

Oral Statement

Sixth session of the Open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights (OEIGWG)

Friday 30 October 2020

Final

Delivered by Ulises Quero Garcia

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Mr Chairperson-Rapporteur

This is a joint statement on behalf of FIDH, FI, ESCR-net, Altsean Burma, LHR, ECCJ, WILPF,

At the closing of this sixth session of the IGWG on a Legally Binding Instrument on Transnational companies and Other Business Entreprises and human rights, our organizations would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, your team and the Secretariat for organizing this session and moving forward with the negotiations even in a difficult context of a global pandemic and the UN liquidity crisis. We also appreciate the delegations who actively engaged and made efforts to foster a qualitative discussion and to improve the text. We restate our support and engagement in the process towards an LBI that will improve the protection of human rights in the context of business activities.

We reaffirm our views that the second revised draft provides a sounder basis for further negotiations and contains many positive aspects that need to be kept in the next steps of the process.

This session has shown that, while there is still work to do to clarify and improve parts of the text, concrete proposals and solutions have been presented by some delegations, which would support progress towards an effective and widely acceptable LBI.

We are remain concerned, however, at the slow pace with which negotiations are taking place and at the reluctance of some delegations to genuinely engage in the discussions by using diverse excuses. The global inequalities and abuses linked to

business activities, further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, show that it is crucial to keep progressing without unnecessary delay to fulfill the mandate of this IGWG.

To that end, we support the call on the Chair and all delegations to carry on with negotiations on an intersessional basis until the next formal IGWG session in October 2021. These negotiations could be focused on specific articles or issues with a view to enable better understanding and seek point of agreement among States, allowing pre-agreements to be negotiated in the plenum in next session, with the essential contribution and participation of civil society and experts.

We equally strongly support the request of compilation of an annotated draft showing the changes requested to the text by delegations and civil society organisations as we think this will help facilitate the negotiations and their transparency moving forward.

Thank you