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**24th SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT**

**SOUTH AFRICA STATEMENT**

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

**(Agenda Item 4.1)**

**15- 19 MAY 2023**

**ROOM XX**

**PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA**

***(Check against Delivery)***

Chairperson,

South Africa aligns itself with the statements of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

My Delegation welcomes the convening of the 24th Session of the Working Group on the Right to Development and congratulates Ambassador Zamir Akram on his re-election as the Chair-Rapporteur and wishes him success in his important mandate.

South Africa thanks the Chair-Rapporteur for the second revised draft convention on the right to development which will be considered for intergovernmental negotiations, during this Session, in line with Resolution 51/7.

South Africa reaffirms its commitment towards the promotion and protection of all human rights, without discrimination, as envisioned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which we commemorate the 75th and 30th anniversaries thereof, respectively.

My delegation believes that the operationalisation of the right to development is essential to overcome the ever-increasing and evolving challenges that have manifested themselves through, among others, economic and debt crises, the food and energy crises, climate change, new and protracted conflicts, and the displacement of persons.

These global challenges have reversed valuable gains made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and thus calls for enhanced international cooperation and global partnership to address them, as envisaged by the Goal 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Now, more than ever the elaboration of a legally binding instrument on the right to development is a much-needed response to the multifaceted global challenges we are confronted by as well as to bring us back on track to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Let us be inspired by the bold commitment and political will demonstrated by Member States in 1986 when they recognised, through the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development, the need for the right to development to be streamlined in our collective efforts to ensure a balance in all three pillars of the United Nations, as we strive to achieve a peaceful, secure, and equitable world wherein every human person can live in dignity.

Similarly, let us build on the progress and commitment made in 1993, when States reaffirmed in the the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development as an “*inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights.”*

To this effect, South Africa would like to encourage all Members States to engage with this process in a manner that puts the interests of rights- bearer at the core of our deliberations, working towards removing obstacles to the legal recognition of this fundamental and ensuring that it becomes a reality for all, without discrimination.

I thank you