

CENTRE ON
HOUSING RIGHTS
AND EVICTIONS



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Oral Statement: Ghana Universal Periodic Review
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COHRE welcomes Ghana's support of recommendation 23 in the report of the Working Group to include a gender perspective and rights-based approach in issues related to the right to adequate housing. In this vein, we would note the following:

Ghana's urban poor struggle with issues of sanitation, infrastructure, and natural disasters, including fire outbreaks (because of densely packed wooden structures) and flooding (many of Ghana's slums are located on marginal land prone to flooding). Due to lack of secure tenure, most remain vulnerable to evictions and increased human rights violations.

We note with concern the current Rent Act, which allows landlords to charge only six months rent in advance; however, in practice, landlords charge one to three years rent in advance. As the demand for accommodation exceeds supply, tenants have no choice but to accept these rent charges or lose their rental units. This system is characterized by high charges by estate agents/brokers and inefficient rent tribunals.

We commend Ghana's Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing for initiating a consultative process to enable stakeholders' inputs into the national shelter policy. COHRE hopes that Ghana's national shelter policy will reflect the concerns and needs of the poor and vulnerable.

We applaud several governments for commenting on the rights of women in Ghana during the interactive dialogue. We commend Hungary for raising property inheritance issues related to women.

We are concerned that, outside the area of inheritance, few questions were raised on women's housing, land and property rights. Ghana has made some progress in addressing discrimination against women but a lot remains to be done. Equal laws for property access, control and ownership must be enacted and enforced, and discriminatory practices outlawed.

Finally, although we commend the government of Ghana for having ratified a number of international treaties, we note with concern that Ghana is yet to ratify the protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights related to women's rights in Africa. The ratification and implementation will be an important first step towards realising women's human rights in Ghana.

Thank you Mr. President.