

Ladies and gentlemen, the debate on social development or social justice tends to focus on issues such as income inequality, wealth disparity or environmental protection - all of them are of course extremely important. Today, however, I would like to speak about another factor crucial for an honest debate on social development: about housing.

In Poland, we face a dramatic housing crisis forcing my generation to either spend a majority of their paychecks on rent, sign a mortgage for thirty years or live with their parents well into their thirties. The prices have skyrocketed in recent years, our mortgage rates are the highest in Europe. For the past thirty years we've privatised most of our public housing programs. On top of that, buying up real estate has become a popular investment opportunity for the top 1%. They usually do not even rent those apartments, on the contrary, they just hoard them, treating them as an investment, highly profitable and more secure than in any other form.

Such a crisis is happening not only in Poland but all around the world. And it is our responsibility as parliamentarians, as leaders in our communities, to acknowledge loudly and clearly that housing is not an investment opportunity for speculators, it is not an endless profit source for banks. Adequate housing is a human right. Therefore we must commit to providing affordable and accessible housing to all through any

means possible and necessary. Instead of privatising public housing programs we must expand them. Instead of letting the interest rates on mortgages run riot we must drive them down. Instead of appeasing the banks we must regulate them.

Because if we do not fight for the human right to affordable housing the market, the banks and the speculators surely will not. We have enough evidence of that already.