



Franciscans International
A voice at the United Nations

PANEL II - Principles for an International Legally Binding Instrument

Thank you Ms. President.

I am speaking on behalf of:

- FRANCISCANS INTERNATIONAL
- CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON ENVIRONMENT DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE DRC
- IBASE
- GRUFIDES
- FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK
- MERCY INTERNATIONAL GLOBAL ACTION

As a result of economic globalization, we have observed ever-increasing levels of human rights abuses carried out by unscrupulous business activities, leading to a race to the bottom in terms of human rights protection.

Our collective monitoring and investigation of cases in more than 30 countries has allowed us to identify gaps in the Guiding Principles and conclude that they are not sufficient to address the root causes of these systematic abuses. Their good intentions have not translated into concrete change for local communities.

Nonetheless, we assert that the development of a treaty in the field of business and human rights does not interfere with the implementation of the Guiding Principles. Treaty process should build on the way paved by the Guiding Principles, and more importantly it should fill in their gaps.

Grounded on the widely documented and known reality, the Treaty process, outcome, and framework_must be marked by an explicit and steadfast commitment to improving the effective protection and guarantee of the rights of those, we know, are most vulnerable to abuses by corporations.

The Treaty process should be consistent with the human-rights principles of universality, indivisibility, and interdependence of all human rights, as well as participation, transparency, inclusion, equality and non-discrimination, accountability and rule of law.

The process and outcome of elaborating a treaty **must** contribute to the effective protection of individuals and communities affected or threatened by companies and for this it should have the widest scope, including an extra-territorial scope.

Finally Treaty process should ensure that States fulfill all human rights using all appropriate means, including through international cooperation.

Thank you

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Franciscans International (FI) is an international non-governmental organization with general ECOSOC consultative status, working for the promotion, protection, and respect of human rights, as well as social and environmental justice. Since its establishment in 1989, FI has used advocacy as a tool to combat and curb human rights abuses. FI relies on the expertise and first-hand information of a large network of partners working with the most vulnerable strata of society in approximately 160 countries. From our offices in Geneva and New York, FI works together with grassroots movements and national and international civil-society organizations to advocate at the United Nations for structural changes addressing the root causes of injustice.