

52nd session of the Human Rights Council

High-level meeting commemorating the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development

Concept note (as of 28 February 2022)

Date and venue: Tuesday, 28 February 2023, 4 to 6 p.m. and Wednesday, 1 March 2023, 10 a.m. to noon (UTC+1)
Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, and online platform (Zoom)
(will be broadcast live and archived at <https://media.un.org/en/webtv>)

Objectives: The high-level meeting marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development.¹ The meeting provides an opportunity for the international community to demonstrate and reaffirm its unequivocal commitment to the effective realization of the right to development. The high-level participants will discuss and identify ways for building forward better together against the backdrop of multiple interconnected challenges, obstacles and crises that prevent the realization of the right to development, including the negative impact of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting will consider good practices and examples in addressing these common threats and reflect on what has been achieved and on persistent challenges. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the United Nations mechanisms on the right to development with a view to identifying concrete proposals to strengthen their effectiveness.

The high-level meeting will contribute to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and increasing awareness among all stakeholders, in particular Member States, relevant bodies, agencies and mechanisms of the United Nations system, the international financial and trade institutions, as well as civil society of the special role of the right to development for advancing effective multilateralism, international solidarity and cooperation.

The objectives of this high-level meeting are:

- **To celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the right to development**, and to reaffirm the global commitment to the effective realization of the right to development;
- **To raise awareness of the multi-dimensional nature and positive contribution of the right to development** to the realization of all human rights and social justice;
- **To address the barriers and obstacles in the full realization of the right to development**;
- **To explore ways to overcome the challenges to implementation of the right to development** including the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change;
- **To share good practices in realizing the right to development**, in particular in the context of effective international cooperation and solidarity;
- **To highlight the importance of concrete measures, such as adopting a legally binding instrument on the right to development, for the realization of the right to development.**

¹ Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-right-development>

First part

28 February 2023, 4 to 6 p.m.

Chair:	H.E. Mr. Marc Bichler , Vice-President of the Human Rights Council
Opening statements:	Ms. Amina J. Mohammed , Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (<i>video message</i>) Mr. Volker Türk , United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov , Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan (<i>video message</i>) Mr. Achim Steiner , Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (<i>video message</i>) Ms. Rebeca Grynspan , Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (<i>video message</i>) Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus , Director-General of the World Health Organization (<i>video message</i>)

Second part

1 March 2023, 10 a.m. to noon

Chair:	H.E. Ms. Maira Mariela Macdonal Alvarez , Vice-President of the Human Rights Council
Panellists:	Mr. Saad Alfarargi , Special Rapporteur on the right to development Mr. Zamir Akram , Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Right to Development Mr. Bonny Ibhawoh , Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development Ms. Li Yuefen , Senior Adviser on South-South Cooperation and Development Finance, South Centre
Outcome:	<p>The high-level meeting on the promotion and realization of the right to development will reaffirm the commitment to the realization of the right to development and enhance international cooperation and solidarity in addressing global challenges preventing the realization of the right to development.</p> <p>The anticipated outcomes of this discussion include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A celebration and reaffirmation of the global commitment to the right to development, for making it a reality for all;• Increased awareness about the importance of realizing the right to development, which is indivisible, interdependent and interrelated with all other human rights;• A discussion of pathways for a legally binding instrument as a means to th effective operationalization of the right to development;• Identification of ways to enhance international cooperation and solidarity in resolving international crises that prevent the realization of the right to development;• A discussion of good practices for the realization of the right to development, and for achieving social justice;• A summary report on the high-level meeting submitted to the Human Rights Council.

Mandate: In its resolution [49/8](#), the Human Rights Council decided to convene, at its fifty-second session, a full-day high-level meeting, in a hybrid format and fully accessible to persons with disabilities, with sign language interpretation and webcast, on the promotion and protection of the right to development as a celebration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development. It also requested the High Commissioner to prepare a summary report on the high-level meeting and to submit it to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-fourth session.

Format: The full-day high-level meeting will be divided into two parts of maximum two hours each. The first part will consist of opening statements, followed by interventions from the floor. The second part is in the format of a panel discussion. A maximum of one hour will be set aside for the podium, which will cover the opening statements and the panellists' presentations, and their responses to questions and concluding remarks. The remaining hour will be reserved for two segments of interventions from the floor, with each segment consisting of interventions from 12 States or observers, 1 national human rights institution and 2 non-governmental organizations. Each speaker will have two minutes to raise issues and to ask panellists questions.

The list of speakers for the discussion will be established through the online inscription system and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups of States will be moved to the beginning of the list. Delegates unable to take the floor due to time constraints will be able to upload their statements on the online system to be posted on the HRC Extranet. Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

Accessibility: In an effort to render the Human Rights Council more accessible to persons with disabilities and to promote their full participation in the work of the Council on an equal basis with others, the meeting will be made accessible. International sign interpretation and real-time captioning in English will be provided and webcast during the meeting. Participants can access live English captioning on the StreamText web page (<https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=CFI-UNOG>) during the event itself. Hearing loops are available for collection from the Secretariat desk. Oral statements may be embossed in Braille from any of the six official languages of the United Nations, upon request and following the procedure described in *The accessibility guide to the Human Rights Council for persons with disabilities* (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/accessibility>).

Background: Within the United Nations, the right to development was first recognized as a human right by the Commission on Human Rights in 1977. Following several studies and seminars on this topic and a six-year drafting process, the General Assembly adopted in 1986 the [Declaration on the Right to Development](#). 4 December 2021 marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration.

The Declaration remains, until today, the principal normative document on this right. It defines the right to development as an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

Development is much more than gross domestic product (GDP). As such, the Declaration recognized that development is a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits resulting therefrom.

The Human Rights Council is the principal United Nations organ guiding the work of the United Nations on this right. It has established a number of subsidiary bodies, to assist it with its work in promoting and protecting the right to development, notably the intergovernmental Working Group on the Right to Development, the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, and the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development.

In addition, the HRC holds a biennial panel discussion on the right to development since September 2020. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has the mandate to promote and protect the realization of the right to development and to enhance support from relevant bodies of the United Nations system for this purpose.

The Declaration placed on States and on the international community, duties to make national and international development policies for the well-being of all. This calls inter alia for inclusive and human rights informed policies in peace and security, economics and finance, trade and investment, food and agriculture, and climate change and the environment. Under the Declaration on the Right to Development, States have obligations at three levels: (a) internally, through the formulation of national development policies and programmes affecting persons within their jurisdictions; (b) internationally, through the adoption and implementation of policies extending beyond their jurisdictions; and (c) collectively, through global and regional partnerships.²

The right to development framework must guide and inform the elaboration of international instruments, such as multilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements and debt and financial agreements, which can have negative implications especially for people in developing countries. Thus, operationalizing this right is essential in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and in promoting and protecting human rights.

Background documents:

- [1986 Declaration on the Right to Development](#)
- [1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action](#)
- [Human Rights Council resolution 49/8](#) of 31 March 2022 on commemoration of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development
- [Frequently asked questions on the right to development](#)
- Consolidated report of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner on the right to development, 2022 ([A/HRC/51/22](#))
- Thematic study by the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development on operationalizing the right to development in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, 2021 ([A/HRC/48/63](#))
- Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development on response and recovery plans and policies on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic from the perspective of the right to development at the national level ([A/HRC/51/30](#))
- Policy brief of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development on [climate action and the right to development: a participatory approach](#), 2021
- Thematic report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development on guidelines and recommendations on the practical implementation of the right to development, 2019 ([A/HRC/45/15](#))
- Transforming our world: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015)
- [The Paris Agreement](#)
- [Web page of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development](#)
- [Web page of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development](#)
- [Web page of the Working Group on the Right to Development](#)
- [Web page on OHCHR and the right to development](#)
- [Contribution of development to human rights in the Republic of Guinea](#)

² Frequently Asked Questions on the Right to Development, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/publications/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-no-37-frequently-asked-questions-right-development>, page 4.