

Concept Note (External)

Title: A Home for all is Justice for all: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70) side event

Date/time: Monday, March 9, 2026, from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM (EST)

Format: Virtual/online via Zoom

OVERVIEW

The theme for the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women is “*Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls*”. This CSW70 side event will convene a distinguished panel to discuss the critical issues of specific populations of women and girls and successful interventions to redress violations of their rights and call government stakeholders to take action to prevent homelessness by addressing legal barriers and discrimination that serve as barriers to women’s human rights in housing, land and inheritance rights.

Article 25 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights affirms that “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food clothing and shelter...” Yet, well over 2.8 billion people lack access to adequate housing, secure land and basic water and sanitation services. More than 1.12 billion of these people live in precarious conditions in slums or informal settlements, threatening their health and even their survival. In addition, some 300 million people face absolute homelessness globally, lacking any form of stable shelter, no housing at all.

Many people are experiencing or at risk of experiencing hidden homelessness, which means they are often not included in the data. Many of these people are women with children who conceal their housing status due to fear of losing their children to the state government. Furthermore, millions of people are forcibly evicted or displaced from their homes every year. Many are driven into homelessness by conflict, climate, commodification, or criminalization. A gender analysis indicates that women of all ages are particularly affected in all forms of homelessness, and their needs require specific solutions. Whether migrants, indigenous, economically disenfranchised, mothers, youth, or older adults, one of the major causes of this vulnerability for women is discriminatory statutory laws as well as customary laws and practices, and lack of access to legal and other remedies.

PANEL

Dr. Balakrishnan Rajogopal | United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing

[BIO]

Amanda Richer | Displacement Consultant — One Health Clinic, ShelterApp

[BIO]

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Frances Zainoeddin | Vice-Chair of the NGO Committee on Ageing, International Federation on Ageing and member of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women

[BIO]

Daniel LaBlanc | VIVAT International

[BIO]

[NAME] | Covenant House

[BIO]

Tamar Ezer | University of Miami School of Law Human Rights Clinic

[BIO]

AGENDA

Speakers	Talking Points	Time
Jackie Shapiro OR Linda Sama	Welcome + Introduction	3 minutes
Dr. Balakrishnan Rajogopal	Global policy/housing + human rights	8 minutes
Amanda Richer	TBA	5 minutes
Frances Zainoeddin	Homelessness among older adults	5 minutes
Daniel LaBlanc	Indigenous land rights	5 minutes
Representative from Covenant House	Homelessness among youth	5 minutes
Tamar Ezer	Human rights/women and girls	5 minutes
All participants	Question + answer (Q&A) segment	20 minutes
Closing remarks	Reflection, thank you + next steps	2 minutes

The NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH), founded in 2017, is a group of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, committed to advocating at the United Nations for the alleviation and eventual elimination of

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homelessness. In collaboration with like-minded organizations, global platforms, academic centers, and people experiencing homelessness, we seek to end homelessness in all its forms, and to secure appropriate, safe, and sustainable housing for all.