

The fourth session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Opening Statement by Mr. Ayuush Bat-Erdene Chief of the Right to Development Section, OHCHR 3 November 2021

Excellencies,
Dear participants

As you may know, the Human Rights Council established this Expert Mechanism in September 2019 (Res. 45/6), just before the COVID-19 pandemic stroke the world. The task of the Mechanism is three-fold. 1) it provides the Council with thematic expertise on the right to development; 2) it supports Member States in searching for, identifying and sharing best practices in relation to the implementation of the right to development; and 3) it promotes the implementation of the right to development worldwide.

The Human Rights Council appointed five distinguished experts nominated by regional groups to undertake this task. I am very pleased to welcome them all in this room for their first in-person meeting. Ms. Klentiana Mahmutaj from Albania; Mr. Koen De Feyter from Belgium; Mr. Armando Antonio De Negri Filho from Brazil; Mr. Mihir Kanade from India, and Mr. Bonny Ibhawoh from Nigeria.

Despite the lock-down and many other challenges brought by the pandemic, the group has accomplished many important tasks, mostly in virtual world. They held 3 formal meetings and 26 informal meetings. They prepared and submitted 2 annual reports to the HRC and the GA (A/HRC/45/29 and A/HRC/48/62). They coordinated their action with the Chair of the IGWG on the RTD and the Special Rapporteur on the RTD and other relevant Special Procedures mandate holders. The group issued a statement on COVID-19 and vaccine nationalism.

On 21 October 2021, the Expert Mechanism held an online dialogue with civil society organizations and social movements to learn from them and support their engagement with the right to development in view of identifying good practices, opportunities and challenges that could be shared with States, international organizations, and other stakeholders.

Dear participants,

In the discharge of its mandate, the Expert Mechanism identified five thematic areas for study during its first 3-year term. The first study elaborates on the operationalization of the right to development in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on the targets incorporated as means of implementation (doc A/HRC/48/63). It was presented to the Council in September this year.

The second study elaborates on racism, racial discrimination and the right to development and will be submitted to the Council in September 2022. The third study will discuss inequalities and the right to development, whereas the fourth study will address the right to development in international investment law. Finally, the fifth thematic study will focus on non-State actors and the duty to cooperate.

Dear Participants,

The right to development is ever important in the current context of building better in addressing the socio-economic impact of the pandemic including speedy and inclusive vaccination worldwide leaving no one behind.

COVID-19 has shed light on the world's interdependency and interconnectedness and on the relevance of bringing forward and operationalize the right to development including its dimensions of international cooperation and solidarity.

In conclusion, let me congratulate the five members of the Expert Mechanism for the excellent work carried out thus far and I wish them and you all a constructive and successful session.

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