

31st session of the Human Rights Council

Annual high-level panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming

“The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights, with an emphasis on the right to development”

Concept note (as of 29 February 2016)

Date and venue: **Monday, 29 February 2016, 3-6 p.m.**, Palais des Nations, [Room XX](#), Geneva
(will be broadcast live and archived on <http://webtv.un.org>)

Objective: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out a transformative vision for people and planet-centred, human rights-based, and gender-sensitive sustainable development, strongly grounded in international human rights standards. It strives to leave no one behind and has equality and non-discrimination as its centrepiece. Its holistic approach towards development goes far beyond the narrow focus of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and marks a break with the dominant development paradigm. With its 17 Goals and related 169 targets, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mirror the international human rights framework encompassing all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the right to development. With its universal applicability, the 2030 Agenda will bring new opportunities to integrate all human rights into global and national policies in both developed and developing countries over the next 15 years.

As the year 2016 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development by the General Assembly, the panel will also explore the new opportunities arising from the 2030 Agenda to advance the mainstreaming of all human rights throughout the United Nations system at the global, regional and country level, with an emphasis on the right to development.

The debate will be guided by the following questions:

1. *What new opportunities will the 2030 Agenda for “people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership” offer to advance human rights in development?*
2. *How can the 2030 Agenda help bring the three pillars of the United Nations peace and security, development and human rights closer together and strengthen the UN’s work on conflict prevention?*
3. *How can the 2030 Agenda also advance the realization of the right to development and vice versa, with a view to achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development?*
4. *How can we ensure that the 2030 Agenda effectively and efficiently contributes to the realization of human rights of women and girls and the most vulnerable groups of society?*
5. *How can human rights mechanisms contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the global review of SDG progress?*

Chair: **H.E. Mr. Choi Kyonglim**, President of the Human Rights Council

Opening statements: **H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon**, Secretary-General of the United Nations
H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations
Mr. Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

- Moderator:** **Ms. Kate Gilmore**, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Panellists:** **H.E. Mr. Zamir Akram**, Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Right to Development and former Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in Geneva
- Ms. Helen Clark**, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Chair of the United Nations Development Group
- Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin**, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Mr. Yannick Glemarec**, Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)
- Ms. Jan Beagle**, Deputy Executive Director, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- Outcome:** The event is aimed to generate practical ideas and policy recommendations on how the United Nations system can further the mainstreaming of all human rights in supporting a human rights-sensitive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The panel will also provide a contribution to the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of the Right to Development.
- Mandate:** In paragraph 42 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21, the Council decided to hold an annual high-level panel discussion to interact with heads of governing bodies and secretariats of United Nations agencies and funds within their respective mandates on specific human rights themes, with the objective of promoting the mainstreaming of human rights throughout the United Nations system. Following consultations with Member States it was decided that in 2016 the panel will focus on the theme “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights, with an emphasis on the right to development”.
- Format:** Opening statements and initial presentations by the panellists (estimated to take up 1 hour) will be followed by an interactive discussion. The list of speakers for the discussion will be established at the beginning of the panel and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups will be moved to the beginning of the list. States and observers, including representatives of civil society, take the floor for a 2-minute intervention each (total 45 minutes), followed by responses from panellists (15 minutes). A second round of interventions from the floor (45 minutes) will be followed by responses and concluding remarks from the panellists (15 minutes). To make the panel interactive, speakers are encouraged to focus their interventions on the themes of the panellists either by asking questions to the panellists or sharing relevant national experience. Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).
- Background:** After three years of intergovernmental negotiations, and one of the most consultative processes in the history of the United Nations, Member States adopted and launched the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 25 September 2015 (General Assembly resolution 70/1). This 2030 Agenda for “people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership”, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 related targets, is of vital importance as it will determine the direction of global and national policy for the next 15 years.
- The new Agenda is strongly grounded in international human rights standards and “is

to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the obligations of States under international law.” It is important to note that the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda address both civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural rights. They cover the freedom from fear, as well as freedom from want, and many of them explicitly integrate normative attributes of human rights under international treaties. Two Goals explicitly address inequalities: Goal 5 (gender equality) and Goal 10 (reducing inequalities both within and among countries). Goal 16 covers a number of important civil and political rights. Goal 17 on “strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development” and a number of targets under each of the other 16 Goals address a range of financial and other means of implementation which are critical for the achievement of the SDGs.

Thirty years ago, the Declaration on the Right to Development proclaimed a vision of development aimed at the constant improvement of the well-being of all individuals and peoples, and equality of opportunity for development for all. The year 2016 marks the 30th anniversary of this Declaration. Its vision should guide the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the related Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Accordingly, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council have encouraged Member States and relevant bodies of the United Nations to pay particular consideration to the right to development in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The next critical step is to ensure that the important human rights commitments of the 2030 Agenda are followed through in the implementation phase, in accordance with the indivisible and universal nature of the Agenda. A robust monitoring and review framework needs to be put in place to scrupulously measure progress, by all actors, including the private sector, towards the SDGs in order to secure accountability to all. This will include exploring ways to incorporate the wealth of information and recommendations generated by existing human rights monitoring mechanisms, including the Universal Periodic Review, into the monitoring and review mechanisms of the 2030 Agenda. Most importantly, to honour the commitment to leave no one behind, progress for different groups in all countries needs to be tracked. The ongoing work to develop an indicator framework which is human rights-sensitive and includes a systematic disaggregation of data is critical in this regard.

Background documents:

- [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development \(General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015\)](#)
- [Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development](#)
- [1986 Declaration on the Right to Development](#)
- [Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action](#)
- [Consolidated report of the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner on the right to development \(A/HRC/30/22\)](#)
- [Report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on the Right to Development \(Fact Sheet No. 37\)](#)