

Housing Sector In Eurasia Needs A Mind Shift And Greater Cooperation For Effective Solutions

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To solve housing problems in the region, practical as well as strategic actions are needed with more emphasis on education and awareness among citizens about their rights and responsibilities in relation to shelter, property and housing

Raquel Rolnik, UN Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing, said in a video message to the delegates of the second Housing Forum for Europe & Central Asia a paradigm shift is needed from the belief that the market can solve all housing problems. She emphasized as the ongoing crisis since 2008 demonstrates, we need to redefine the responsibility of states in providing social services, including housing.

A market approach is necessary to develop housing microfinance and residential energy efficiency, among many other things, but state intervention for vulnerable groups, like the Roma, elderly, low-income, mentally and physically challenged, or refugees, cannot be overlooked. At the same time, international organizations and NGOs should shift from direct services toward shaping market solutions and policies.

These are some of the outcomes of the second Housing Forum Europe & Central Asia, which concluded on April 24, 2013, in Geneva, Switzerland. The debates and discussions touched on important thematic areas such as housing inclusiveness and equal access to adequate standards of living in cities, including the right to adequate housing.

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