



**STATEMENT BY SAAD ALFARARGI
SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT**

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Development

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Dear Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group, Your Excellences, distinguished delegates, representatives of the United Nations and the NGO community,

I am honoured to be with you today in my capacity as United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to development. I have accepted this appointment with a deep sense of commitment and responsibility to pursue the objectives and deliver the expected outcomes of the mandate which the Council has entrusted to me. Thank you also for the honour, privilege and opportunity given to me today, to share with this distinguished gathering, my plan for the implementation of my mandate and to inform you of the activities that I have undertaken to date.

As you know, in its Resolution 33/14 (September 2016), the Human Rights Council established the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development. The Council appointed me as Special Rapporteur on the right to development at its thirty-fourth session (March 2017) and I took up this role on 1 May 2017.

When establishing my mandate, the Human Rights Council emphasized the urgent need to make the right to development a reality for everyone I also aim to ensure that the right to development remains a focus in the global discourse on the post-2015 development agenda and that the right to development, and indeed all human rights, are recognized as an integral part of the sustainable development

discourse, while emphasizing that development should happen in accordance with human rights principles and with the goal of achieving the realization of the right to development for all, rather than simply for economic growth. While economic growth is important, it is a quantitative and value-neutral concept that can have both negative and positive impacts on people's lives. Development, on the other hand, is a qualitative concept; including the human rights dimension is crucial to assessing the actual success of human development. Accordingly, the vision contained in the Declaration on the Right to Development, namely that it entitles everyone to participate in, contribute to and enjoy development in its economic, social, cultural and political dimensions, must be the guiding force in the implementation of the post-2015 development framework.

I was very pleased when, in September 2017, in its Resolution 36/9, the UN Human Rights Council mandated me to conduct **Regional Consultations on the implementation of the right to development**. I am happy to inform you that the first Regional Consultation, for the African region, took place from 27 to 29 March 2018 in Addis Ababa. I take the opportunity to thank the host country Ethiopia for facilitating the successful organisation of this event. I would also like to thank the Regional Office of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for East Africa

I am also happy to inform you that I am planning to hold subsequent regional consultations for Europe - in Geneva, on 11 and

12 June 2018- for GRULAC - in Panama on 3 and 4 October 2018 and for Asia – in Bangkok, on 12 and 13 December 2018.

I believe that my work can only be carried out in a participatory and open manner and therefore I wish to include in the consultation process all relevant stakeholders including States, intergovernmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, civil society, academia, and the business community. The discussions provide opportunities to exchange with a wide range of development practitioners.

I decided to focus these regional consultations on identifying and promoting good practices in the practical implementation of the right to development, including with regards to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs devised to advance human development through the human rights based approach. I believe that looking at local level human development initiatives and experiences would help bring light on context-specific indicators and monitoring methodologies.

The participants in the first Regional Consultation raised numerous challenges facing the implementation of the right to development.

Throughout the discussions I heard one overarching theme- namely the importance of the effective participation and inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in the development process. This includes

the participation of communities, non-governmental and grass roots organisations, academia as well as actors advocating for the rights , women, youth, minorities, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities, to name but a few. in ALL development related processes, at local, national and international levels. Effective participation is needed to insure that policies and programs are well informed and match expectations of beneficiaries; it allows the mobilising of domestic resources including human resources, and fosters a culture of accountability without which the outcome of development can only remain uncertain and incomplete. This theme resonates closely with the vision contained in the Declaration on the Right to Development, which entitles everyone to participate in, contribute to and enjoy development in its economic, social, cultural and political dimensions. This is the theme that must be the guiding force in the implementation of the post-2015 development framework.

The participants in the Regional Consultation also provided a considerable number of practical recommendations on designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development policies, programmes and projects in a manner compliant with the right to development. Summaries of the recommendations from this and subsequent consultations will be posted on the website of my mandate. Based on the recommendations from this and the subsequent Regional Consultations, **my ultimate aim is to contribute to the**

formulation of general guidelines in implementing policies and programs to promote and fulfil the right to development.

Since the beginning of my mandate I have also been focussing on developing a specific methodology for the conduct of in-situ country visits to assess the implementation of the right to development. I have sent requests for country visits to 20 countries and I am pleased to announce that so far six countries have responded positively to my requests. I am planning to conduct my first country visit to Cabo Verde in November 2018.

I am also mandated to submit annual reports to the Human Rights Council and to the General Assembly, covering all activities relating to the mandate with a view to maximizing the benefits of the reporting process. Accordingly, I am planning to report to the Human Rights Council in September on the right to development and inequality, with a focus on the implementation of SDG 10. I am further planning to dedicate my report to the General Assembly to the thematic of South-South cooperation and explore how it can contribute to and be guided by the realisation of the right to development

Last but not least, the Resolution establishing my mandate requested me to contribute to the work of the Working Group on the Right to Development, with a view to supporting the accomplishment of its overall mandate, taking into account, inter alia, the

deliberations, recommendations and conclusions of the Working Group, while avoiding any duplication. Last year I participated in informal consultations with the Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group, representatives of the participating States and civil society organizations and I am continuing to assess how best to carry out this task. I am looking forward to your suggestions and advise in that regard. I hope that the outcomes of the Regional Consultations will not only be helpful to national governments and stakeholders in their efforts towards implementing effective and human rights compliant development policies and programmes, but will also contribute to the efforts of the Working Group on the Right to Development.

I also endeavour to use in my work the agreed conclusions of the Working Group. I hope that my partnership with the Working Group is going to be a good example of synergies in the work of Special procedures and other mechanisms.

Mister Chair-Rapporteur,

This is my first interactive dialogue with the Working Group on the Right to Development, a global inter-governmental body with a rich history. I am very much aware of the complexities and sensitivities that surround the debate on the right to development. I am also aware of the need to avoid duplication of work being done throughout the United Nations system and to ensure synchronicity and consistency in all activities. I am looking forward to receiving

feedback from the distinguished delegates participating in this Working Group, as well as from other relevant stakeholders including civil society organisations and experts present today. I am looking forward to your questions and advise.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the effective discharge of this mandate will only be possible with the full cooperation of Member States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, and with adequate support from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

I thank you all for your kind attention.