



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

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Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development

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US GOVERNMENT SANCTIONS

Mr. Surya DEVA, Chair, Coordination Committee, UN Special Procedures

In his role as Chair of the Coordination Committee of the UN Special Procedures, Mr. Surya DEVA strongly condemns the US government sanctions against **Ms. Francesca ALBANESE**, Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Sanctioning a Special Rapporteur appointed by the UNHRC violates international law and is direct attack on the integrity of the entire UN human rights system. Mr. Surya DEVA calls on the Council to denounce these sanctions and requests the UN General Assembly to seek an **advisory opinion** of the International Court of Justice on this particular issue.

PRESENTATION OF THE THEMATIC REPORT

Mr. Surya DEVA, Special Rapporteur (SR) on the Right to Development

The SR introduces his **thematic report** exploring the nexus between **gender equality and the right to development**. The right to development is sometimes considered to be in opposition to the achievement of gender equality. The polarisation between states championing gender equality and states promoting the right to development reflects the divide.



This thematic report seeks to **overcome such misconceptions**. It elaborates the **mutually reinforcing nexus** between gender equality and the right to development. The enjoyment of gender equality by girls and women in all their diversity would lead to the realisation of their right to development. Conversely, realising the right to development of girls and women would result in gender equality.

Gender equality is a cross-cutting foundational human rights that must not fluctuate with changes in the political climate. Despite progress made over the years, girls and women continue to face various forms of discrimination in both private and public spheres due to discriminatory laws, patriarchal norms and structural barriers. According to the 2024 gender snapshot, none of the SDG 5 targets have been met.

Women enjoy **less than two-thirds of the rights** available to men. The age of retirement for women is lower than that of men. In 62 economies, women spend 2.5 times more hours than men on unpaid domestic work. Girls and women are also **disproportionately affected** by poverty, austerity measures, climate change, conflicts, new technologies and unilateral sanctions. Moreover, women human rights defenders and girls climate activists continue to face sexist attacks in all regions of the world. These **worrying trends must be reversed**.

Women and girls - namely about half of the world's population - cannot realise their economic, social, cultural and political development unless there is substantive gender equality. Gender equality is critical not merely for women and girls. Gender equality is beneficial for all human beings. At the same time, women and girls should not be seen as recipients of empowerment by others. Rather, when women and girls are **enabled as agents of change**, they can contribute to creating a more inclusive peaceful and sustainable world.

In a recently published leaflet, Mr. Surya DEVA has tried to demystify the right to development. The right to development is a transformative human right because it seeks to address various historical injustices. As the international community commemorates the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA), the SR urges all states, UN entities, businesses, and other actors to **leverage this transformative potential of the right to development** to address the root causes of gender inequality.

The SR's thematic report illustrates five aspects of the right to development that could be employed to **achieve substantive gender equality**, namely the collective dimension of this right; active, free and meaningful participation; fair distribution; intersectionality; and international cooperation. These aspects of the right to development can create enabling conditions for women and girls to become changemakers.

PRESENTATION OF COUNTRY VISIT REPORTS

Mr. Surya DEVA presents the report on his visit to **Honduras** conducted in November 2024. During the visit, the SR met with the representatives of several government ministries, UN agencies, non-governmental organisations, and industry associations. The SR expresses his gratitude to the government of Honduras for its cooperation and to the representatives of various stakeholders for their valuable input.



The SR observed that the government is committed to **embracing a more sustainable and inclusive model of development** and has taken some initial steps in this direction, such as the abolition of employment and economic development zones; a ban on extractive exploitation licences; the prohibition of open-pit mining; giving priority to social programmes to address inequality and improve living conditions; providing free meals in schools and offering solidarity scholarships to low-income students.

At the same time, Honduras faces **multiple challenges** such as systemic discrimination against Indigenous peoples and afro-Hondurans; law and order problems; land conflicts; weak environmental governance; climate crisis; attacks against human rights defenders; a high national debt burden; and multiple arbitration claims by foreign investors.

In his report, the SR has formulated recommendations to **operationalise a model of planet-centred participatory development** which balances economic growth with social inclusion and environmental sustainability. For instance, the government should take measures to address poverty, socio-economic disparities, improve access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and protect human rights defenders. Moreover, the government should strengthen land rights and secure land titles for Indigenous communities, and develop a national policy on investment governance that provides incentives only to responsible investors.

REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mr. Surya DEVA acknowledges the appreciation expressed by the government of Honduras for the very good cooperation during his country visit and commends the openness of the government to move towards a model of development which is more inclusive and sustainable, including efforts to rectify some of the past mistakes. The SR announces his **country visit to Germany in November 2025** and looks forward to a similar collaboration with the German government. The SR also looks forward to receiving more invitations for country visits.

The SR further praises the fact that delegations practically unanimously expressed appreciation the nexus that his thematic report tries to make between gender equality and the right to development. Turning to questions, the SR stresses that several measures can be taken to address **gender bias in artificial intelligence**. One is the participation of women and girls in all these processes of data and system management, because women are not having adequate equal representation in STEM courses. If AI tools are developed by males - especially those males who are not gender-responsive and gender-sensitive - then the bias is going to be reflected in the tools. For any technology including AI, the full life-cycle approach has to be gender-responsive.

Briefly reflecting on the observations made by the Kuwaiti delegation, the SR opens the door to a bilateral conversation. In his report, the SR does not place any limitations whatsoever on the right to development. The report rather highlights the fact that the right to development should be seen as a **holistic right focussing on economic, social, political and cultural development**. The report's focus is placed on gender equality and the right to development nexus. Fully aware of sensitivities in relation to culture, language and religion in certain countries, the SR believes that those **sensitivities can be used to promote gender equality**. For instance, there are different ways to greet each other across the world - that is diversity. There is no need to follow one



particular way of greeting each other. This diversity can be respected and can be used to promote the equality and dignified existence of everyone.

On the question raised by the European Union about the **role of the UNHRC in this nexus**, the SR suggests that one key role the Council can play is to build bridges and alliances. Often in the world there is too much polarisation. On matters of gender equality and on the right to development, there should not be any polarisation. The thematic report rightly shows that we need to break those barriers and boundaries and work together to create a world in which no one is left behind.

On what UN agencies, states businesses and others could do for integrating gender equality in regional and international processes, the SR suggests that whenever crafting any national or regional plans, **gender equality should be a cross-cutting issue** in all these processes, and this applies not only to the right to development, but any other process - be it climate change, migration, technologies or SDGs. Gender equality as a cross-cutting issue should be integrated in all these processes. Instead of looking at gender equality and the right to development as **two parallel compartments**, Mr. Surya DEVA suggests that all the actors - including states, businesses, UN agencies and development actors - must see gender equality as a cross-cutting foundational issue, and whatever else is being done, it shall be seen through that particular lens.

For instance, **ASEAN** is developing a Declaration on the Rights to Development and Peace, and the SR hopes it will be adopted next month. A gender approach can thus be applied to that ASEAN Declaration. Similarly, the **African Commission** is developing a general comment on the right to development and gender equality can be integrated in the drafting and in the interpretation of that general comment.

The SR further appreciates Uganda's call for the renewal of the mandate by consensus as delegates may appreciate that in the last two and a half years, the SR has been trying to build bridges and a **consensus on a normatively sound interpretation** of the right to development, but this without compromising the key elements of the right to development.

On how to strengthen **international cooperation to promote gender equality**, the SR suggests interpreting international cooperation in a broad manner. It is not merely about development aid. It is also about technical assistance, capacity-building, and sharing good practises. In all these processes, it is crucial to take into account the perspective of women and girls. This is a key way to move forward. The world is facing many challenges, and one way to overcome these challenges - whether these challenges are conflict-related, as conflicts impact women and girls disproportionately, or a climate change crisis - is international cooperation. It may be difficult, but there is no alternative to international cooperation. The ICJ in its advisory opinion has reiterated and confirmed that international cooperation is an **obligation of all states under customary international law**. This is also a key component of IT development.

Turning to the question of how to ensure intersectional **participation of women** in international cooperation and development aid, the SR suggests that listening to diverse women and girls in countries where the development aid is supposed to make a difference is very crucial. **Gender equality is non-negotiable**, cross-cutting and foundational issue, but there are different views in different countries. Instead of imposing a particular narrative around gender equality, it is crucial



to listen to women rather than deciding for them. Listen to women and girls in those countries where the development aid is going to make a difference, and integrate those perspectives rather than thinking - 'I have this perspective, and that should be followed globally.' In the SR's view, **diversity is a value that can be used in a positive manner**.

Addressing the concern raised by the Holy See over **abortion** and its potential conflict with the right to life, the SR underlines that abortion is about the autonomy of women. This should be respected, and many countries accept it under certain circumstances. From the SR's perspective, there is no conflict between abortion and the right to life, simply because the agency of women has to be respected.

As regards the **integration of a gender perspective into climate resilience**, the SR stresses that women bring a lot of unique knowledge about resilience, and regrettably often, all that knowledge is overlooked. Women should not be seen as someone who needs to be helped, to be rescued. In resilience efforts, policies, and strategies, we should listen to women, their experiences and their knowledge, and use that knowledge to build local strategies to mitigate the challenges related to climate disasters. For instance, women take care of plants at home. So, how could a plantation be used as a shield against climate change-related disasters?

On the issue of **gender and budgeting**, the SR draws the Council's attention to paragraph 40 of his thematic report, in which he specifically mentions some good practises on gender-responsive budgeting. In his view, gender has to be integrated in all policy-making, including budgeting, public procurement, taxation, and everywhere. Lastly, touching upon **religion and culture**, as explained in his report, the SR suggests using culture and religion in a positive way to promote gender equality. We should also look at how those practises developed historically.

In closing, the SR highly appreciates the statements delivered by all delegations and civil society organizations. The list was long, with regrettably not enough time to accommodate all, but Mr. Surya DEVA enthusiastically offers the opportunity for delegations to engage bilaterally or to share their statements with the SR to continue the dialogue.

VIEWS EXPRESSED BY HONDURAS AS CONCERNED COUNTRY

Speaking on behalf of the government of **Honduras**, Mr. Héctor Longino BECERRA LANZA, **Secretary of State in the Human Rights Office**, expresses its gratitude for the country visit report and appreciates the opportunity to hold a frank and constructive dialogue to strengthen national actions in public policies, with the aim of fostering an inclusive development that is respectful of human rights and the environment.

Honduras recognises that despite important progress in the protection of human rights and in the reduction of inequalities, there are still **challenges in rural areas** where the economic and social gap is a priority challenge. The consequences of the coup d'état 2009 and the excess of benefits granted to business actors in the 12 years and seven months that followed, continue to weigh on the indexes of impunity and corruption, which are still identified as challenges for Honduras.

In this context, the government of President Xiomara Castro, working together with other state institutions, reaffirms its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, as reflected in the measures adopted since 2022. These are aimed at strengthening the



constitutional rule of law and transforming the development model into one that ensures dignity, equality, and well-being for all people.

Thanking the SR for having recognised these important efforts made throughout the report. Honduras wishes to broaden and strengthen the information presented in the report. With regard to the SDGs, Honduras has seen a **meaningful poverty reduction** - from 74 percent in 2021 to 64 percent in 2024 - namely a 10.7 percent reduction, as well as a reduction in extreme poverty from 66 percent in 2021 to 52 percent in 2024, namely a 13.6 percent reduction.

Turning to the rights of **Indigenous peoples and access to land**, Honduras has created a technical roundtable for legislative harmonization - an open space for the active participation of civil society organizations, with the aim of reforming and derogating criminal provisions, whose arbitrary use may lead to the criminalisation of human rights defenders. Thanks to technical support provided by OHCHR and different state institutions, the Supreme Court of Justice has taken the steps necessary to create jurisdictional bodies that are specialised in matters of land and the environment.

With regard to **gender equality**, Honduras approved of a geo-referencing tool for the national care system. As regards Indigenous peoples and access to land, Honduras created an interdisciplinary group of independent experts, whose goal is to move forward in the search for comprehensive justice for Bertha Cáceres as well as addressing other related crimes including recommendations on reparations and guarantees of non-repetition.

As for the SDGs, **eight hospitals** are being built in strategic areas of the country, with the primary goal of improving access to health care for the entirety of the population. 245 municipalities have been declared territories **free of illiteracy**, which covers 82 percent of the national territory. In addition, repairs have been carried out on more than 5.000 educational centres out of a total of 12.000 – which were in a state of deterioration and neglect. Honduras has further worked towards the **de-fossilisation** of its energy matrix with **64.5 percent being non-fossil**, that is to say hydroelectric, solar, wind, biomass and geothermal energy.

In closing, the Secretary of State in the Office of Human Rights reiterates the commitment of Honduras to international cooperation in the field of human rights. With this spirit, Honduras maintains an **open invitation to all Special Procedures**. In the last four years, Honduras has received six visits, and it maintains its will to continue working jointly on the conclusions and recommendations presented in the country visit report.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Views Expressed by State Delegations

Algeria emphasizes that its Constitution enshrines the principle of equality between male and female citizens when it comes to rights and obligations, especially when it comes to lifting barriers to equal participation in social, economic and cultural life. Algeria is deploying efforts to foster the political and economic empowerment of women through an increase in their representation in decision-making spheres as well as in leadership positions and equality in employment. Algeria points out it lifted the reservation to article 15 of the CEDAW. Algeria's economic and social measures are based on equal chances and aim at including women in the



development process in all its aspects. In the same context, Algeria pays due importance to capacity-building and training of individuals so that they can take part in the development process. In closing, Algeria reiterates the importance of international cooperation and solidarity in order to reach a social order that will allow everyone to enjoy the right to development.

Algeria on behalf of the Arab group affirms that the right to development is a fundamental right, inalienable and indivisible. Gender equality also is part of it. Fostering the right to development favours gender equality. Development is a comprehensive process which requires efforts from all stakeholders. Development cannot come in a context of conflict or war or human rights violations as the latter hinder the right to development. In developing countries, the international community must be able to guarantee technology transfer and best practises in order to ensure the right to development for all people. Acknowledging that gender equality is part and parcel of the 2030 Agenda, the Arab group stresses that the right to development shall be implemented in harmony with the realities and specificities of each country. In closing, the Arab group calls on the international community to take measures to support developing countries in their development processes.

Bolivia agrees with the SR's vision that the right to development and gender are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Against the backdrop of a global backsliding on gender equality, it is crucial to ensure that this is a right that cannot depend on political trends. Progress made must be upheld, especially progress enshrined in the Pact for the Future, ensuring that gender equality is supported and that all violence against women ends. In its national programmes and its development efforts, Bolivia has sought to build shelters and housing for women. Combating violence is essential in order to make progress on the right to development, economic, social, cultural and political development. Bolivia subscribes to the recommendations formulated by the SR on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action this year, thereby addressing a call on the international community to continue its efforts to achieve gender equality.

Chad affirms that the right to development remains one of the main priorities for the country, and this should be the centre of a social order that allows the enjoyment of all human rights. Despite the progress made, there are still major obstacles to overcome in order to achieve the SDGs and bridge the huge inequalities among countries, including in terms of access to basic services. Chad is in favour of measures that seek to establish a development model that provides responses to the sexual crises that are in particular affecting the least developed countries, including access to education and other matters. Chad has considerable resources, both in agriculture and in the subsoil, as well as its vibrant population. These are an important capital that needs to be drawn upon carefully so that we can contribute to development. In closing, Chad underlines the need to ensure that the Council's work can contribute in full to the furtherance of equality and the right to development, which includes the right of everybody to a sufficient standard of living and access to water and sanitation.

Côte d'Ivoire appreciates the thematic report which emphasises the close link between gender equality and the effective right to development. Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the SR's analysis which rightly recalls that gender equality is not only a matter of social justice and respecting human rights but also crucial for the implementation of the SDGs. Côte d'Ivoire supports the idea that



women's full participation in economic, social and political life is essential to build inclusive, resilient, prosperous societies. Women's empowerment and that of girls should be a cross-cutting priority in all public development policies. The Ivorian government has adopted and implemented a number of strategic instruments for gender equality including the Law on Parity, the National Women's Empowerment Programme, the systematic integration of the gender approach in sectoral plans and budgets in line with the 2063 Agenda of the African Union and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its support to the SR's mandate and encourages continuing the work to promote a holistic, inclusive approach to the right to development which places gender equality at the heart of collective action.

Djibouti takes notes of the SR's appraisal of the gender and right to development in light of human rights instruments and the key obstacles to true equality between men and women. Djibouti attaches great importance to groups living in vulnerability, particularly women and girls. In order to fulfil the right to development, Djibouti believes that the acceleration of policies favouring the inclusion, the empowerment and the effective participation of women and girls in society requires mechanisms to support this process and the establishment of standards based on equality and equity. In his thematic report, the SR underscores that international cooperation is essential for the right to development. In this connection, Djibouti asks how could international cooperation be strengthened in order to become a tool for genuine social transformation, thereby promoting the equality between men and women

Egypt emphasizes that women are drivers of development and transformation towards a peaceful and inclusive society. Ensuring gender equality is not confined to the SDGs, but it is one of the human rights pillars. In this respect, Egypt is keen on empowering women, promoting their decision-making as a partner in building society and fostering its renaissance. Egypt legislation encompasses provisions prohibiting discrimination against women and ensuring their representation in public life with a view to achieving inclusive development. Amidst growing geopolitical tensions that negatively affect development and human rights, especially in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Egypt agrees with the SR on the need to promote the role of institutions to prevent human rights violations against women and girls and to hold to account those responsible.

Eritrea expresses its appreciation to the SR for highlighting the critical synergy between gender equality and the right to development. Enabling women and girls as agents of change is foundational to building inclusive peaceful and sustainable development. In Eritrea, this nexus is reflected in tangible progress. Education is guaranteed as a fundamental right and is provided free of charge from primary to higher education. Girls now nearly achieve parity in secondary schools, constituting almost half of all 12th grade students. Over three decades, Eritrean women have shattered outdated norms excelling as health care professionals, community health workers and educators, while also playing vital roles in agriculture, engineering, mining and sports. These gains reflect not only policy, but also broader cultural transformation. Progressive laws, community awareness and affirmative measures have created an enabling environment to allow women to fully participate as equals in all spheres of life. Therefore, Eritrea reiterates that gender equality is not merely a desired outcome but a strategic pathway to realising the right to development. Empowering women through education, inclusion and recognition reinforces



collective progress. Eritrea remains firmly committed to advancing this agenda and to constructive engagement within the UNHRC.

Ghana on behalf of the African group recognises the importance of an integrated and holistic approach that considers gender equality as an essential component of the right to development. In the world and particularly in Africa where half of the population is made up of women, it is impossible to achieve sustainable development without their full participation and inclusion in all spheres of social, economic and political life. While acknowledging the enormous challenges that persist, African governments have been strengthening their commitment through public policies that advance both the right to development and gender equality. In line with the African Union's Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, such policies aim to foster inclusion, inclusive growth, reduce poverty and enhance human capital, especially among women and youth. With regard to the recommendations contained in the thematic report, the African group would appreciate the SR's views on how UN member states, multilateral institutions and the private sector could further reinforce their contributions to ensure the effective implementation of existing and any future international and regional instruments and agendas on gender equality and the right to development.

The **Holy See** takes note of the SR's report in which he points out that the realization of the right to development requires equality for women and girls. Such equality is rooted in the dignity of every man and woman, which is inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance. This God-given dignity must always be at the heart of all development efforts if we are to build a world in which everyone can lead an authentically human life in truth, justice, and peace, as Pope Leo XIV said. When women and girls are able to fulfil their potential, the benefits extend far beyond the individual. Families are strengthened, social cohesion is reinforced, and the common good is advanced. 30 years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, one truth bears repeating. Women play a critical role in the family. The family is the basic unit of society and, as such, should be strengthened. This requires policies that support both motherhood and family, as well as the principle of shared responsibility between women and men. Sadly, the report states that to realise social development, women should enjoy autonomy over decisions concerning abortion. This implies that social development is linked to denial of the right to life to the child in the womb. This creates a paradox. Precisely in an age when the inviolable rights of persons are solemnly proclaimed and the value of life is publicly affirmed, the very right to life is being denied. One should be honest and admit that it is by addressing these issues that we can reach social development and the good of the world's women, and not by proposing false solutions such as denying another person's inviolable right to life, which is always a failure of law, of justice, and ultimately of the entire society.

India appreciates the thematic report and remains committed to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through comprehensive social, educational and economic measures. Reserving one-third of seats in the lower house of the national Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies for women marks a historic step in political empowerment. An inclusive learning environment is promoted through flagship initiatives such as 'Save the Girl - Child Educate the Girl Child' - supported through the National Education Policy 2020 which prioritises equitable access for girls to quality education. Turning to economic empowerment, women's employability and entrepreneurship are strengthened through various initiatives such as the Skill India Mission,



vocational training institutes and labour reforms. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act ensures a minimum one-third participation of women in rural employment. Safety and protection are addressed through robust legal measures, including the reform of criminal laws, the Domestic Violence Act and the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act, complemented by fast-track special courts. India remains firmly committed to the effective implementation of the right to development and will continue to support the SR's activities.

Jamaica welcomes the report's focus on the mutually reinforcing nexus between gender equality and the right to development. Expressing support for a number of the recommendations contained in the report including at paragraphs 92, 93 and 94D, Jamaica firmly believes that the recommendations set out in the report must translate into concrete actions that ensure greater equity and equality for women and girls. At the national level, the 2011 National Policy for Gender Equality and the 2017 to 2027 National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence, the 2023 Domestic Violence Amendment Act, the 2021 Sexual Harassment Prevention and Protection Act and the 1976 Employment Equal Pay for Men and Women Act provide a strong legal and policy framework for ensuring gender equality, employment of women and girls and overall sustainable development. Jamaica calls on member states to recommit at all levels to address gender inequality, leaving no woman or girl behind as a critical dimension to realising the right to development.

Jordan highlights that the SR's emphasis on the core concept that true gender equality is not a request limited to women and girls, but a main pillar to the development of societies as well as to peace, stability, and prosperity. In this spirit, Jordan adopted a number of policies and legislations that promote women participation in the public life and private life, including the National Strategy for Women and action plans linked to SDGs, namely SDG 5. Jordan pays due importance to combating all forms of violence based on discrimination, and has national mechanisms in place for reporting and protection in cooperation with civil society and international partners. Jordan guarantees effective participation of women and girls in implementing and drafting development policies at all levels, be it at the level of municipal councils or national initiatives. In the face of new global challenges such as climate change, crisis, and conflict, Jordan is adopting inclusive policies at the level of national response and the impact of this crisis on women and girls. Reiterating the importance of international cooperation and development assistance as a key tool to promote gender equality, Jordan reaffirms its commitment to working with all partners in order to achieve a sustainable and inclusive development that is beneficial to all.

Kenya stresses that its Constitution guarantees equality and key measures are already in place, such as the two-thirds gender principle, gender-responsive budgeting and the Women Enterprise Fund, which seek to expand women's participation in politics, access to finance, and support for entrepreneurship. Women are driving progress in Kenya not only in parliament and government, but also across peace-building, the green and care economies, and climate resilience, where women innovators and cooperatives are vital to sustainable development. Kenyan women's active roles in mediation and community resilience, especially in the horn of Africa, embody the principle that women and girls are dynamic agents of growth, peace and sustainability. Yet, challenges remain. Kenya echoes the SR's call for global solidarity to close gender gaps through international cooperation; investment in gender responsive public services and climate finance;



and ensuring women's full participation in global decision-making processes. In this regard, Kenya reiterates its call for strengthened international cooperation and political will to advance consensus on normative clarity and implementation mechanisms for the right to development. The latter must be elevated beyond rhetoric to concrete legal and policy actions that empower women and that facilitate women and girls as agents of change.

Kuwait jointly with the GCC countries reaffirm their attachment to development as a fundamental human rights, thereby insisting that this right should be envisaged in its entirety with the limitations imposed upon it as explained by the SR. The GCC countries attach great importance to the autonomy of women and their empowerment, which includes the protection of women from all forms of violence, access to health and education, ensuring their economic participation in society. As the family remains the fundamental unit of society, the GCC countries reject all concepts and all terminology that is not internationally agreed upon, and religious and cultural specificities must be duly observed. The GCC countries remain firmly committed to equality and the empowerment of women, which go hand-in-hand with respect for national sovereignty, cultural and religious specificities, and through an equitable international cooperation allowing for a fair distribution of resources.

The **Lao PDR** reiterates that all human rights, including the right to development, are universal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated, and mutually reinforcing. The Lao PDR emphasises that advancing the right to development of women and girls is highly imperative. With this in mind, it has promoted inclusive and sustainable development for all, including women and girls, without discrimination. The gender equality has been recognised and guaranteed by the Constitution and various national legislations. Furthermore, the promotion of gender equality and advancement of women have been mainstreamed into the National Social Development Plan, aligning with its commitment to implement the 2023 Agenda, especially SDG 5. Currently, the Lao PDR is implementing various plans, such as the Strategic Development Plan for Lao Women 2030, the National Strategy and Action Plan on Gender Equality. In this connection, the Lao PDR's strategy to strengthen collaboration with all UN agency development partners and stakeholders to ensure gender equality and empower women and girls in the country.

Lithuania jointly with the Nordic-Baltic countries emphasize that development policies must ensure that growth is inclusive, justice is upheld, and no one is left behind. The key principle of the right to development is the full, equal and meaningful participation and contribution by all groups of society. However, as the SR's thematic report highlights, women and girls do not equally enjoy the right to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from economic, social, cultural and political development. They continue to face numerous challenges, being disproportionately affected by poverty, climate change, conflicts, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as well as the gender digital divide. The harmful practise of child early and forced marriage continues to impact millions of young women and girls, undermining the access to health, education, safety and comprehensive development. Women and girls are among the most affected by the development policies. Yet, they remain among the least heard. Their full, equal and meaningful participation in shaping and implementing development strategies is a necessary condition to ensure an inclusive and sustainable growth.



Luxembourg shares the SR's view the universal indivisible interdependent nature of all human rights which mutually shore up each other whether they are economic social, cultural, civil or political rights. States have the responsibility of respecting protecting and implementing all human rights in compliance with their commitments under international law in order that the enjoyment of the right to development becomes a reality in the lives of everyone men and women, individually and collectively. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration which establishes a fundamental bond between progress and empowerment of women and sustainable development. However, progress towards the SDGs and in particular SDG5 on gender equality remains insufficient across the world. In his report, the SR recommends mobilising tools and international cooperation as well as development aid to achieve genuine gender equality. Women and girls should be involved actively as participants in implementing their rights.

Malawi concurs with the SR's central message that gender equality and the right to development are mutually reinforcing. Without gender equality, the right to development cannot be fully realised. Conversely, realising the right to development creates conditions for substantive gender equality. At the national level, Malawi continues to implement the Gender Equality Act and has taken steps to empower women and girls through targeted agricultural support, women's cooperatives, the provision of technical vocational training, and social protection programmes that benefit female-headed households. Malawi has also prioritised women's participation in decision-making. However, Malawi recognises that persistent challenges - including structural inequalities, the effects of climate change, and limited resources - continue to hinder progress. Malawi therefore echoes the SR's call for greater international cooperation, including development assistance and technology transfer, in order to accelerate gender equality. Malawi believes that leveraging women and girls as agents of change is essential for building inclusive, peaceful and sustainable societies.

Malaysia concurs with the SR that the right to development cannot be fully realised without gender equality and that progress in one will naturally advance the other. Malaysia appreciates the recognition reflected in the report of Malaysia's efforts, including the expansion of maternity and paternity leave protections for pregnant women as well as measures on equal pay and women's access to employment opportunities. These reforms underscores Malaysia's commitment to enabling the equal participation of both women and men in national development. Looking ahead, the 30th Malaysia plan under the Madani Vision incorporates gender responsive policy across the national development agenda. This includes raising women's labour force participation to 60 percent, narrowing the wage gap; strengthening child care support; and promoting women's leadership. The plan also adopts a needs-based approach and extending support to marginalised groups. Malaysia reaffirms that advancing gender equality is not only a national priority but also integral to achieving inclusive peaceful and sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Beijing Declaration.

Mali underscores the gender equality is a major issue for development. Its absence has direct impacts on economic, social, and cultural development and politics and is at the origin of various inequalities, notably in the field of education, healthcare, justice, job, access to land and important official positions. In the framework for leveraging gender equality, Mali introduced in 2024 a roadmap integrating effectively gender issue in elections. This was a major step towards



moving towards a more egalitarian and inclusive society. Mali believes it is useful to have active, free and constructive participation of women and girls in decision-making and in the development of policies that are more capable of boosting parameters linked to gender equality, notably with regard to the right to development, the SDGs, climate change, conflict, new technologies, trade and investment agreements and public debt.

Mozambique expresses its high appreciation for the SR's insightful report which highlights the vital link between gender equality and the right to development. Mozambique fully agrees that gender equality and the right to development are mutually reinforcing, as the lack of equality hinders the realisation of economic, social, cultural and political rights, while progress in these areas advances gender equality. In Mozambique, advancing gender equality is central to national development priorities. The country is implementing gender-sensitive policies; increasing women participation in political and economic decision-making; promoting equitable access to quality education and health care; and expanding opportunities for women and girls in rural and urban areas alike. Mozambique is also working to strengthen legal frameworks and community initiative that address gender-based violence and empower women as drivers of sustainable development. To conclude, Mozambique calls for strong international cooperation and solidarity, especially in supporting countries of the Global South to achieve gender-responsive development.

Nepal commends the thematic report and the SR's efforts to advance the right to development. The latter is fundamental to achieving sustainable development and fostering equal opportunities for all. Nepal's Constitution enshrines the right to development as a fundamental right. The country gives priority to inclusive growth, social justice, poverty reduction, and the empowerment of all segments of society, particularly marginalised and vulnerable groups. Structural barriers in trade, finance, technology transfer, and the impacts of climate change hinder the realisation of the right to development for all, particularly LDCs. Therefore, Nepal calls for a strong and robust development cooperation and access to finance. It further requests the effective operationalisation of the UN Declaration on the Rights to Development and enhanced support for countries in special situations.

Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic States (OIC) reaffirms its commitment to the realisation and enjoyment of the right to development by everyone and everywhere. As half of humanity, upholding women's and girls' right to development and ensuring their freedom from all forms of discrimination remains essential. For operationalising this vital human right, the OIC appreciates the report's acknowledgement of the disproportionate impact of armed conflict of women and girls in the illegally Occupied Palestinian Territory of Gaza, where women girls and children make up nearly two-thirds of those killed in Israel's unceasing genocidal onslaught. Repeated Israeli strikes on medical facilities and critical civilian infrastructure also has a disproportionate impact on the wounded and displaced, often women and children. A greater integration of the right to development into the international human rights framework remains as key as upholding the indivisibility, interdependence, and interrelatedness of all human rights. International cooperation in support of sustainable development and the reform of the international financial architecture are essential pillars in the pursuit of all human rights, including gender equality. The Draft International Covenant on the Right to Development remains the best way to address deep-seated challenges, including inequalities within and across

countries, poverty, malnutrition, food insecurity, and climate change. Such Covenant should therefore be adopted without delay.

Pakistan states that empowering women and girls is central to their ability to participate and contribute to and benefit from development. The government of Pakistan is committed to protecting and promoting the human rights of women and girls, including the right to development. Targeted initiatives such as the Benazir Income Support Programme have sought to empower women and girls, especially those in vulnerable situations, particularly in rural areas. Other initiative, including the Nashonuma Programme and Zero Out-of-School Children Campaign, have focused on nutrition and education with a distinct focus on women and girls. These gains, however, are not irreversible. Among several challenges, armed conflicts and natural disasters are an acute threat to the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls. Currently, large parts of Pakistan have been once again experiencing catastrophic flooding caused by drastically changing climatic conditions. Disruptions in sharing of hydrological data have only worsened matters and heightened risks. Pakistan would welcome the SR's insights on how to ensure climate resilience and empowerment programmes targeting women and girls from a right to development perspective.

Portugal believes that gender equality is a precondition for sustainable development and is committed to integrating a gender perspective across all development policies and programmes in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. In Portugal's view, this requires dismantling structural barriers such as persistent gender pay gaps, unequal access to quality education, limited participation in leadership and decision-making positions, discriminatory laws or social norms, and inadequate access to technology and financial resources. Addressing these barriers is crucial for women and girls to fully exercise their rights and contribute to sustainable development.

Qatar stresses that women's effective participation in all areas of life on an equal footing is crucial for development. The UN Declaration on the Right to Development prohibits gender discrimination. SDG 5 places emphasis on gender equality and women's empowerment. Internationally, Qatar's women play a crucial role in development and benefit from government support and access to empowerment in all economic, social and political sectors. This is part of Qatar Vision 2030, which seeks to identify the steps for economic development and social prosperity. Through various sectoral strategies and policies, Qatar has worked for women's empowerment, providing them to benefit in all sectors through an approach that ends discrimination against women and girls, emphasising socio-economic aspects. In 2024, Qatar hosted the Summit on Social Development in Doha, which was a milestone and hopes will further strengthen its work..

South Africa appreciates the SR's timely and insightful report and its emphasis on the mutually reinforcing relationship between gender equality and the right to development. For South Africa, this nexus is not only theoretical, it is foundational. Its national Constitution enshrines both gender equality and the right to development as non-negotiable pillars of justice and dignity. Yet, South Africa remains concerned that particular norms, structural inequalities, and under-representation of women, especially in decision-making, continue to obstruct inclusive development across the South. The right to development cannot be realised without dismantling



these barriers. South Africa echoes the SR's call for intersectional approaches, inclusive participation, and fair distribution of resources. Gender-responsive budgeting, equitable access to education, and equal and meaningful representation of women in governance are essential to achieving substantive equality. South Africa urges member states to reaffirm their commitment to Beijing Declaration and to integrate gender equality into all dimensions of development policy. We must move beyond rhetoric to action because when women thrive, nations prosper.

Sri Lanka welcomes the thematic report's comprehensive approach and recommendations closely aligned with the actions being carried out by the government to achieve gender equality. Sri Lanka is concerned that none of the SDG5 targets have been met with only five years down the road to 2030. Sri Lanka has a separate Ministry for Women and Child Affairs. A wide range of legal policy and institutional framework are in the place to advance women's rights, including an inter-ministerial mechanism to follow up on the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee. Women in Sri Lanka's Parliament have increased in the 2024 election. The government is further committed to increase women's political participation by 50 percent through necessary structural and social reforms. Sri Lanka experiences its most challenging economic period in recent times compounded by the cumulative effect of the global crisis. Special empowerment measures have been introduced for women alongside strengthened social protection measures as they play a crucial role in the economic recovery and stabilisation. In conclusion, Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitment to achieving gender equality through women's empowerment and the elimination of all barriers and challenges, thereby ensuring women's active contribution towards the achievement of a fair and inclusive society and sustainable economic growth in the country.

Togo welcomes the SR's thematic report and its analytical tool which wisely emphasises the pressing need to assess the role of women and girls in implementing the right to development. It is useful to recall that the participatory approach is important for individual development and the implementation of harmonious development models within each society. On these premises, Togo over the years has made male-female equality a central pillar in development and implementation of public policies. For example, since 2018, Togo has had a quota of 25 percent of public contracts reserved for young and women entrepreneurs and gives women at least 30 percent of the agricultural land. Togo encourages all actors in development at all levels further to support the developing least developed countries for effective implementation of the right to development. In closing it calls for stronger action and a spirit of solidarity to reduce the debt burden on the LDCs so that they may better finance inclusive development.

Uganda appreciates the thematic report's acknowledgement of the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and girls. The right to development is a fundamental human right and is an integral pillar to the enjoyment of all other fundamental rights. Poverty, underdevelopment, marginalisation and political instability cannot be divorced from meaningful discussion relating to human rights. Applauding the SR for his report and continued highlights to the key issues that inform the right to development, Uganda, on this premise, invites all states to finalise the Draft Covenant on the Right to Development that will pave a legal path and responsibilities for states to collectively and individually ensure promotion and protection of the right to development. Lastly, Uganda reassures the SR of its support and reiterates its firm commitment to promoting the right to development for its people.



Uganda on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) appreciates the SR's report and stresses that this remains a very important addition to the UNHCR's work in advancing the right to development. Looking forward to the renewal of the SR's mandate for the next three years, the NAM invites the UNHRC to unanimously adopt the resolution on the right to development. Re-echoing the urgent need to make the right to development a reality for everyone including women, the NAM calls upon OHCHR to prioritise the promotion and protection of the right to development for all. In this regard, the NAM stresses the urgent need to adopt a legally binding instrument - the Draft International Covenant on the Right to development - to enhance cooperation amongst states and set an enabling environment for states to hold each other accountable in delivering the right to development for all. Once more, the NAM highly appreciates the SR's work and interaction that continues to spotlight the importance of the right to development and its close link to the enjoyment of other human rights for all.

Venezuela appreciates the SR's thematic report and its reference to public policies for gender equality and development set in place in Venezuela. In this regard, the country highlights the implementation of social programmes such as the mission '*Venezuela Mujer*' which encompasses indicators such as ethnicity, class, and disability and the mission '*Madres de Barrios*' (Mothers of the Neighbourhood) which focusses on Indigenous women and women of African Descent, working with different social groups for a local policy design that is inclusive. Venezuela has extensively informed of the aggressions carried out by the US government against the Bolivarian Republic, which have been escalating in recent years through the illegal imposition of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs), smear campaigns and disregard for Venezuelan legitimate institutions, judicialization for political purposes, all reaching unprecedented levels of hostility and threats today, especially with the deployment of American military forces in the Caribbean against Venezuela. The latter urges states to abstain from UCMs and calls for measures to reject threats of use of force against territorial integrity and political independence of any state that puts at risk human rights and their full enjoyment thereof, particularly for the development of the Venezuelan people.

Venezuela on behalf of a group of Group of Friends in Defence of the UN Charter attaches great importance to the promotional protection of all human rights and considers the right to development as a universal, collective human right. It serves as a measure to address the increasing economic inequality and social inequality mainly due to the exploitation of resources of the South and to an international system that focusses on wealth, generating poverty and inequality. Some countries claim to be exceptional and claim the right to dominate other sovereign states through the imposition of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs). The latter are an obstacle to the 2030 Agenda and affect millions of people. Despite progress in this area, much remains to be done, particularly the adoption of an international legally binding instrument on the right to development. The Group of Friends reiterates its determination to actively and constructively participate in this process until this inalienable human right is enjoyed by all people of the world, honouring the promise of leaving no one behind.

Viet Nam shares with the SR the view that gender equality and the right to development are mutually reinforcing and indispensable for achieving sustainable development. This year, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 10th anniversary of the 2030 Agenda, Viet Nam reaffirms its commitment to their full and accelerated



implementation. Gender inequality remains a structural barrier to the realisation of the right to development. Addressing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination is essential to leave no one behind. Viet Nam believes that priority should be given to ensuring full equal and meaningful participation of women and girls in decision-making; advancing their leadership in science, technology and digital transformation; strengthening their roles in peace and security processes and climate action; and promoting gender-responsive capacity-building to support national implementation.

Zimbabwe concurs with the SR's assertion on the positive relation between gender equality and the four facets of the right to development. Similarly, it agrees on the reflection that gender equality is intrinsically linked to human development, and that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. The country's legislative framework prohibits gender-based discrimination. Zimbabwe has implemented the national gender policy and ratified regional and international legal instruments promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. In 2023, Zimbabwe integrated gender as a cross-cutting theme in the country's development strategy. Firmly convinced that gender equality is not only a fundamental right, but a necessity for national growth, Zimbabwe remains steadfast in its commitment to empowering women and girls, and will continue to strengthen policies that ensure women's full participation in economic and social development.

Views Expressed by Intergovernmental Organizations and UN Entities

The **European Union** welcomes the SR's focus on the nexus between gender equality and sustainable development. Gender equality is a core value of the EU enshrined in the Treaty on European Union and in its Charter of Fundamental Rights. EU legislation aims to eliminate discrimination based on gender, ensure equal pay for equal work, promote work life balance, as well as equal participation in decision-making process and women's economic independence. The EU is fully committed to achieving sustainable and inclusive development and implementing the 2030 Agenda. The indivisibility, interdependence and universality of all human rights is a cornerstone of the human rights system. The right to development exactly as all human rights is universally applicable and should be enjoyed equally by all persons, including women and girls and other persons who have not benefited equally from development. EU's commitment to gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by all women and girls is unwavering. The Union prioritises gender equality in its external action. It supports women's rights and empowerment globally through advocacy, funding and partnerships.

UNDP welcomes the SR's timely thematic report which reinforces the link between gender equality and the right to development. This report also arrives at a very pivotal moment - 30 years since the Beijing Declaration and 25 years since the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. For UNDP, gender equality is an accelerator of system change and ensures that investments in governance, climate resilience, peace and prosperity deliver inclusive sustainable results. It is central to unlocking development and lies at the heart of UNDP's mission. Despite strong evidence that investing in gender equality is transformative for development outcomes, progress remains slow and uneven. Gender equality is undermined by compounding crisis, democratic backsliding, declining trust in institutions, erosion of rule of law, social unrest, economic



inequality, and rollbacks on women's rights. Development stands on the edge with many being left behind and hard-won gains at risk. Standing firm in its mission, through its Strategic Plan 2026-2029, UNDP will be sharpening its focus and responding to member states' call to accelerate gender equality, most notably by integrating gender equality into fiscal reforms, helping to expand care systems, digital transformation and gender responsive green transitions. UNDP aims to generate multiplier effects that reduce poverty faster, strengthen institution and expand opportunities for all. The cost of inaction is staggering. Gender inequality drains 10 trillion from the global economy annually.

UNFPA concurs with the SR that without gender equality, the right to development cannot be realised. Patriarchal social norms, cultural barriers, discrimination within the family, discriminatory laws, limited access to education, neglected sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls, the digital divide and poverty continue to undermine gender equality and sustainable development. Building on the SR's framework to unlock the transformative potential of the right to development to achieve gender equality, UNFPA works alongside governments, women- and youth-led organisations as well as community actors to change negative social norms that perpetuate intersectional discrimination. Moreover, the promotion of measures to safeguard the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls is central to the vision set forth by member states in the ICPD Programme of Action under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This requires an array of deliberate measures enabling women to make autonomous decisions concerning what happens to their bodies, lives and futures, and have the information services and means to do so free from discrimination, coercion, and violence. Access to comprehensive sexuality education is vital to inform decision-making and empowerment of women and girls. The right to development and sexual and reproductive health and rights converge in promoting self-determination from bodies to households, communities and nations. UNFPA stands ready to support governments in unlocking the potential of the right to development towards achieving gender equality and sustainable growth.

UN Women welcomes the SR's focus on gender equality and is pleased to have contributed to the development of the thematic report, highlighting key efforts on financing for development that enhance all women's and girls rights. In September 2025, UN women and UN DESA will launch the **2025 Gender Snapshot** - the world's leading source of data on gender equality. With only five years remaining to deliver the 2030 Agenda, the data is clear - without bold investment, hundreds of millions of women and girls will remain in extreme poverty and SDG 5 will remain unmet. The Beijing+30 Action Agenda launched in Geneva by the Gender Advisory Board of the UNHRC on Monday, 8 September 2025, encourages member states to prioritise actions that accelerate concrete investments in gender equality and empowerment of women and girls by 2030. The Agenda identifies six priority areas - a digital revolution; freedom from poverty; zero violence; full and equal decision-making; power, peace and security; climate justice, and a seventh cross-cutting emphasis on youth. Today, more than 80 member states have submitted over 140 priority actions to the Beijing+ 30 Agenda. UN Women will formally announce national actions at the UNGA High-Level Meeting on Beijing+30 to be held on 22 September 2025. UN Women stands ready to make the ambitions of the Beijing Declaration a reality for all women and girls everywhere.



Views Expressed by National Human Rights Institutions

The **National Human Rights Committee of Qatar** underlines that the SR's thematic report and the activities of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development have contributed significantly in shedding light on the obstacles that hinder this fundamental right. Barriers include for instance inequality and gender-based violence, as well as the absence of social empowerment and just representation of women and girls in developmental policies. For the furtherance of this right, the Committee stresses the adoption of the Qatari National Vision 2030 and the Third National Strategy for Development 2024-2030. The Committee has taken all effort to make of sustainable development and gender equality a must. It carries out reviews all national policies, strategies and legislation related to development through a human rights perspective; monitors compliance and receives complaints by the most vulnerable groups. The Committee extends its gratitude to the SR and the Expert Mechanism for their reports, which are a source of inspiration, notably for a NHRI. In closing, the Committee hopes that the Draft International Covenant on the Right to Development would be a roadmap for the achievement of security and peace.

Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

The **Centre for International Environmental Law (CIEL)** expresses its gratitude to the SR for addressing the issue of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) in his report on Honduras. The SR describes how the case of *Próspera and others V. Honduras* is emblematic of the way in which ISDS forces governments to pay polluters and threatens the state's ability to protect the environment, Indigenous lands and human rights. By allowing foreign investors to sue states for adopting measures in the public interest, ISDS forces governments to pay polluters instead of holding them accountable, a direct violation of international human rights and environmental law. The threats of multi-billion dollar claims deter governments from adopting stronger human rights and climate measures. Such investment claims can produce regulatory chill, discouraging states from phasing out fossil fuels. Far from facilitating a just transition, ISDS entrenches the fossil fuel economy and deepens states' dependency on extractive industries. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights has likewise affirmed that investment treaties and ISDS must not restrict states from adopting measures to confront the climate crisis and fulfil their human rights obligations. Therefore, CIEL urges the UNHRC to take up this matter explicitly to ensure that ISDS no longer undermines states' ability to meet their human rights and climate commitments.

Sikh Human Rights Group (SHRG) appreciates the SR's thought-provoking and precise report and emphasizes that the right to development can only be realised with appropriate integration of gender input, and gender and dignity is reinforced by the realisation of the right to development. In this sense, women's participation in decision-making so deeply rooted in the Sikh tradition that promotes dignity, respect, and inclusion of all identities ensures that policies are inclusive and responsive. Furthermore, women's health, especially menstrual and reproductive health, is still stigmatised and underfunded. On top of this, the famous pink tax is still present in many countries, undermining dignity and obstructing development. SHRG is pleased to read the report's mention of the fair distribution of unpaid domestic tasks, which are disproportionately performed by women, with all the negative consequences that this entails. Finally, SHRG recalls the essential role that women from indigenous and rural communities play as guardians of biodiversity and sustainable practises, yet they are often excluded from decision-making



processes. SHRG suggests that the numerous women's cooperatives be better supported under the framework of the right to development.

AKAHATÁ welcomes the recognition by the SR of the climate crisis on human rights, especially on peasants, Indigenous people, people of African descent and all those who defend territory and natural resources, as well as the responsibility of Honduras and private business to guarantee that those rights are not violated. AKAHATÁ recognises the underscoring of structural inequalities that affect these groups and women, girls and adolescents, including those with disabilities, while regretting the fact that key topics such as the lack of recognition legally of LGBTIQ families and the violation of their right to care are still an issue. This was recently recognised as an autonomous right by the Inter-American Court to affect older persons and their children. AKAHATÁ is concerned by the ideological blockage on sexual and reproductive rights and sexual education driven by conservative lobbies and a rise in forced pregnancies among girls and teenagers. Likewise, there is a prohibition on abortion in Honduras and the severity of this needs to be emphasised. AKAHATÁ calls on the SR to ensure that Honduras ratifies the Escazú Agreement and further calls on both the SR and the UNHRC to recommend urgent ratification of the Inter-American Conventions against racism and all forms of discrimination.

The **Centre for Reproductive Rights** jointly with ILGA World and the Sexual Rights Initiative welcome the report's assertion that there can be no gender equality including sexual and reproductive health and rights without the right to development and vice versa. The false divide between development and gender equality has been weaponised to undermine hard-won progress in gender equality and human rights, threatening the foundation of inclusive rights-based development with disproportionate impact on women, girls and persons with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics. As highlighted by the SR, access to sexual and reproductive health is essential to ensure all people can meaningfully participate in and benefit from the right to development. This includes abortion and gender-affirming care. The right to development is also vital to address deep-rooted structural inequalities such as gender stereotypes, intersecting forms of discrimination and legacies of slavery and colonial past. The right to development must address the economic challenges and barriers perpetrated by the dominant economic paradigm that continue preventing women, girls and persons with diverse ideas to enjoy their sexual reproductive health, bodily and reproductive autonomy. The Centre calls on the UNHRC to uphold the universality of human rights so all people can enjoy and participate in the right to development, free from discrimination and violence, and equality can finally be achieved.

The **British Humanists Association** praises the SR's recognition that cultural and religious values should be used to promote rather than undermine gender equality. The Association emphasises that the right to freedom of religion and belief must never be misinterpreted to justify restricting women's rights. Individuals must be able to adopt, change or practise a religion or belief according to their own conscience, including when this challenges societal expectations. State-enforced gender-based persecution under repressive theocratic regimes remains deeply concerning. However, a well-connected transnational religiously conservative network of civil society actors spanning Europe, the United States and Russia is increasingly driving resistance to gender equality by promoting policy shifts and societal norms across continents. They have mobilised partner organisations to spread misinformation and stigma to discourage abortion in



the UK, to target and harass women's rights activists in Kenya and Ghana, and to shape education systems in a way that reinforces patriarchal ideas about society and family life in Chile. Such political and societal influence impedes women's education, health, economic opportunity and civic participation, directly undermining their right to development. These efforts are often explicitly justified through appeals to religious values. The Association asks how could the SR encourage states to protect the right to freedom of religion and belief for all women, to promote gender equality against pressures from religious fundamentalist groups.

The **Association for Defending Victims of Terrorism** states that on 13 June 2025, Israel launched a war against Iran in violation of article 2.4 of the UN Charter. During the war, nearly 1,000 civilians were killed, including women and children, as well as 14 nuclear scientists who had dedicated their lives to scientific research to ensure Iran's right to development. In addition, the country's infrastructure, including nuclear facilities, refineries, airports and other public facilities, were targeted, causing extensive damage and disrupting services to citizens. Assassinating scientists and destroying infrastructure of any country is a major uptake to improving the living conditions of its people and may set back economic, social, cultural and political development for years. Israel's war against Iran was a continuation of violations of all norms of international law in Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen and Syria, which, according to a statement by UN Independent Experts, form part of a broader pattern of lawful unilateral acts by Israel, which are considered international crimes punished under the wrong statutes. The Association calls on the SR on the right to development to condemn and to investigate aspects of the war in his next report. Furthermore, member states must take necessary measures to stop Israel's wars so that the sustainable peace and security in the region is not destroyed anymore.

The **Global Institute for Water, Environment and Health** stresses India's unwavering commitment to the realisation of the right to development guided by the principle of that the world is one family. Through EG20 presidency, India advanced consensus on climate action, digital infrastructure and equitable growth, including securing permanent membership for the African Union and adopting the Green Development Pact to accelerate the SDGs. India's climate leadership is also reflected in the International Solar Alliance, mobilising clean energy investment for more than 120 countries, alongside ambitious domestic renewable expansion and innovation in green technologies. In humanitarian diplomacy, India has acted swiftly and without preconditions, from Operation Dust in Turkey and Syria to humanitarian missions in the Indian Ocean region, while advocating at the UN for ceasefires and humanitarian access in conflict zones, including Gaza. Moreover, through the Indian AI mission, India is shaping global norms on ethical, inclusive and development-orientated artificial intelligence. By aligning sustainable development with human rights principles, India contributes to building a balanced and inclusive global order, where the right to development is realised for all, leaving no one behind.

The **China NGO Network for International Exchanges** recalls that 30 years ago, China hosted the UN World Conference on Women. Since then, China has upheld gender equality as a fundamental national policy, implementing national actions to support women's holistic development and actively encourage women's participation. In 2021, China launched a global development initiative, recognising that sustained progress in gender equality and women's empowerment is essential to achieving broader SDG targets. In this spirit, Chinese civil society organisations have taken proactive steps. Across various regions, China's Women's Federations

have initiated programmes such as household management and handicraft training. In developing countries like the Lao PDR, Chinese non-NGOs have introduced initiatives such as the Talent and Male Friendship Workshops, which provide training and help their employment locally. Today, the China's NGO Network for International Exchanges is convening the second International Civil Society Solidarity Conference on the Global Development Initiative in Inner Mongolia. Civil society representatives from China and abroad are sharing examples and heartfelt stories of how their commitments to gender equality have been translated into concrete actions. The Network calls on all countries to foster a peaceful and inclusive society for women and to promote equality for all.

Make Mothers Matter (MMM) particularly values the report's recognition of the care economy. Across the world, mothers and other caregivers sustain family and societies through their own paid domestic and care work. Yet, this essential contribution remains invisible in economic models and undervalued in policy frameworks. When care is not recognised or fairly shared, women, especially mothers, face persistent inequalities in education, employment, political participation, and cultural life, limiting both their right to development and that of society as a whole. Intersectionality matters. Rural, migrant, and low-income women are hardest hit. The report calls for a feminist economy, one that invests in care infrastructures, values and paid care, and ensures its fair sharing between women and men, families and society, public and private actors. Therefore, MMM urges states to invest in cross-sectorial care systems, from quality, accessible child care and parental leave, to universal health care and social protection. Care should be placed at the centre of national and international development strategies. It is time to repurpose our economic system, to prioritise the well-being of people and the planet at the heart of the right to development, and to recognise and support unpaid care work. Recognising and valuing care is not only a question of gender justice, it is key for the realisation of the right to development for all.

The **International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)** welcome the report's assertion that there can be no gender equality, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, without the right to development, and that intersectional discrimination, including based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, remain obstacles to achieving equality and therefore development. Although the report points out discrimination based on socioeconomic status, it is necessary that states directly address discrimination against adult persons engaged in consensual sex work. To realise right to development, states should fully decriminalise sex work, recognise labour rights, and ensure active, free, and meaningful participation in decision-making. States should not be forced to choose between repaying unsustainable debt burdens and fulfilling human rights, including SRHR. Global financial institutions must consider the gender impacts of debt and austerity. Debt relief and cancellation are urgently needed. IPPF echoes the call for a shift towards a feminist economy that prioritises public rights-based investment in care infrastructure. Care is a universal need, a right, and a job, performed mainly by women and racialized people, which should be recognised and retributed. As its core, the right to development must challenge the dominant economic paradigm by reconceptualising growth, while focussing on redistribution of all resources. In closing, IPPF calls on all states to address the precarious natures of gendered labour by including redefinition, redistribution, and revalidation of labour, including unpaid care work and sex work.



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

- 36** State Delegations
- 4** Inter-Governmental Organizations and UN Entities
- 1** National Human Rights Institution
- 10** Non-Governmental Organizations