



New Zealand: UN expert to carry out her final visit to assess the housing situation

GENEVA (6 February 2020) – The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, Leilani Farha, will visit New Zealand from 10 to 19 February 2020 - her final mission before concluding her mandate in April 2020.

"I look forward to explore the challenges and opportunities New Zealand is facing in realizing and protecting the human right to adequate housing," the expert said.

New Zealand is facing significant challenges in ensuring access to affordable housing for all populations, including people living in substandard housing and homelessness.

"Housing affordability has become an issue of concern worldwide. International investment and speculation in housing has contributed to this development. I hope to gain an understanding as to whether such trends are also present in New Zealand," the expert said.

"I would like to learn more about programmes and policies put in place to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11.1, which commits governments to ensuring access to safe, affordable and adequate housing for all by 2030," Farha said.

The Special Rapporteur will also examine issues related to security of tenure and to access to justice and remedies for violations of the right to housing. Particular attention will be given to Maori, people of Pacific descent, persons with disabilities, children and women, refugees, migrants and homeless people.

"I am looking forward to sharing with the Government and other actors constructive examples of how the right to housing is effectively being implemented in other jurisdictions through legislation and national rights based housing strategies," the expert said.

Farha is expected to meet with [the two Associate Ministers covering Maori housing and public housing](#), as well as with senior officials from the Ministries of Housing and Urban Development, Social Development, Justice and the Treasury.

She is expected to have talks with Members of Parliament and with mayors and town council representatives in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington. She will also meet with the New Zealand Human Rights Human Rights Commission, Maori and civil society representatives.

During the visit the Special Rapporteur will attend a screening of the award winning documentary "Push" that follows her work as she investigates the financialization of housing across the world. The film will be shown on 11 February 2020 at 19:00 at Victoria University Wellington (Central Wellington), Government Building Lecture Theatre 1 (GB LT 1). (As seats are limited, advance [registration](#) is highly recommended.)

At the end of the visit, the Special Rapporteur will hold a press conference to share her preliminary findings and recommendations at 13:00 on 19 February 2020, at UNICEF New Zealand, Level 1, PSA House, [11 Aurora Terrace](#), Wellington. Access will be strictly limited to journalists. The press conference will also be [streamed](#) live.

The Special Rapporteur on the right to housing will present a comprehensive report of the visit to the UN Human Rights Council in March 2021.

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Ms Leilani Farha is the [UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing](#) as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. She took up her mandate in June 2014. Farha is the Executive Director of the NGO *Canada without Poverty*, based in Ottawa. A lawyer by training, for the past 20 years Ms. Farha has worked both internationally and domestically on the implementation of the right to adequate housing for the most marginalized groups and on the situation of people living in poverty. Her most recent [report to the Human Rights Council](#) focusses on access to justice for the right to housing.

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UN Human Rights, Country Page - [New Zealand](#)

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