



*Delivered by Ms. Debbie Stothard  
Check against delivery*

**Eight session of the OIEGWG – Legally binding instrument on business and human rights  
Opening statement**

Thank you Mr. Chair – Rapporteur, we congratulate you on your election

I deliver this statement on behalf of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).

During these last 8 years of negotiations, the draft text elaborated by the Chair of the Working Group has been enriched both by the proposals of some states and by the many contributions made by civil society organisations. FIDH considers of vital importance that the negotiations on the draft LBI continue in a meaningful way this year on the basis of the Third Draft text, thus allowing the existing text to improve and consolidate.

As a number of countries, including the European Union, advance towards the adoption of national legislations imposing a mandatory due diligence duty, this year's session represents a significant opportunity for States to contribute to the building of a global set of rules regulating corporate behaviour when it comes to human rights and access to justice for rights holders.

The LBI constitutes the strongest and most tangible avenue available to do so, *specifically because* it presents a reasonable level of detail and attempts to tackle the concrete legal and practical barriers that victims face. We urge states not to water-down but to protect and strengthen these crucial elements in the current draft treaty text.

While FIDH regrets that the Friends of the Chair Group has not had the opportunity to meet regularly and work ahead of this year's session, we are confident that this group of states will, from now on, support the Chair in ensuring a broad participation of states in the process, in fostering civil society participation, that has been so essential in these years of the process, and in moving negotiations forward, including by facilitating intersessional dialogue.

In the current climate and social crisis, the need for global rules on company's behaviour is stronger than ever. We urge States to take this opportunity seriously and to engage with this draft's content, as well as to make efforts to strengthen the text and work towards a legally solid document. FIDH will provide during the week specific textual suggestions to do so.

