city's network of roads and highways. Furthermore, it is imperative that these changes are accompanied by policies that incorporate these neighborhoods into the system of public transportation that is offered to the rest of the city (bus, subway, railway, taxi, etc.), remedying the inequality to access to transportation services in various areas of the city and guaranteeing frequent routes to and within the villas.



URBANIZATION IMPLIES ESTABLISHMENT AND INCORPORATION: IT CANNOT INCLUDE FORCED EVICTION OR RELOCATION OUTSIDE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

All policies concerning the villas should avoid eviction and bear in mind the principle of community roots in the process of urbanization. Forced relocation of the population should only be carried out in exceptional cases; in such cases, it should follow a protocol of social responsibility plus respect for the rights of the aforementioned population and should occur within the neighborhood itself.

⁴ The World Health Organization recommends a ratio of 10-15 square meters of green space per inhabitant; the current ratio in the city of Buenos Aires is 5.9 square meters per inhabitant.

URBANIZATION OF THE VILLAS WITHOUT EVICTION

Based on both the national constitution and that of the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, as well as numerous laws and international treaties, the state is obliged to guarantee access to adequate housing. Any populational displacement in villas and precarious settlements is unacceptable, seeing as their inhabitants have already shaped the existing urbanization through the construction of their homes and the surrounding urban environment. For this reason, all policies regarding the villas must avoid eviction—which is to say moving members of the community outside of the neighborhood—and maintain a commitment to the importance of community roots in the process of urban integration, which in turn will help avoid the shifting of state resources to other areas.

RELOCALIZATION OF THE POPULATION ONLY IN EXCEPTIONAL CASES

Relocalization should only take place when it is impossible to find an alternative solution to improve the quality of life for the affected population in the area in which they already reside. Relocalization within the villa should only take place when it is imperative as a part of the processes of generation of infrastructure or public spaces, renovation of housing, or the opening up of consolidated housing blocks. Relocating the population outside of the villa will not constitute an alternative state policy; it will only be considered in exceptional cases in which a serious and demonstrable environmental or structural risk exists which cannot be remedied. In such cases, relocation should be based on the following general principles:

- a) Whenever possible, relocation should be happening in areas of the same neighborhood or nearby neighborhoods, and in the latter case should assume a commitment to the rights of the affected population by avoiding the abrupt uprooting of inhabitants and working to strengthen the relationship between current and future spaces of daily life (places of work, education, healthcare, community spaces, etc.) of the affected population, beginning with an adequate registry (census) of those affected.
- b) Participation of affected inhabitants in all steps of the decision making processes surrounding relocation.
- c) Application of a socially responsible protocol that will serve as a guide for the public officials and professionals who make up the institutional structures in charge of relocation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE PROTOCOL FOR RELOCATION

Such a socially responsible protocol should only be applied when eviction is the only option, and it should be guided by an objective of equity. It must keep in mind that involuntary relocation of a population begins before the movement of any persons involved and does not end until the affected persons have access to a new home. The process as a whole encompasses three main stages: a) the stage prior

to relocation, b) the act of moving, and c) the stage after relocation. These stages, although they are carried out at different moments in time, should be planned and developed together as a unified process. A socially responsible protocol⁵ also requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account the singularities of each situation. It is absolutely necessary to utilize detailed studies with the goal of anticipating possible risks for the affected population and avoid higher costs for both the persons being relocated and the public administrations involved in the process. For this, the protocol must adhere to the following guiding principles:

- *Processes of relocalization require a comprehensive approach, as they involve a change of habitat that modifies the physical spaces and the daily routine of those affected (housing, health care facilities, educational establishments, nutritional resources, and recreational spaces, among other aspects). Furthermore, the singularities of each neighborhood must be taken into account, as well as the diversity of the situations faced by the families that will be relocated, and there should be particular respect and attention given to the perspective of gender, which is an important aspect that is present across all steps of the process.*
- *The authority in charge of relocalization should promote collaboration and communication among the different agencies of the state that are involved in the process. It must also be considered that the process of relocation will have diverse effects on several different populations: a) The population being moved, b) The population of the area that will receive those being moved, and c) The population who will remain waiting to be relocated in the future.*
- *The budget for the relocation process should be prepared and outlined keeping in mind all of its steps—from design to implementation and beyond. It is also necessary to incorporate permanent channels for review of the actions carried out as well as for evaluation of the satisfaction of the affected population in relation to all steps of the process.*



URBANIZATION MUST INCLUDE IMPROVEMENTS TO HOUSING TO GUARANTEE ADE-QUATE LIVING STANDARDS.

Actions of intervention with regards to housing should focus on the restoration of constructed heritage (properties with historical, cultural, architectural value, etc.) They should also work to guarantee decent living conditions as well as accessibility to and connectivity with the existing urban fabric, guaranteeing to the entire population of villas and other marginalized settlements a reversal of precarious living conditions, overcrowding, and housing shortages.

⁵ The Autonomous City and the Province of Buenos Aires must comply with official protocols surrounding relocalization that were developed with the collaboration of various groups, including academic organizations, members of civil society, and community representatives. These protocols are important precedents that can be

REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION OF HOUSING

Improvements and renovations to existing housing should take into account the different social and economic conditions of each family affected, as well as the cultural character of the building, the participation in the planning and carrying out of projects, the selection of materials, the workforce hired, and the necessary technical support. Input from members of the community will be essential in deciding how and where to intervene in the process of “esponjamiento” or “acupuntura,” which refers to the removal of buildings in a housing block to promote better movement and open up space, using small-scale interventions to transform the greater urban fabric. Community participation will allow for the improvement of the largest possible number of dwellings. The design and construction of any expansions/modifications should guarantee decent living conditions for families, considering alternatives of horizontal or vertical construction in terms of structural security. These processes will depend on the necessary professional technical support and laborers, and those who live in the neighborhood should be prioritized in terms of hiring.

PLANNING AND DESIGN OF PROPOSALS FOR HOUSING REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION

Any proposal for renovation should arise from a holistic evaluation, based on a study of each block in urban, habitational, and social terms, as well as a physical survey of the block with regards to the relation and correspondence among individual buildings. The process will be carried out through surveying each dwelling until a comprehensive vision of the formation of the block can be constructed, keeping in mind floor plans and elevation. Depending on the case, the block will be studied either as a whole or divided into sections. The study will highlight the ways of accessing each building (in floor plans and elevation) and along with community members, the habitability of each building and of the block as a whole will be evaluated in terms of ventilation, lighting, ease-ments or right of way, and crowding. This will open up the possibility for the sharing of proposals for the unification and/or relocation of certain dwellings in order to create open spaces and improve the overall habitability of the block.

MENDING THE URBAN FABRIC THROUGH THE OPENING AND REPAIRING OF STREETS

We must begin with a knowledge of the unique requirements of each neighborhood and with respect to existing byways or streets in order to create proposals for new thoroughfares that will guarantee connectivity within the neighborhood and independent access to dwellings with minimal destruction or demolition in the process. Their dimensions of width and height should guarantee conditions of accessibility, ventilation and illumination, and the efficient functioning of water and sewage services. With regards to intervention in and/or around houses that border the streets or passageways to be modified, the same criteria will be observed and respected as in the case of the aforementioned “esponjamiento” or “urban acupuncture.” This will require studying the city

blocks that are on the edge of the street or thoroughfare in question, and from these observations, creating a proposal of “healing” that will guarantee that habitability of the dwellings affected, using the same criteria of “esponjamiento.”

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF ITS FUTURE INHABITANTS

Quando When the relocation of families is required, the construction of new housing should respect the previously discussed socially responsible protocol. In each case, this process should: a) be de-signed in a participatory manner whenever there is work to be done that will involve interaction between technical teams and the affected population, b) be based on a comprehensive and coor-dinated plan of construction that guarantees the completion of work and the security in each space of dwelling, c) use materials that are of good quality and weather-resistant. The consultation of technical professionals or contractors should not incur any costs to the families affected. Teams of professionals should be selected by the organizations in charge of relocation and should be fi-nanced through special programs. As with the rest of the actions and activities to be undertaken throughout the process of urbanization, the employment of local workers or neighborhood labor cooperatives should be prioritized in carrying out these works of construction.

The selection process of workers and cooperatives should be transparent, as well as the account-ability for the resources invested into each project.

MICROCREDIT AND REVOLVING FUNDS

Interventions on behalf of the State for the improvement of housing should be accompanied by other policies that allow for the completion of additional improvements to be carried out by the in-habitants themselves. For this reason, the State must guarantee, among other measures, a trans-parent policy for affected families to receive credit, and it should rely on the participation of com-munity and social organizations. Special consideration should be given to women who are in charge of their homes and who have children to care for, and to women who are living in situations of violence. The full amount of the loans should be entirely dedicated to the improvement of the neighborhood, and under no circumstances should these credits replace or reduce in any way the responsibility of the State in the development of projects of urban development and housing that are necessary in the process of the urbanization of villas.



URBANIZATION IMPLIES SECURITY OF POSSESSION AND LAND TITLE REGULARIZA-TION

The ownership of land and/or of the housing provided by the state in the villas must guarantee the stability and the permanency of the inhabitants of these neighborhoods, keeping in mind the variety of options for land titling that exist.

PRIORITIZE STABILITY AND PERMANENCY

The secure permanency of families living in villas is a fundamental aspect in the present and future living conditions of these families. It generates the necessary stability for the development of projects at the individual, familial, and community levels. Guaranteeing the secure possession of land to those who inhabit it is a key step in urbanization that can take place through a variety of stable and permanent modes of possession.

GUARANTEE THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF LAND, PROTECTING IT FROM SPECULATIVE INTERESTS

The complexity of this intervention implies the establishment of protections and mixed solutions, that are adapted to each individual project of urbanization. Special attention should be given to ensuring that the social investment of the community or state-owned properties are not transferred to or capitalized upon by agents or processes of real-estate speculation. Additionally, it is absolutely necessary and relevant that the State regulation of the use of property or land is in line with the general interests of the affected population in order to fully comply with norms that dictate the social and environmental functions that property should serve; these guidelines can be found in the National Constitution, following the incorporation in 1994 of international pacts and treaties regarding human rights. Financing of public housing and other investments in infrastructure - in order to be sustainable, viable, and equitable - should rely on funds from various property-management mechanisms, for example: Recovery of urban capital gains, fines on unused or underutilized properties, and fees for real estate developers and construction companies seeking permits. It should also be seen to that housing policies and zoning regarding government-held lands are aimed at meeting the needs of the affected population rather than being the subject of business speculation.



URBANIZATION REQUIRES AN APPROACH WHICH WILL ADDRESS THE HOUSING ISSUES OF RENTERS

The urbanization of the villas will require thorough assessments of the unique living situation of renters and the design of interventions specifically oriented to protect this sector of the population and ensure that they as well have access to the city as well as safe and adequate living conditions.

RECORDS OF THE POPULATION AND CONDITIONS OF LIVING OF TENANTS IN VILLAS

All of the obstacles that restrict transparency regarding the living situation of renters and other pre-carious tenant groups (such as antichresis or receiving housing in exchange for an interest free loan) in the villas. In a similar vein, it is necessary to produce systematic reports on the living conditions of those affected and the percentage of the population that these vulnerable groups make up in the villas. This information should then be used to analyze and determine more precisely the unique living situations being faced by this particular sector of the population.

There is a need for comprehensive and integrated approaches that give visibility to the situation faced by tenants and recognize the right that these citizens have to adequate housing, as well as guarantee their right to participate in the process of urbanization. Therefore, the state must create a holistic and integrated urban policy that guarantees access to adequate housing and to all of the benefits that come out of processes of urbanization and ownership. Such an approach is necessary in order to avoid that tenants become subjects of or victims to property speculation or forced evictions.

FULL ACCESS TO ADEQUATE AND SAFE HOUSING FOR RENTERS AND TENANTS

Those who are currently living in rented housing, along with the rest of those who live in villas, have the right to a safe and adequate living space to facilitate individual and familial development. This implies a necessity to intervene in all those factors that contribute to the deficit in this area, taking into account crowding, health conditions, and ventilation, as well as access to basic infrastructural services and community spaces and equipment. Furthermore, all inhabitants should be able to obtain adequate housing at accessible prices. Tenants are subject to various abuses related to the judicial actions and decisions surrounding renting in villas. It is absolutely necessary that this sector of the population has access to secure and permanent housing, which will imply much more than merely regulating the tenements that currently exist in the villas.

CREATION OF TRANSITORY HOUSING

As part of a wider plan to resolve the housing deficit, it will be necessary to implement systems of systems of public housing in the form of state-owned buildings to be used as transitional housing. The State, through the creation of a Bank of Properties, must guarantee the land and funding for the construction of housing or the renovation of existing buildings that are currently uninhabitable.



URBANIZATION MUST ALSO INCLUDE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Processes of urbanization in the villas must strive for complete integration of marginalized populations, focusing on the exercise of rights, removal of stigmas, and the creation of productive activities that will aid with economic development.

SOCIOCULTURAL INTEGRATION

Sociocultural integration entails fighting all forms of discrimination, whether in speech or in action, toward villas and their inhabitants. There must be an effort to combat stigmas and instead recognize that the inhabitants of these areas are equal citizens with the same rights and obligations as the rest of the city's inhabitants. Furthermore, special effort should be taken to preserve the unique memory and history of each neighborhood. In villas, as in the rest of the city, various communities live alongside each other, each with distinct cultural traditions. In order to facilitate integration, the urbanization process should also include the creation of spaces and conditions that allow for ex-pression of these cultures and traditions for the mutual enrichment of the communities and their members. An issue of particular importance is the nature of official discourse and media coverage surrounding the villas, as these channels have the power to either reinforce or dissolve stereotypes; the creation of media outlets in the villas (many of which opened after new media laws were passed) has been an important step in meeting this goal.

SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Community members in the villas rely on various means of productions in their homes and neigh-borhoods in order to meet their daily needs. Processes of urbanization have often ignored this di-mension, failing to include in their plans provisions to protect and improve the physical conditions necessary for the development of these productive activities, and in some cases, even limiting or destroying the spaces that are required for such activities. Any action of urbanization must be taken with an understanding of the activities and production that takes place in and around the affected neighborhood so that these activities can be allowed to continue. Special care must be taken so that on the path to urbanization or improvement, no opportunities for economic production for the affected populations are missed, jeopardized, or destroyed. Continuing with this line of economic opportunity, projects to be carried out in the urbanization process should prioritize workers with roots in the neighborhoods and the communities affected.



URBANIZATION INCLUDES GUARANTEEING THE RIGHT TO DEMOCRATIC SECURITY AND ACCESS TO THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

All actions taken towards the urbanization of villas and precarious neighborhoods must guarantee the security of the members of the affected communities and seek to end any abusive or unjust treatment by security forces. Similarly, measures should be taken to strengthen the mechanisms currently in place to assure full access to the judicial system.

ACCESS TO THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The majority of those living in the villas face a number of obstacles (economic barriers, distance from judicial facilities, misinformation or lack of information regarding their rights, etc.) when dealing with the judicial system. In some neighborhoods, there are already mechanisms in place whose goal is to facilitate education surrounding and access to the judicial system for persons in vulnerable conditions. In many cases, these organizations also assist with the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Access to the judicial system is a fundamental right without which other rights cannot be exercised. Therefore, there must be changes and improvements made to the government agencies having to do with the judicial system.

SECURITY IN THE VILLAS

The security of citizens is a key condition for social integration, participation, and access to the judicial system for inhabitants of the villas. A comprehensive conception of security encompasses prevention of physical violence, as well as the guarantee of fair and adequate living conditions for all. Therefore, urbanization of the villas must include the creation and implementation of security policies that aim to protect and uphold the rights of the members of these communities. Further-more, an end must be put to the violence and abuse at the hands of the police that has become a daily occurrence in these neighborhoods.

CONTEXTUAL FOCUS

A punitive approach to crime and violence only serves to multiply and intensify the conditions that give rise to acts of crime and violence. Policies that rely only on police action and incarceration do not address the root causes of these issues in the villas--issues of inequality, as well as the isolation and stigmatization of these neighborhoods. Actions taken towards urbanization should be attentive to the context of each particular situation, taking into account the social and institutional causes of violence with the goal of addressing these structural factors. The integration of the villas with the rest of the city requires an approach that relates security

policies with other public policies and complements actions of the penal system with actions on behalf of other state agencies. These government resources should be used to better protect marginalized sectors of the population in order to avoid a further deepening of inequality.

REGULATION AND CONTROL OF SECURITY FORCES IN THE VILLAS

As in any other neighborhood of the city, there should be a police or security presence in the villas. However, these forces should have specific preparation in order to work with all sectors of the community, avoiding violent or discriminatory practices. Furthermore, there should be mechanisms of control in place; these mechanisms should be physically present in the villas and accessible by victims of police abuse and their families.



URBANIZATION MUST BE SUSTAINABLE AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE ENVIRONMENT

The urbanization of villas should involve a system of assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of environmental factors and the impacts of development. The results should be carefully measured and analyzed, enabling the development of new actions to guarantee sustainable urbanization. It is crucial that budget plans include and guarantee these steps, and that these actions be carried out correctly and precisely. Lastly, it is very important to warn communities about the environmental risks present in each neighborhood so that adequate action can be taken to address them.

ASSESSMENT, MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND EX POST ACCOMPANIMENT

The process of urbanization should occur in a transversal or intersecting manner along with actions intended to identify the urban and demographic characteristics of each neighborhood, tracking and follow-up on projects to be completed, and evaluation of results. This way, it can be guaranteed that the process of urbanization will be sustainable over time.

The information included in the assessment, monitoring, evaluation, and ex post report must incorporate perspectives of gender and sexual diversity. The report must include information with regard to housing, the environment, and space—for example, overcrowding, sanitary conditions, exposure to environmental risks, the structural state of buildings, and the access to community resources such as schools or healthcare facilities. Organizations already present in each neighborhood should be able to participate in the design of the censuses and surveys so that, in addition to the aforementioned information, there's the opportunity to include other aspects that were not originally considered by the responsible organism.

In policies of development it is fundamental that provisions are introduced to address urban and populational growth in order to anticipate future needs as much as possible and to ensure that any actions taken be sustainable and long-lasting. The durability of these actions will guarantee the effective, long-term access to basic rights that have been denied to inhabitants of the villas. The process of integrating the villas with the rest of the city requires a plan of action that does not end at physical projects for the regularization of infrastructure or improvements to housing. An effective plan must include deadlines and parameters for state policies to effectively improve living conditions in the villas, integrate them with the rest of the urban environment, and ensure that all actions taken endure over time.

MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Environmental issues are clearly linked with a type of social inequality, which seeing as the greatest risks, are often disproportionately concentrated in marginalized areas. Today, we face a number of environmental risks, villas and marginalized neighborhoods which are the areas most impacted by these issues, especially when considering chemicals or contaminating agents. For this reason, there must be environmental studies to determine the danger of certain natural or technological events and exposure to certain environments or substances. There should also be social studies conducted regarding the social vulnerability due to a general lack of knowledge surrounding environmental issues and how to best manage them. It is necessary to organize a participative model of risk management that involves the affected population from the beginning and establishes mediums of control, mitigation, and/or remediation that will eliminate or minimize environmental risks.

BUDGET FOR THE VILLAS

To guarantee the sustainable urbanization of the villas, it is necessary that in the state budgets, adequate funds be allocated to projects of urbanization and to professional teams. Furthermore, there needs to be a guarantee of sufficient financial support to sustain the process over time. The allocation of funds should correspond with the magnitude of the projects and the anticipated time-line. Also, there should be updates whenever necessary in order to ensure that all materials and work processes are in compliance with the guidelines set forth for public tenders. Financing should also be provided for technical and social support, as well as for necessary repairs or improvements after the projects are completed.

TRANSPARENCY AND CONTROL OF RESOURCES

Processes of urbanization in the villas involve the management and use of a large number of public resources. The State should ensure the proper and legitimate use of these resources, and all actions and policies involving said resources should be transparent and equitable. Information surrounding the costs incurred by the projects, services, and contracting involved in urbanization should be permanently and easily accessible to all.

PRESERVATION AND STRENGTHENING OF COMMUNITY TIES

Many of these neighborhoods tend to rely on strong networks of community organizations. These strong ties are the result of a need to join forces in order to manage the day-to-day needs of the neighborhood, such as the provision of basic services, installation of community equipment, and the resolution of territorial issues. Other organizations focus more specifically on the needs of migrant communities or the development of cultural and recreational activities. In addition, there is a very strong general sense of community, more so than in the rest of the city, that simply arises among neighbors due to proximity. These community ties are extremely important in ensuring the sustainability of urbanized or reurbanized neighborhoods over time, seeing as they are a mechanism through which state-sponsored improvements can be strengthened and expanded upon.

**To add your support, please send an email to:
adhesiones@acuerdoporlaurbanizacion.org with your
information or the information of your organization.**

TO DATE, THE FOLLOWING ARE SUPPORTERS OF THE AGREEMENT FOR THE URBANI-ZATION OF VILLAS:

Alianza Internacional de Habitantes - Latinoamérica; Área de Estudios Urbanos- Instituto de Inves-tigaciones Gino Germani (AEU-IGG); Asamblea Ambiental de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires; Asocia-ción Ciudadana por los Derechos Humanos; Asociación Civil Madre Tierra; ACIJ - Asociación Civil por la Igualdad y la Justicia; ATAJO (Dirección General de Acceso a la Justicia de la Procuración General de la Nación); Carrera de Arquitectura de la Universidad Nacional de Avellaneda; Carrera de Arquitectura y Urbanismo de la Universidad Nacional de La Matanza; Centro De Acción Urbano Ambiental - UNLP; CELS - Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales; Centro de Estudios para el Cambio Social CECS; CEAPI - Centro de Estudios y Acción por la Igualdad; Centro de Hábitat Inclusivo (UBA- FADU); Centro de Justicia y Derechos Humanos (UNLA); Centro de Investigación Hábitat y Municipio (CIHaM -FADU (UBA); Centro Latinoamericano de Derechos Humanos (CLADH); Ciudades Reveladas; CEJIP - Centro para una Justicia Igualitaria y Popular; Colectivo por la Igualdad; Coordinadora de Trabajadores Desocupados Aníbal Verón; Corriente Villera Inde-pendiente; CTA Capital; El Hormiguero; Federación de Villas (FEDEVI); Formación Investigación y Defensa Legal en Argentina (FIDELA); Foro de Organizaciones de Tierra, Infraestructura y Vivien-da de la Provincia de Bs. As. (Fotivba); FOL - Frente de Organizaciones en Lucha; Frente Popular Darío Santillán; Frente Territorial Salvador Herrera; HABITAR Argentina; Instituto de Hábitat Ur-bano del CPAU | Consejo Profesional de Arquitectura y Urbanismo; Instituto de la Espacialidad Humana (FADU (UBA); Instituto del Conurbano de la Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento (ICO-UNGS); La Alameda; Laboratorio de Políticas Públicas (LPP); La USINA; Lxs Invisibles; Maestría en Hábitat y Pobreza Urbana en América Latina (UBA - FADU); Ministerio Público de la Defensa de la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires; Movimiento de Defensa de la Vivienda Familiar (MO.DE.VI.FA.); Movimiento de Ocupantes e Inquilinos; Movimiento Popular Seamos Libres; Ob-servatorio del Derecho a la Ciudad (ODC); Organización 14bis; Organización Popular Cienfuegos; Patria Grande; Poder Ciudadano; Blog Proyecto Riachuelo; Proyecto Habitar (UBA- FADU); Se-cretariado de Enlace de Comunidades Autogestionarias (SEDECA); Taller 36 arquitectura ciudad (T36 AC / FAUD-UNC); Taller forma&proyecto (UBA - FADU); Taller Libre de Proyecto Social (TLPS / UBA- FADU); Turba Talleres De Urbanismo Barrial (TURBA); TECHO - Argentina; Urbana Te ve; WINGU; Organizaciones, representantes y vecinos/as de barrio Fátima; Barrio Los Pileto-nes; Barrio Los Pinos; Playón de Chacarita; Rodrigo Bueno; Villa 1.11.14; Villa 15; Villa 17; Villa 19; Villa 20; Villa 21.24; Villa 31-31bis.