

The 5th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development
Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda
Implementation of the mandate and programme of work - Focused thematic discussion

with the Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health

Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng

Friday 11 March 2022, 11h – 13h Eastern Time

The Right to Health and the Right to Development in the Pandemic Era
Concept Note

Introduction

The effect of Covid 19 has been global but in particular developing countries - and least developed countries - have suffered the most, suffering, amongst other things, stark rises in job losses, extreme poverty, acute hunger, a decline in access to education, an increase in child labour, a rise in girl child-marriages and the deepening of foreign debt.

All of the above, when coupled with access to vaccines, medical equipment and medication which has been neither consistent nor equitable, has had devastating effects on the right to health and consequently the right to development across the globe.

Purpose

The purpose of the session would be two-fold:

- (1) First, to get on an overview of how the right to health has been adversely affected in the last two years and,
- (2) secondly, to discuss the current initiative aimed at reviewing the global and national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as developing necessary frameworks to deal with future pandemics.

Guiding questions

- (1) How can we facilitate the effective prediction, prevention, detection and assessment of, and the response to, future pandemics in a collective and interconnected manner?
- (2) How can we fulfil our common duty to increase global resilience to face the future?
- (3) How can we provide a globally coordinated platform which addresses effectively the urgency and the severity of future pandemics and endemics by, amongst other things, learning from the inadequacies and fragmentation of the current response to COVID-19?
- (4) How can we build on the right to development and the duty of international cooperation?
- (5) In that regard, it will be necessary, amongst others, to enhance North-South, South-South regional and international cooperation on access to science, technology and innovation, as well as knowledge-sharing. How can this be best achieved?

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