

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing

Raquel Rolnik, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing



All actors involved in the housing sector should fully recognize the multiple dimensions of housing, which is much more than a mere financial asset and has great implications for the individual, the community and society as a whole. [...] All public and private actors involved in housing need to acknowledge the right to adequate housing and take it into account in their work.

-Raquel Rolnik, February 2009

What is the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing?

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing is an independent expert appointed by the UN Human Rights Council to examine and report on the case of adequate housing as a human right around the world. The Rapporteur researches issues of housing concerns, receives complaints from victims of housing rights violations, makes visits to countries where there have been complaints of human rights violations, and makes policy recommendations to governments on behalf of those victims.

Who is the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing?

Raquel Rolnik has been the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living and on the right to non-discrimination regarding adequate housing since May 2008. As a Special Rapporteur, she is independent from any government or organization. She is based in Sao Paulo, Brazil, working as a professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Sao Paulo. An architect and urban planner with over 30 years of experience in planning and urban land management, Ms. Rolnik has advised national and local governments on planning and management of housing, local development programs, policy reform and institutional development. In her most recent report to the UN Human Rights Council, she discussed the housing and mortgage crises' global impact on the right to adequate housing.

What will the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing do on the office's first official U.S. housing mission?

Raquel Rolnik will be making site visits and meeting with advocacy groups, government officials, and affected residents in Los Angeles, CA; Chicago, IL; New Orleans, LA; New York, NY; Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, SD; Wilkes Barre, PA; and Washington, DC. Her focus will be on problems of homelessness, foreclosure and public housing policies on both the local and national levels.