



**Housing and Land Rights Network
Habitat International Coalition**



**Land Forum III:
“Land, People’s Sovereignty
and Self-determination”**

15–17 January 2012

Follow-up Report

Introduction:

The eve of the third round of the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) regional Land Forum fell on the first anniversary of the fall of the former Tunisian regime and just days before the first anniversary of the “25 January Revolution” in Egypt, and in the midst of the events of the struggle of peoples across the region, from Bahrain to Mauritania. It was against this backdrop that the Habitat International Coalition’s Housing and Land Rights Network (HIC-HLRN) organized the Land Forum III, full of hope. The proceedings, proposals and conclusions of the participants reflect the aspirations for liberation and the self-determination of peoples, particularly with regard to land within the frame of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCRs). Their contributions provided abundant information and cases, which many participants encountered for the first time, about people suffering injustice and the deprivation of rights and resources.

The resulting knowledge creation is consistent with HIC-HLRN’s objectives in serving members of the Habitat International Coalition, in general. The main objective of the Land Forum, in particular, is the development of knowledge and capacity of Member organizations—and civil society at large—to address the pressing issues related to land use and management in the region within the framework of their States’ treaty obligations to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. Such knowledge and capabilities achieved through the Land Forum are designed to help participants achieve their own problem-solving goals at the local level through the activities of their own organizations and targeted programs.

The knowledge exchanged in the Land Forum serves participants involved in activities and specialties as diverse as their organizations’ programs, ranging from monitoring and research, negotiation with policy makers, litigation, alternative planning, advocacy and decision making with local and national authorities. Hence, the Land Forum is intended to provide an opportunity for participants to:

- Engage in comparative analysis of land struggles in diverse cases,
- Cooperation/coordination of work and action across CSOs and countries,
- Set a regional research and advocacy agenda on land and human rights,
- Deepen the specialization required in the field of housing and land rights,
- Explore the human rights issues related to women and workers in each case,
- Exchange with participants across the region to address common challenges,
- Address regional issues of land management with human rights methodology,
- Explore networking and advocacy opportunities at local and international levels,
- Develop human rights dimensions of land, natural resources and tenure standards,
- Devise alternative solutions to problems associated with land use and administration.

One tool toward achieving this kind of convergence is the calendar of common events, opportunities, activities, and campaigns over the next two years. HIC-HLRN has developed this tool through the Land Forum so that participants can use and revise it according to developments.

In the intervals between each session, HLRN will provide all services necessary within its resources and capacity, in order to achieve these human rights objectives. In so doing, HLRN already has developed methods and tools such as the Violation Database, methods for the quantification of damages/losses from violations, the *Landpedia*, and services such as the *News* and *Documentation* sections of its website for the MENA region, and HLRN’s global Urgent Action system. To these HLRN recently has added the electronic bulletin *Land Times*, which HLRN publishes periodically in two languages (Arabic and English).

The subject of land in relation to human rights in MENA is broad and varied, but also quite underdeveloped in the region. Therefore, HLRN seeks partnership with a variety of activists,

professionals and experts to develop this field. The presentations and contributions proposed by the participants with each session of the Land Forum contribute to developing the human rights culture related to land and natural resources. This year, the Forum took place amid historic events and changes in the region such that imposed the theme of self-determination of peoples within their States. Exercising this right, in all cases, involves the struggle of peoples to get rid of occupation and other forms of tyranny as indispensable to the realization of all other rights and freedoms. The various contributions to Land Forum III reflected actual developments and converged around three key agreed-upon themes under which to rally civic efforts, namely:

1. Indigenous peoples;
2. Transitional justice;
3. Constitutional, legislative and policy reform on ESCRs.

Since September 2011, HLRN organized serial meetings and activated correspondence with Members to agree on a date of October 2011 for the third session of the Land Forum. However, the circumstances and events rapidly unfolding in Egypt prevented that, due to violence and the long-running electoral process. In consultation with partners and Members, and despite the threat that the Egyptian military government would spread its assault on more civil society organizations, the parties then embraced the decision for the Forum to be held in January 2012, as organizing it in another country would increase costs prohibitively.

Forum consultations involved meetings, correspondence and communication about the presence of representatives of organizations and social movements in Algeria, Egypt, Iran (Aḥwaz), Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Nuba Mountains (South Kordofan, Sudan), Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Western Sahara and Yemen. Representatives from Morocco were unable to travel to Egypt for various reasons, but accepted to distribute two papers on the land issues in their country.

In addition to the national specificity of each case and context, certain common themes emerged in the discussions. Land rights, especially in the context of developing countries in the Middle East and North Africa, inevitably are linked to the rights to food, decent work and other human rights. In many cases, we find the right to land associated with the identity of the community, culture, livelihood, and then as a major cause in the survival of communities.

All papers included varying degrees of displacement and eviction. Some of these involved discrimination and demographic manipulation: The papers on the Nuba Mountains, Aḥwaz, Palestine and the Western Sahara shared these aspects, in particular.

Land in the urban—or urbanization—context evoked discussion of the "Right to the City," with particular reference to the experiences of other HIC Members and social movements in Brazil and Latin American generally.

Conflict and occupation and/or war constituted a common theme also among several cases, particularly Darfur, Libya, Nuba Mountains, Palestine and Western Sahara. Although not in an armed conflict, the case of Aḥwaz (Iran) shared characteristics with internationally recognized cases of occupation.

منتدى الأرض في الشرق الأوسط وشمال إفريقيا
الدورة الثالثة: القاهرة ١٥-١٧ يناير / كانون الثاني ٢٠١٢
الأرض وسيادة الشعوب وتقرير المصير



Brot für die Welt بالتعاون مع
التحالف الدولي للموائل
شبكة حقوق الأرض والسكن

Gender/women's tenure/inheritance were a focus of previous sessions of the Forum, particularly from Morocco, Tunisia and Sudan. The second day of Land Forum III dedicated a portion of the program to oral testimony on the subject of women farmers in Egypt.

Privatization of collective land and public services was also an interstate concern, notably in the papers and presentations from Morocco, Egypt, Iraq and Lebanon. Related land reform and agrarian "antireform" formed a theme repeated in the presentations and testimonies from Egypt. While policy reform formed a principal overarching theme, so, too, was real estate fraud and corruption in land deals an increasingly evident theme across all of the Arab Spring countries, as these violations were the special focus of the papers on Bahrain, Tunisia and Yemen, and testimonies from Egypt.

The case-based discussions each addressed the normative framework as it related to each case, and sought to present problem-solving recommendations. This culminated in the practical aspect on the third day, in which participants identified and committed to actions—especially research and advocacy activities—for the coming period. These included:

At the multilateral level:

- Monitoring progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- Contributions to the work the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the poor;
- Monitoring and critical assessments of multilateral and bilateral programs and projects;
- Developing internet tools for monitoring and documenting human rights and land issues;
- Advocating for a World Court Advisory Opinion on the separation wall in Western Sahara;
- Campaigns and processes for secure tenure of land and housing and good urban governance (related to the ongoing FAO process to develop new guidelines);

On the national level:

- National plans of action for human rights;
- Collaboration with national institutions for human rights;
- Using transitional justice mechanisms in postconflict and transitional situations;
- Advocating to establish commissions on land for restitutions purposes (as in Kenya);
- Other country-specific campaigns at national level (e.g., Urgent Actions on water in Iraq);
- Parallel reporting for country reviews by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (e.g., Egypt).

And at the level of civil society:

- Developing a regional Charter and the "right to the city,"
- Using the World Social Forum to focus on land and water rights,
- Monitoring the new FAO guidelines on land tenure and natural resources locally,
- Developing the "Charter of rights of farmers" linked with La Via Campesina movement.

HLRN will publish a book compiling the edited versions of the Land Forum contributions with annexes capturing the most important points of discussion.



Label of participants' Land Forum III and Land Forum Library CD

The Proceedings

Day 1: 15 January 2012:

The Land Forum III in the Middle East/North Africa started with an opening by the international coordinator of the Housing and Land Rights Network Joseph Schechla, who explained the importance of the Forum, delivered a word of appreciation for the supporters of the Forum (*Brot für die Welt*), reviewed the important issues raised within the human rights framework of the Forum, and reflected on the current changes in the region.

This was followed by a presentation by the HLRN Middle East/North Africa Coordinator Rabie Wahba on the accumulation of work and achievements of the Forum over the past three years since its inception. He cited:

- The regional working groups still working on a seasonal basis, according to events land issues in conflict and occupation situations;
- Support from the Forum to local civil society initiatives in some countries to counter the effects of privatization and monopoly of resources;
- Subsequent reports about the confiscation of land (e.g., Palestine, Iraq, Darfur, Bahrain, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan);
- New community-based social formations advocating access to water, securing legally guaranteed land tenure, and on agricultural production;
- Publication of the first issue of the *Land Times* newsletter by HLRN;
- The compilation of a comprehensive reference list and information resources (relevant reports, legal materials, specialized studies and documentation of land struggles on DVD for Land Forum participants, as well as *Landpedia*;
- Electronic networking with housing and land rights specialists across the region; and
- Documentation of violations, resistance struggles and success stories.

Professor Rami Zreik (American University in Beirut) provided a keynote address that set the stage for subsequent discussions. His was a problem statement of the destructive patterns of land and resource use across the region leading to greater direct and indirect dependence upon imported foods and feed for livestock. He referred to the globalization pressures due to the control of production and pricing by major corporations in the food industry, and the detrimental consequences on food sovereignty across MENA. As an academic with activities in the social movements and civil society, Prof. Zreik spoke of the importance of partnership in developing the research and advocacy agenda, and posing alternative, rational solutions to problems arising from failed and undemocratic policies.

On the first thematic session of the Forum, panelists Sheruan Hassan (Kurdish Syrian) and Adel al-Swaidi (Aḥwaz Arab, Iran) and Āyāt Hamdān (Palestine) covered a range of issues reflecting the “Social Diversity on the Land” (e.g., gender, youth and ethnicity), and the importance of water and land as rights inherent to all humankind as an organic need. Each represented the case of a population whose relationship with the land is at risk. Sustenance and survival on the land of their birth is a daily struggle for minority populations in the region. In the cases presented, Messrs. Hassan and al-Swaidi explained how institutionalized discrimination works in their respective cases, and posed generally agreed upon solutions through the exercise of differing degrees of autonomy. In the Aḥwaz case, the narrative refers back to the independence of “Arabistan” before the territory’s incorporation into Iran after 1916. Mr. Hassan spoke of the formal proposal of autonomy for Kurdish areas within a democratic Syria.

Ms. Hamdān spoke of the campaign to preserve the integral relationship of Palestinian youth with the national land, despite occupation policies to alienate them from land-based culture and livelihood. She addressed the indispensable task of preserving the upcoming generations’ link to the land, so as not to forget the people’s roots and unique identity.

The panel was, in itself, a measure against forgetfulness. Whereas, the social diversity represented in the panel reminded participants of the actual demographic complexity of the region, with major non-Arab populations in States defined as “Arab” (e.g., Libya, Syria), and major Arab populations in States subsumed under other ethnic identifications (e.g., Iran and Israel).

The composition of the participants was reflected in the discussion of balancing development in urban and rural areas, and how development in the countryside has suffered with most attention and investment overwhelmingly favoring urban interests. Within that theme was a discussion of how to strengthen women’s right to access to land, especially in the countryside.

The issue—and term—of “indigenous peoples” raised a lot of controversy, which revealed deep confusion and misunderstanding of the definition and issues related to indigenous peoples and their lands. Certain participants, especially from those peoples under occupation, in particular Palestine, were equivocal about the term “indigenous peoples.” Some objected to the designation of the Palestinians as an indigenous people, based on an assumption that that designation would downgrade Palestinians, including and especially undermine their claim to self-determination in an independent state. That case was seen as quite different from the Arab people of Aḥwaz or the Kurds in Syria as people subject to institutionalized discrimination. Also the question of the Sahrawis living under Moroccan occupation sparked controversy about the possibility of calling them to an indigenous people.

This led to a discussion of the Tibet issue and the Palestinian cause, and the comparative development of population transfer in the respective Holy Cities as their capitals. Mention was made of the HLRN Solidarity Network, formed among Tibetans, Palestinians and Kurds at the Habitat II Conference at Istanbul, in 1996. Added to this was reference to the definition

generally agreed upon since the 1980s in forums of indigenous peoples. That demonstrated that the discussion—and comparative analysis—are not new.

The establishment of industrial zones in the occupied Palestinian territory, such as Marj Bin Amr (Jazreel Plain) and Jenin, captured the attention of the participants as a process that ultimately accommodates the Israeli occupation's confiscation of Palestinian land and the transformation of land-based people into wage laborers. Discussion expressed the need and commitment to address those violations disguised as development by supporting the campaign of Bisan Center for Research and Development in Land Forum follow-up activities.

In the next session, "Land and Water, the Source of Life," panelists linked economic globalization and the local struggles for land and natural resources. Drs. Hazim Luhebe and Firās `Ugla (Iraqi National Civil Society University) raised the crisis of cross-border water management in the region with a paper on "The Undeclared Water War between Iraq and Neighboring Countries." Abdelmawlaa Ismail (Egypt), of the Right to Water Forum in the Arab Region, brought the issues into the context of "The 25 January Revolution and the Limits to Justice and Remedy in Accessing Agricultural Resources (Land & Water)." He explained the growing disparity between land-rich and land-poor farmers in Egypt, particularly affecting women, and which accompanied disparities in access to water. Islām Sabāhi and Ahmed Rāshid (Life Society for Development of the Delta, Egypt) each continued the theme of youth activism in addressing rich water resources in the Nile Delta subject to corruption and pollution.

Discussions emerging from that session were controversial, particularly with regard to the sovereignty of peoples in land and water, whether for peoples under occupation or national minorities, and how to address scarcity and discrimination. Participants opened the subject of the inherent tensions and extent to which peoples seek and achieve self-sufficiency with their resources in the face of scarcity, monopoly and external control of production and distribution through the policies of globalization and market liberalization. The discussion turned to the CSOs' role in the struggle against such policies that deprive people and communities of their means of subsistence.

In the next panel, "Economic Globalization and the Struggle for Land and Natural Resources," with Kinda Mohamediah (ANND, Lebanon), Rami Zreik (AUC, Lebanon) and attorney/legal researcher Tāriq `Abd ul-`Āl, the subjects revolved around globalization pressures that force people from the land base and production. Prof. Zreik also recounted the experience of civil society negotiating with FAO and member States to adopt the new *Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security*, which coincides with the effort to preserve tenure of communities and small producers in the face of global land grabbing.

Ms. Mohamedieh spoke of global consequences of economic globalization, contrasting the effects for local residents and producers with the human rights obligations of the State. Mr. `Abd ul-`Āl related the consequences for Egypt, particularly the counter-reform of land tenure since the 1990s that has left farmers destitute and failed to enhance Egyptian food security,

A debate ensued over privatization as a form of economic development or social dislocation, in addition to the issues of investment agreements and companies' multiple nationalities under the extraterritorial human rights obligations on States. Participants suggested that the strategy and role of CSOs include ongoing self-education and, in turn, civic education about the activities of multinational corporations in trade and investment, and work to develop the principles of the State's obligations respect, protect and fulfill ESCRs.

A proposal raised the possibility of a study of the principles and theories of Islamic law as opposing policies of monopoly and privatization. Other proposals called for better

communication with organized labor to build awareness of the need to face privatization and benefit from the struggle experiences and new political forces in other parts of the world to combat corruption, abuse of power, monopoly and privatization related to land and natural resources.

Ms. Mohamedieh addressed these practical issues and gave guidance on how nongovernmental organizations can monitor bilateral agreements between States and with multinational companies. One campaign target includes mobilizing to recognize an obligation on the States to disclose the contracts to international companies in the context of standards of transparency and the right to access to information. Civil society also has a role, she explained, in the reform of investment policies and regulating multinational companies through the assessment of investment agreements within the international human rights methodology. That would have MENA civil society addressing World Trade Organization policies and working with compliance and arbitration mechanisms at the regional level to devise policy alternatives.



Land in Conflict, Occupation, War and Population Transfer panel

Day 2: 16 January 2012

On the second day, the momentum of issues and discussions continued in an exchange with diverse participants, ranging from intellectuals and professionals to farmers and small-scale producers. For many attending, this was a first exposure to the diversity of lifestyles and views combined. The day began with a summary of the issues covered in the previous day, in particular:

- Indigenous peoples,
- The right to self-determination,
- Multiple forces perpetuating unjust conditions of peoples while promoting the withdrawal of States from their obligations to uphold rights.

The principal discussions on the second day began with (1) the struggle of the peasants in Egypt and the role of neoliberal market forces in stripping the poor Egyptian peasants of their rights to land and housing, (2) the denial of the right to self-determination of peoples under

occupation and colonization in the region through the denial of access to land and natural resources, as well as (3) development issues in urban areas and slums as they relate to human rights violations and claims, as well as (4) cases where official corruption and techniques of land looting meet.

Highlighting the many examples across the region, Bashīr Saqr presented the situation of Egyptian peasants under the panel's theme "Solidarity with the Farmer," reporting policies as unchanged since 25 January 2011. He also analyzed that peasants did not participate effectively in the revolution, due to their lack of awareness and sophistication in public affairs.

Mahmūd Mansī (Sons of the Land Association for Human Rights, Egypt) provided background on the Egyptian farmers' "Struggles before and after the 25 January Revolution," Mina Moqbel (Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development, Upper Egypt) provided examples of ongoing work to empower farmers through community organizing and resisting dispossession with claims to their human rights.

Through the subsequent discussions, some suggestions emerged for the peasants' continuing struggle, such as an awareness campaign and training for farmers on their economic and social rights. Such efforts would aim to include safeguards for peasants' rights in the new constitutions and affirm their right to form independent trade unions, and to undertake legal awareness raising on agricultural land tenure issues. It was suggested that CSOs find a mechanism for peasants to relate effectively with State institutions and foundations, and ensure their partnership in decision making on policy affecting their economic and social development.

The participants benefited from the testimony of Sitt Nawal Ibrahim Khamis, vice president of the Agricultural Councils of Fayūm (Egypt). She gave an inspiring account of her personal experience as a steadfast defender of women and men agricultural workers in Egypt.



Sitt Nawal Khamis (al-Fayūm) addressing the Land Forum

"Land as a Subject of Conflict, Occupation, War & Population Transfer" was the subject of the gripping second session on Day 2. The unprecedented composition of the panel gathered Gaici al-Nah (Sahrawi Association for the Landmine Victims, Western Sahara), Issa Samandar (Palestinian National Committee on the Register of Damage [from the Separation Wall], Palestine), Yacoub Odeh (Land Research Center, Palestine), Abduh Hammād (Social Peace Initiative for Darfur, Sudan) and Firās al-Ugla (National Civil Society University, Iraq). Each case presented land and human rights issues arising from situations that variously combined the categories cited in the session's title.

Mr. Nah began by drawing the common link between the occupier's deprivation of the land, depriving the occupied people of their principal means of subsistence, and the simultaneous denial of self-determination. In Mr. Samandar's account of the experience of documenting

the consequences of the Apartheid Wall across Palestine's West Bank, the speaker made reference to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion that set in motion the current effort to record the resulting damages. That made possible a discussion of prospects for the ICJ also addressing the legality of the Moroccan wall across Western Sahara.

The subsequent speakers updated the participants on the Israeli assaults on land and houses as means to force the Palestinians out and replace them with Jewish settlers. The assessment of the struggle for natural resources in Sudan also informed the participants about the population-transfer dimensions of conflict, especially—but not only—in Darfur, involving armed invaders from the north affiliated with the ruling power. Finally, the paper on Iraq presented a legal analysis of military occupation violating rights of both the State and people by the occupying powers extracting wealth from the land and other resources.

The discussions highlighted examples of human rights violations related to land in MENA countries not officially recognized as undergoing conflict. Participants pointed out the factors in common among all the cases before them. Underlying the different country situations across the region, it was observed that each—including those in the first panel—takes place in the absence of citizenship as the basis for the equal enjoyment of rights and responsibilities. The material discrimination affecting certain groups in a society or territory cause and/or perpetuate a rending of the social fabric and conflict among peoples. Participants also addressed the need for the State to disclose all development plans with full transparency, as acclaimed development projects constitute a cover for much of the corruption in the management of natural resources of the State.

The ownership of urban land, particularly in the region's populous informal settlements, tends to be very complex. Seldom do residents own both their houses and the land on which they live. Nonetheless, experts and long experience now confirm that secure land tenure is a necessary precondition for successful slum upgrading. Therefore, participants and HLRN officers organized the session on "The Human Rights Dimensions of Urban Land" to focus on the human rights and social dimensions of urban land struggles. Abdelmawlaa Ismail (Egypt) presented the paper "Slums: The Violation of a Bundle of Human Rights" by Ms. Rajā' al-Kassāb (Morocco), who was unable to obtain a visa to attend the Land Forum. Her paper portrayed the experience of struggling for access to land, housing and services in Morocco and the problems of policy and governance that prevail despite demonstrable government expenditure.

Presenting his paper "Urban Terrain: More Rights," Baher Shawki (Egypt) analyzed the current urban context against the challenges and opportunities arising with new social forces calling for fundamental change across the region. He interjected the concept of the "right to the city" as a possible strategic device for mobilizing social forces and re-envisioning urban governance.

Joseph Schechla then chronicled the global experience of promoting a "human right to the city" and global Charter on the Right to the City as a rhetorical movement that emerged eventually to embrace human rights methodology. Observing that the movement maintains its point of gravity in Latin American urban social movements, he argued that the concept needs to be indigenized in other regions with wider understanding and practical application before it can gather momentum elsewhere. Participants then suggested that the Land Forum participants work to develop a regionally specific Charter on the Right to the City, in order to be compatible and consistent with the characteristics and the nature of the region

One of the Land Form themes defining the current political crisis across the region was explored in the final session "Corruption in Land Fraud and the Arab Awakening." The presented cases reflected the increase of public information on the subject since the previous edition of the Land Forum.

Muhammad `Abd ul-`Adhīm (Egyptian Center for Civic and Legislative Reform) presented an analysis of the devices that Egyptian authorities have used to acquire land and property from citizens within existing law. His paper, “Homeless by Force of Law: Security of Tenure and Legal Lacunae in Egypt,” contrasted actual practice with the minimum human standards under international law, and shared a video dramatizing the consequences of forced eviction and dispossession in Egypt. He also explained the special case of land confiscation in Nubia under exceptional laws.

Then `Abd ul-Sabūr Hasab Allah (Nubian Association for Land and Human Rights, Egypt) expanded on the particular consequences of “Nubian Migrations and Loss of Agricultural Land, 1898–2012.” His presentation exposed violations of Nubian citizens’ right of access to their land, the resulting displacement due to megaprojects and the more-recent inundation of some Nubian villages due to failed infrastructure. He concluded with a description of efforts by Nubian civil society organizations in Egypt working to restore Nubian heritage threatened by displacement and land loss.

Muhammad Yahya Sabrī (Democratic Social Forum, Yemen) presented the prospects for transitional justice in Yemen, with a focus on the land fraud recently exposed in the growing opposition to the `Ali `Abdullah Sālih regime. He also spoke broadly about the civil process to develop a democratic sense of citizenship and culture of human rights that demands a State carry out its social justice functions.

A subject of the ongoing calls for fundamental change also in Bahrain is the widespread corruption and looting of landed property by the ruling family. Akeela `Ali (Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights) represented the case of Bahraini youth demands for fundamental change that has called for an equitable solution to the land and housing crisis. There, material discrimination and confiscation of the country’s natural resources have left the majority without the prospect of livelihood or democracy. She also demonstrated with a short video how royal land grabbing has deepened the crisis of scarcity and political legitimacy.

Filling in the picture of land and real estate fraud and corruption as a feature of the deposed regime in Tunisia was Ahmed Mansour (HIC-HLRN, Egypt). Mr. Mansour presented the experience of Tunisia’s National Commission to Investigate Corruption and Embezzlement. He discussed the recent evidence publicized in the Commission’s final report and the prospects for establishing a permanent anticorruption commission and the subject of restorative justice for past violations.

In the discussion, participants raised the prospects of building awareness of the principles of transitional justice, especially in the current phase experienced across the region. An outpouring of protests and popular uprisings that have been successful in many countries of the region to remove corrupt systems of government now face the challenge of institutionalizing better alternatives that realize democratic control over the destiny of the country. With such programs as the Land Forum, HIC-HLRN could assist civil society organizations advance the needed land-restitution and housing policy-reform aspects of transitional justice in all of the transition country cases discussed in the Forum. The prospect stoked some controversy over the concept and meaning of transitional justice. The debate revealed a lack of clarity among the participants, but piqued interest in exploring the issue further.

Day 3: 17 January 2012:

After a recap of the previous day's program, Sālih al-Homedy (journalist, Yemen) shared the results of an investigation into "Land Grabbing and Its Consequences for the Unity of Yemen." He detailed the land confiscation and real estate fraud carried out since the 1994 civil war in Yemen. The exposé has revealed a pattern of wide-spread dispossession and nepotistic privatization of lands, especially in the southern part of the country. This case is paralleled also by cases of official land grabbing by cronies of the former president in Hudaida (western Yemen), with consequences for the legitimacy of the government and riving calls from the south to separate again from the unity achieved 1991.

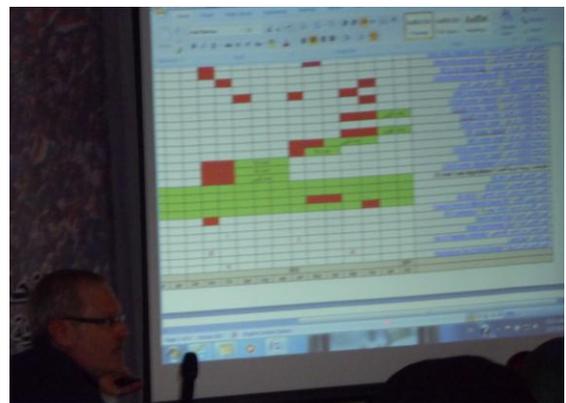
Posing Solutions

Following the case-specific presentations, the rest of the Forum was dedicated to "Posing Solutions: Toward Human Rights-based Land Policies in Middle East/North Africa." Joseph Schechla presented the draft calendar of potential actions and opportunities for research and advocacy in 2012–13. He explained that the interactive document should serve as a set of options in specifying joint activities in between sessions of the Land Forum and, therefore, should serve as a tool for the practical small-group sessions to follow.

Rabie Wahba facilitated the transition to the working-group sessions. Mr. Wahba responded to the critical questions controversial issues common to the participants and consulted with participants on a reconfiguration of the practical sessions to reflect that apparent need for more work and clarity, while also capturing the participants' expressed interest. The group settled on three topics for the formulation of common positions and proposals:

1. Transitional justice
2. The indigenous peoples question
3. Constitutional, legislative and policy reform

The debate over the first two days of the Forum was rich in detail with a high degree of interaction among participants. The cases and discussions raised motivation for the individuals and organizations to develop the human rights dimensions of land in their work. However, as often happens, the process of crystallizing the ideas into committed action produced many general positions and claims. Nonetheless, participants did set out certain practical steps and commitments to actions compatible with the HIC-HLRN draft calendar of options. Adding specificity will be a task for HLRN coordination.



Joseph Schechla (HIC-HLRN) introducing the Land Forum III Follow-up Activities Calendar

The agenda was full of important issues and details directly affecting the social and economic reality that many of the participating organizations had not confronted before. The concepts, legal criteria and strategic arguments related to indigenous peoples, the very existence of Aḥwaz, the issues involved and values at stake in Western Sahara, the multiple options and processes of "transitional justice" and the prospects for constitutional reform were, for many, new dimensions of work on human rights and the land.

The concept of the right to self-determination itself, which was the title of this third session of the Land Forum, was also deeply debated and discussed. It was new to many also to envision self-determination as an over-riding principle of human rights implementation, as set

forth in the Covenants codifying the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and a function of citizenship within the State.

Specific proposals made over the two days of debate in the Forum included to:

1. Develop a strategic plan for addressing extraterritorial obligations of States and international coordination, especially on the bilateral agreements made between States and multinational corporations;
2. Draft a regional "Charter on the Right in the City," coordinating that with other related international initiatives and building on their expertise;
3. Build popular awareness and social movements to institute transitional justice processes in transition countries, and particularly collaborate through HIC-HLRN to advance their housing and land rights and social justice dimensions.

Report of Working Group I: Indigenous peoples:

Introduction

We, participants in the Land Forum, held in Cairo, in January of 2012, affirm our determination to continue to struggle with the other institutions of democratic civil society and all activists to achieve equal rights for all citizens without discrimination on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, and we commit to work to unify the efforts of activists in achieving social justice for our democracy and for respect for human rights and the citizen in all the Arab countries, in addition to Iran and Turkey.

During the deliberations at the Forum, the similarity of violations against the citizens of all countries became clear, particularly regarding the years-long deprivation of the rights of land ownership and adequate housing, and the exploitation of natural resources for a few monopolies in power, and not for the benefit of the population. Similarities among the participants became clear during the Forum in the spirit of starting the struggle to uphold freedom and human dignity as a result of popular revolts in Arab countries, involving all categories and classes of society in the Arab countries and nationalities living in them. We recognize this in fraternal sympathy and understanding among the participants, despite the different views and orientations, in the determination to change the situation in our countries toward a better future.

Despite the different circumstances in each country, as there are countries and peoples under Western colonial occupation and expansion (Palestine), and others under foreign occupation, including some under Arab countries (e.g., Western Sahara), and some are national in their own country (e.g., the Kurds in Syria), and the other is being subjected to oppression and discrimination in the State (e.g., Nubians). Others (Egypt, Sudan, Bahrain, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia, and Lebanon) are in a transitional phase of the people's uprising for freedom and human dignity as Arab citizens, and all are undergoing revolutionary change to constitutions and revision of arbitrary and oppressive laws. These processes seek to establish public freedoms of various kinds, according to international minimum norms, harnessing the national wealth and natural resources for the benefit of people and [prioritizing] the poor. Thus, the participants affirm the following:

1. The right to land as a legitimate human right that must be included in the constitution of the State and its laws, so as to ensure the obligation of the State and the ruling authorities and prevent them from taking any action even under the pretext of public interest that could violate the rights of individuals or ethnic groups with a [particular] culture and social relations (e.g., Western Sahara and the Nubians in Egypt and Nuba in Sudan), and the national groups in various countries (e.g., the Kurds in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey). Regardless of political circumstances, the rights to land and adequate housing are fundamental human

rights, and the participants confirm the need to consolidate the struggle to remove injustice done to these groups within the concepts agreed upon and within the mechanisms of action identified to shared understanding, and not to serve the Western colonial interests, or threaten the solidarity of Arab popular resistance. Human rights must be guaranteed and guarantees in constitutions, clearly and unambiguously, regardless of place of residence, ethnicity and nationality.

2. Participants emphasized that human rights, protection and equality before the law is the basis of life and require the development of laws that ensure respect for these rights and severely punish all those who violate them. Also, providing the means for a decent life for citizens is the justice of the second part of the equation for the establishment of advanced societies is open to world civilizations and exchange of experiences with them to share the progress of humanity in the creation of a new world free from exploitation and injustice and tyranny.

3. Participants emphasized the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, and declare their solidarity with the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights. They reject land confiscation and colonial settlement by the Zionist movement, and stress their support for the movements of popular resistance to the Apartheid Wall and to racist settler-colonialism. They also commit to resisting normalization with Israel, and participate in the boycott campaigns, all in partnership with the solidarity committees and the Arab and international boycott.

4. Participants emphasized their determination to work for the unity of the freedom fighters, activists and civil society institutions of democracy and unite their efforts under the unified two activities in the region and contribute to the promotion and strengthening of the struggle, the spirit of cooperative and participatory approaches to defeat the reactionary and repressive totalitarian authorities.

The group discussed indigenous peoples under occupation and in many conflict situations reached basic conclusions as follows:

First, the emerging discussions varied in dealing with certain concepts, for example: peoples under occupation, the right of self-determination which has emerged in this context, the applicability of this right in many cases in the Middle East and North Africa, such as the case of Nuba Mountains/Kordofan, and the entitlement to claim [external] self-determination or not. Another example is that of South Sudan, where is the first case in which the application of the right of self-determination was not really under foreign colonialism. We look to the Housing and Land Rights Network to publish papers related to the controversy surrounding such concepts and link them to international humanitarian law.



Second, participants emphasized the need to adopt the principle of reparation, rather than the principle of compensation, and of material and moral reparations as more comprehensive of the principle of compensation, which is included in the principle of reparation.

Third, turn the audience to address many different issues place of conflict in the Middle East and North Africa, were as follows:

- Palestinian people under occupation
- Syrian Kurds
- Arab people of Aḥwaz
- Western Sahara
- Egyptian Nubia
- Nuba Mountains (Sudan)

1 - For the Palestinian cause

Participants emphasized the right of Palestinians in the occupied territories and [the need to] end all forms of colonial settlement of the Israeli occupation, [and commit to]:

- The right of self-determination for the Palestinian people;
- Establishing a Palestinian State on the land of Palestine, with Jerusalem as its capital;
- The return of Palestinian refugees to their homes, and to collective and individual, material and moral reparation;
- Rehabilitation of the UN General Assembly resolution on Zionism as a form of racism;
- Henceforth to refer to settler entities on Palestinian land by their rightful name: “colonies”;
- Work within United Nations and international forums to implement the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Apartheid Wall, its removal and the material and moral reparation for past, current and subsequent individuals and groups victimized;
- Uphold the right of Palestinian Bedouin in the Naqab lands;
- Liberation of Palestinian prisoners from jails and prisons of the Israeli occupation.

2 - Syria's Kurds:

- Discussions focused on the basic demands of the Kurds in Syria, the need to support the Kurdish people in Syria in the framework of the basic requirement based on Syria's democratic and free democratic self-management.
- We call for the cancellation of all decisions of the special 1962 census and the Arab belt, and work to redress against all violations against the Kurds in Syria.

3 - al-Aḥwaz Arabs:

[We support:]

- Liberation of the Arab people of Aḥwaz under Iranian occupation;
- Activating the right to self-determination for the Arab people of Aḥwaz;
- An End to the looting of water, drying and damming of Aḥwaz rivers, and diverting the waters to Iranian cities;

- An immediate halt to executions and mass arrests by the Iranian authorities against the Arab people of Aḥwaz;
- An end to all forms of forced displacement of Aḥwazi people and the looting and confiscation of lands of Aḥwazi farmers (which amount to 600 thousand hectares) in favor of the current Iranian settlement (whereas 1.5 million Iranian settlers have colonized Aḥwaz territory);
- The right of the people of Aḥwaz to Arabic-language education in schools, and also their right in their choice of Arabic names for their male and female newborns, rather than imposing Persian names on them at birth.

4 - Western Sahara issue:

[We support:]

- The right to self-determination for the Sahrawi people,
- Removal of the mostly sand-built separation wall erected by Moroccan forces since 1980, Work to remove landmines.

5 - The issue of Egyptian Nubia

[We support:]

- The right of Nubians in Egypt to return to the territory of the ancient Egyptian Nubia as an extension of a natural population of the Nuba; i.e., to the 44 Nubian villages existing both before the British occupation in 1882 and before the First Republic in 1952;
- Work toward reparations for the harm suffered by the Nubians from violations of their ESCRs.

6 - The issue of the Nuba Mountains of Sudan

[We call for:]

- A stop to all violations against the people of Nuba Mountains in Sudan;
- A stop to all forms of forced displacement to which the people of Nuba Mountains are subjected;
- Delivery of the current ruling on the Nuba Mountains and those indicted by the International Court of Justice, in particular, Ahmad Harūn, because of the crimes against humanity committed in the different areas of Sudan;
- Work to stop the poisoning of water wells in the Nuba Mountains;
- Advocate for the people of the Nuba Mountains in the face of the deteriorating humanitarian situation, especially in the recent war since mid-2011.

Operational activities

The group discussions focused on the need to follow all the international and regional participation of different groups within the scope of the Housing and Land Rights Network by diverse activities, for example:

- Participation in the World Water Forum in view of the violations of the peoples of the region in access to water, for example, in Aḥwaz and Palestinian water stolen by the Israeli occupation authorities, as well as the construction of dams in the headwaters of watersheds shared by the peoples of the region;
- Also participation in the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+ 20) can provide a forum to present violations of environmental issues faced by people in the region; e.g., the issue of massive environmental destruction of the Palestinian territories.

- Commemorating “Jerusalem Day” and promoting participation among the members of Housing and Land Rights Network;
- Reviving and deepening the Land Day commemoration through the Housing and Land Rights Network;
- Set up fact-finding committees to investigate housing and land rights violations;
- Conduct case studies of abuse of the different ESCRs;
- Restore Nubian heritage.

Report of Working Group II: Constitutional, legislative and policy reform

1. Recommendations:

- Arab constitutions should include explicitly clear provision for rights and public freedoms;
- Ensure the rights of all on the basis of citizenship and equal opportunities;
- Recognize and preserve pluralism within our communities;
- Ensure the ESCRs of all citizens without discrimination [with] the State's obligation to implement programs to ensure the enjoyment of those rights, considering also that the international conventions set forth the minimum requirement for the enjoyment of those rights;
- That the constitutions explicitly include the right to adequate housing and land for all citizens.
- Develop a popular mechanism for amending the constitution such as the right of any party to request an amendment to the constitution with a petition signed by 5% of the population and subject to popular referendum (e.g., such a procedure exists in Morocco with a petition signed by a million people).



Constitutional, legislative and policy reform working group

2. Recommendations for legislative reform:

- Revise legislation in line with the various international laws and conventions;

- Civil society organizations develop a regional “Charter of the Right in the City” and discuss the mechanism incorporated in national legislation;
- That legislation contain guarantees of citizens' rights to secure tenure based on the principles of justice, equality and transparency of application of the law;
- Protect the disadvantaged and vulnerable and emphasize their right to claim and struggle, and a positive preference for them (peasants, women, disabled, impoverished and indigenous people);
- Develop a clear mechanism for consultation between legislators and the formal parties, on the one hand, and citizens, on the other hand;
- That legislation include tenants to enable tenant farmers to obtain agricultural land owned by the state for a long period;
- That legislation include safeguards to limit forced evictions and ensure the right to reparations for those violated by forced evictions.

3. Recommendations for policies:

- The horror of the monopoly operations carried out by investors or the State itself have sometimes committed crude infringements on the rights of the most vulnerable groups, especially their housing and land rights. It is necessary to develop a special mechanism to limit such operations and toughening the punishment for the perpetrators. [States should develop and implement] programs to improve our standard of living of the rural population;
- Stop the privatization of services and public utilities;
- End state policies aimed at seizing the territory of the poor and selling them to investors under the umbrella of expropriation for the public purpose;
- Establish participatory social programs working to provide adequate housing for all.



Transitional justice working group

Report of Working Group III: Transitional Justice:

On the final day of the Middle East and North Africa Land Forum III, held in Cairo, from 15 to 17 January 2012 A.D., men and women representatives from organizations, institutions and human rights activists participated in the Forum to consider transitional justice in the region. They expressed their opinions in the deliberations concerning the circumstances of the peoples of the region.

The Forum participants heard the experiences of some members and their struggles to achieve transitional justice in their countries. The humanitarian situation and violations of their land, housing and natural resources by the authorities in the region through the presentation of the activists showed that the Middle East and North Africa has a great legacy of violations of human rights and other violations, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, and civil and political corruption. This situation greatly affects basic rights such as health, education, safe drinking water and adequate housing, among other rights.

The participants discussed a framework that would enable them to access strategies that help to establish transitional justice in the region. That would seek to restore dignity to victims, and building a wall of confidence between conflicting groups, and possibilities to help achieve the rule of law. They also discussed the possibility of working together in order to prevent perpetrators from escaping punishment.

The suffering of peoples has divided the region as follows:

- Some countries or societies are emerging from repressive rule or armed conflict, but by the peace or the transition to new needs of these communities, transitional justice serves as a tool to guarantee safe passage to a stage that precludes the recurrence of violations committed in the past;
- Some the states or territories of the region face historical injustices and systematic violations against the peoples and their natural resources;
- Some countries live under the influence of government corruption, which confiscates the rights of the people in favor of the Sultan and his entourage;
- Some countries suffer from the problems of transition, including:
 - Crises of political development,
 - Nonparticipation of citizens in decision making,
 - The State's failure at enforcing the law,
 - Cultural fragmentation and the inability to achieve national integration,
 - Certain countries and regions live under occupation and face violations of their people at all levels.

Based on these classifications the working group emphasized the need to lay the foundations for implementing transitional justice in the region, through the establishment of a collective entity such as a "Popular Alliance for Transitional Justice," which would be an engine of popular regional mobilization for all those who ascribe to the principle of transitional justice. Such an entity would operate under the Housing and Land Rights Network "Regional Office in Cairo," and recognize the right of victims to reparation.

The working group adopted the basic criteria for transitional justice, in order to achieve the lofty goal:

- Forensic accounting, "the emphasis on ending impunity,"
- Reparation "in order to redress and compensate for the damage suffered,"
- Legislative reform and legal institutions that committed violations in the past,

- Conduct social reconciliation, which is one of the appropriate tools to address the issues of transitional justice,
- Coordination with experts and transitional justice initiatives at the regional level and international level,
- Recording and monitoring violations through nonjudicial means such as civil society organizations or the Popular Committees established by the inhabitants.

Most Arab countries facing postconflict situations have urgent needs can only be achieved through transitional justice. The working group recognized that the Popular Alliance would encourage individuals and civil society organizations and institutions seeking to achieve transitional justice, and help activists to gather information first-hand, either through direct interviews, or through the organizations and institutions, or through social networking, in order to build an easy-reference database.

This Alliance also would be committed to hold training workshops for activists about how they can go about monitoring, exchanging information, analysis, report writing and research that help to achieve the transitional justice goal.

2013												2012												2011	مناسبات وفعاليات وعمليات أخرى خاصة بدول معينة Other country-specific events, activities & processes
Dec	Nov	Oct	Sep	Aug	July	Jun	May	Apr	Mar	Feb	Jan	Dec	Nov	Oct	Sep	Aug	July	Jun	May	Apr	Mar	Feb	Jan	Dec	
																									Jordan / الأردن
																									Bahrain / البحرين
																									Tunisia / تونس
																									Algeria / الجزائر
																									Sudan / السودان
																									Syria / سوريا
																									Western Sahara / الصحراء الغربية
																									Palestine / فلسطين
																									حملة على مداعي المحكمة الجنائية الدولي / ICC campaign
																									Iraq / العراق
																									UA on Iraq water / تحرك عاجل على مياه العراق
																									Lebanon / لبنان
																									Libya / ليبيا
																									Egypt / مصر
																									Morocco / المغرب
																									Mauritania / موريتانيا
																									Yemen / اليمن
																									مناسبات وفعاليات وعمليات Events, activities & processes

HIC-HLRN Regional Land Forum: “Peoples’ Right to Self-Determination”

Cataract Pyramids, Cairo-Giza, 15–17 January 2012

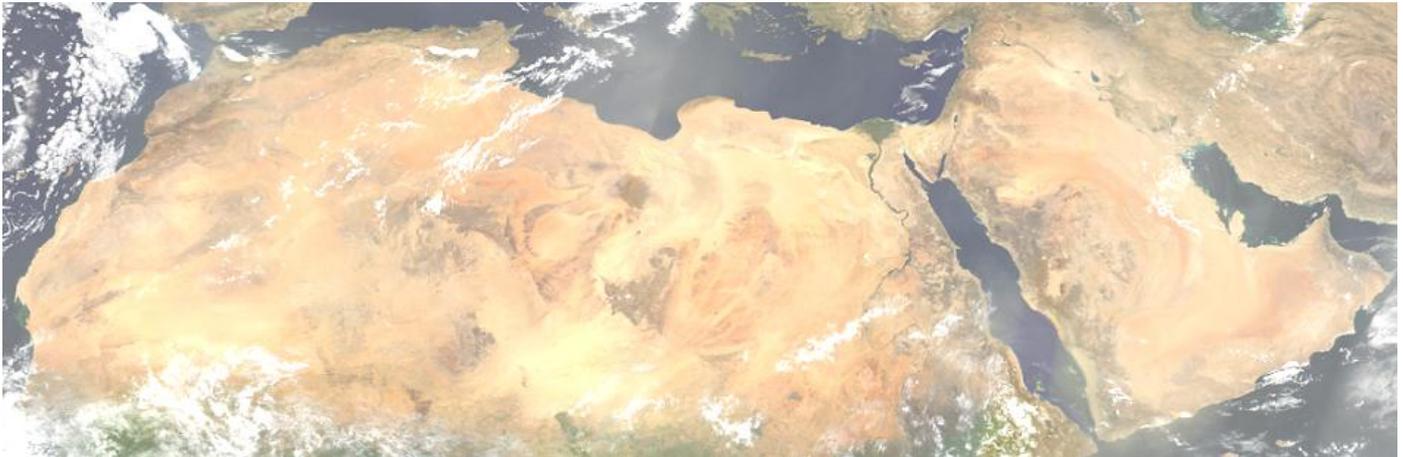
Day 1: Sunday, 15 January 2012

08:30-09:30		Registration	
09:30-10:00	Welcome to MENA Land Forum III: Toward an Assessment of the Previous Rounds, and Visions for the Future Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Joseph Schechla, International Coordinator, Housing and Land Rights Network—HIC-HLRN: Overview and Prospects of the Human Rights Dimension of Land ▪ Rabie Wahba, MENA Program HIC-HLRN (Egypt): Achievements and Tools: <i>Landpedia</i>, <i>Land Times</i>, VDB and Struggles. 	
10:00–11:00	Keynote address: Rami Zreik , “Current Obstacles and Prospects of Peoples’ Sovereignty on the Land” <i>Discussion</i>		
11:00–11:30		<i>Break</i>	
Social Diversity on the Land			
All five main themes Moderator: Rabie Wahba , HIC- HLRN	11:30–11:50	Sheruan Hassan , researcher (Syria)	“The Kurdish Question, Past, Present and Future”
	11:50–12:10	Adel al-Siwidi , researcher (Ahwāz)	“The Ahwaz Question Revisited; Violations and Prospects of Self-Determination” + video
	12:10–12:30	Āyāt Hamdan , Bisan for Research and Development Center, (Palestine)	“Cultural Awareness of Youth and the Centrality of Land under Occupation” + video
	12:30–13:00	<i>Moderation’s summary and discussion</i>	
13:00–14:00		<i>Lunch</i>	
Land and Water, the Source of Life			
Theme	Time	Speaker	Subject
Water	14:05–	Hazim Luhebe & Firās `Ugla , Iraqi	“The Undeclared Water War between Iraq and Neighboring

	14:25	National Civil Society University (Iraq)	Countries”
	14:25– 14:45	Abdelmawla Ismail , Right to Water Forum in the Arab Region	“The 25 January Revolution and the Limits to Justice and Remedy in Accessing Agricultural Resources (Land & Water)”
	14:45– 15:05	Islām Sabāhi , Life Society for Development of the Delta (Egypt)	“Rich Land Resources in the Delta between Corruption and Disastrous Corrosion of the Wetlands”
	15:05– 15:15	Ahmed Rāshid , Life Society for Development of the Delta (Egypt)	“The Scarcity of Irrigation Water in the Delta Limits Food Security”
	15:15– 15:30	<i>Moderator’s summary and discussion</i>	
15:30–16:00		<i>Break</i>	
Economic Globalization and the Struggle for Land and Natural Resources			
Theme	Time	Speaker	Subject
International Norm Development and Advocacy	16:00– 16:20	Kinda Mohamadieh , ANND	“WTO, Investment Agreements and Right to Land”
	16:20– 16:30	Rāmi Zreik , American University in Beirut (Lebanon)	“Our Role in the FAO toward International Norms for Land Administration”
	16:30– 16:50	Tāriq `Abd ul-`Āl , legal researcher (Egypt)	“Privatization in Egypt: Economic Development or Social Dislocation”
	16:50– 17:15	<i>Moderator’s summary and discussion</i>	
Day 2: Monday, 16 January 2012			
Solidarity with the Farmer			
Theme	Time	Speaker	Subject
Constitutional, Legislative and Policy Reform	09:00– 09:20	Bashīr Saqr , Solidarity with Egyptian Peasants (Egypt)	“Policies Stripping Egyptian Poor & Small Farmers of Land & Housing: The Role of Neoliberalism, State & Large-scale Farmers, & Means of Salvation”
	09:20– 09:40	Mahmūd Mansī , Sons of the Land Association (Egypt)	“Struggles before and after 25 th of January Revolution”
	09:40– 10:00	Mina Moqbel , Better Life Association for Community Development	“Experiences in Empowering Farmers” + video showing
	10:00– 10:30	Testimony of Nawal Ibrahim Khamis (Agricultural Council of Fayūm, Egypt), <i>Discussion</i>	

10:30–11:00		Break	
Land as a Subject of Conflict, Occupation, War & Population Transfer			
Theme	Time	Speaker	Subject
Land in Conflict, Occupation and War	11 :00– 11 :15	Gaici al-Nah , Sahrawi Association for the Landmine Victims (Western Sahara)	“Western Sahara: Denial of Self-determination by Depriving a People of Its Means of Subsistence”
	11:15– 11:30	Issa Samandar , Palestinian National Committee on the Register of Damage (Palestine)	“Documenting the Consequences of the Apartheid Wall”
	11:30– 11:45	Yacoub Odeh , Land Research Center (Palestine)	“Israeli Assaults on Land and Houses as Means to Force the Palestinians Out”
	11:45– 12:00	Abduh Hammād , Social Peace Initiative for Darfur	“Current Assessment of the Struggle for Natural Resources in Sudan”
	12:00– 12:15	Firās al-Ugla , National Civil Society University (Iraq)	“State’s Rights under Military Occupation and the Rights of Its People, ”
	12:15– 12:45	<i>Moderator’s summary and discussion</i>	
The Human Rights Dimensions of Urban Land			
	Time	Speaker	Subject
Urban Social Movements and the Human Rights Dimension	12:45– 13:00	Rajā’ al-Kassāb (Morocco) & Abdelmawlaa Ismail Egypt), Right to Water Forum in the Arab Region (Morocco)	“Slums: The Violation of a Bundle of Human Rights”
	13:00– 13:15	Baher Shawki , social researcher (Egypt)	“Urban Terrain: More Rights”
	13:15– 13:30	Joseph Schechla , HIC-HLRN coordinator (Egypt)	“The Urban Terrain: Struggles for a `Human Right to the City”
	13:30– 13:45	<i>Moderator’s summary and discussion</i>	
13:45–14:45		Lunch	
Corruption in Land Fraud and the Arab Awakening			
	Time	Speaker	Subject

Land Corruption & Accountability	14:45–15:00	Muhammad Abd ul-`Adhīm , Egyptian Center for Civic and Legislative Reform	“Homeless by Force of Law: Security of Tenure and Legal Lacunae in Egypt” + video
	15:00–15:20	`Abd ul-Sabūr Hasab Allah , Nubian Association for Land and Human Rights (Egypt)	“Nubian Migrations and Loss of Agricultural Land, 1898–2012”
	15:20–15:40	Muhammad Yahya Sabrī , Democratic Social Forum (Yemen)	“Prospects for Transitional Justice in Yemen”
	15:40–16:00	Akeela `Ali , Bahrain Youth Society for Human Rights (BYSHR)	“Royal Land Grabbing: Deepening the Crisis of Scarcity and Political Legitimacy” + video
	16:00–16:20	Ahmed Mansour , HIC-HLRN (Egypt)	“The National Commission to Investigate Corruption and Embezzlement in Tunisia: Findings and Follow-up
	16:20–16:40	<i>Moderator’s summary and discussion</i>	
	16:40–17:00	<i>Discussion & break intro to group sessions</i>	
Day 3: Tuesday, 17 January 2012			
		Sālih al-Homedy , journalist (Yemen)	“Land Grabbing and Its Consequences for the Unity of Yemen”
09:00–09:30	Plenary: Posing Solutions: Toward Human Rights-based Land Policies in Middle East/North Africa		Moderator: Rabie Wahba 1. The Indigenous Peoples Question 2. Transitional Justice 3. Constitutional, Legislative and Policy Reform
09:30- 09:45	<i>Discussion & break intro to group sessions</i>		
09:45–10:30			
10:30–11:00	Break		
All 3 themes	11:00–13:00	<i>Thematic group sessions continued</i>	
13:00–14:00	<i>Lunch</i>		
14:05–15:45			1. The Indigenous Peoples Question 2. Transitional Justice 3. Constitutional, Legislative and Policy Reform
15:45–17:00	Joseph Schechla & Rabie Wahba		Closing Session and Chart of Work of LF in 2012–14



HIC-HLRN Middle East/North Africa Program

The Middle East/North Africa regional program of Habitat International Coalition's Housing and Land Rights Network meets the need for more-effective civil society participation in public affairs by applying the criteria and methodology of human rights and corresponding state obligations as a defining framework for civil discourse. The ultimate objective of HLRN's program is to develop civil society actors' knowledge and capacity to address complex policy issues related to the most-vital public resources with a degree of competence that enables direct engagement with decision makers at all levels.

HLRN's MENA program supports diverse Member efforts and approaches to uphold housing and land rights, ranging from monitoring treaty compliance, to popular and legal initiatives to posing alternatives to the privatization of public and environmental goods and services, which affects housing and land rights. The program activities promote adequate housing, land and water management as public goods; land as related to food sovereignty; as well as all relevant traditional methods, moral principles and other culturally specific devices for guiding equitable the administration of land and natural resources consistent with human rights.

The MENA region is exceptionally suitable as a focus for this approach, with its conspicuous features of foreign occupation, confiscation of land and water that are bases for livelihoods, the need for good governance in the housing sphere and land administration, and the land and scarce water dimension of self-determination of the indigenous peoples in the region, and people's sovereignty in general.

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