SDG 11 – Public Services International

The generation of decent work opportunities for all is a precondition to urban socio-economic inclusion and local economic development.

To ensure sustainable urban policies we demand the inclusion of labour and environmental clauses in public procurement and public contract transparency and disclosure.

To secure the necessary public funding we need an integrated approach to fight corruption and tax justice for local governments and communities.

We call for the protection of public spaces and commons from privatization and gentrification – which have a direct link to democracy and equity.

Allow me to zoom into 3 areas where we need a major policy shift: housing, public transport and waste management.

The financialization of housing stands in direct opposition to the idea that housing, as a human right, is linked to personal dignity, security and the ability to thrive in communities. Global residential real estate is now valued at US$ 163 trillion, more than half of the value of all global assets and more than twice the world's total GDP.

Quality, affordable and safe public transport is essential for ensuring that cities are inclusive and sustainable and adequate public investment in renewable and carbon neutral public transport is key to fighting climate change. Private participation has grown more rapidly in areas where economic analysis shows that it is the least desirable, especially in the provision of toll roads. The current boom in private infrastructure is driven by ideology and politics, not by economics.

Finally, only 65% of the urban population is served by municipal waste collection, and in many developing regions less than 50% of solid waste is safely disposed of. As an essential public service and a priority for the protection of our environment - waste management should be public, transparent and involve participation of users, communities and workers with a view to improve the service on a continuous basis and secure accountability.

The urban agenda has to put people first.