



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

Statement by Tangi Shikongo, 8th session of the Open-Ended IGWG on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with respect to Human Rights, Geneva, 24 October 2022

Thank you, Mr. Chair,

Namibia aligns herself to the statement made on behalf of the African Group. We join others in congratulating you on your re-election as chairperson-rapporteur and wish you every success with your task.

We commend this WG for the continued commitment to this important process and the rich participation which culminated into the third revised draft. Namibia thanks the Chair-Rapporteur for sharing the third revised draft with the textual suggestions made during our discussions at the 7th Session of this intergovernmental Group last October.

The textual suggestions represent progress in this process and while there is room for improvement, the third revised draft is a strong basis for further discussions. Therefore, Namibia believes that the third revised draft should form the basis of our discussions during this session on how we can address the challenges surrounding human rights abuses resulting from business activities and our attempts to provide appropriate and adequate remedies to those who have suffered harm as result of the human rights abuses.

Mr. Chair,

As per our statement last year Namibia welcomes the initiative to appoint a Group of Friends of the Chair. We note that Group of Friends could not be constituted due to an absence of a representative from the African Region.

Namibia will work within the African Group to ensure that a representative is nominated and confirmed as soon as possible.

Mr. Chair,

While we appreciate your efforts to build consensus towards acceptance by the majority of States once the text is adopted, Namibia emphasizes that the work of this Working Group must ensure that we do not lose sight of the end goal which is to ensure adequate and effective protection as well as provide remedies for the millions of people around the world who continue to suffer as a result of corporate abuse. This Working Group would fail in the execution of its mandate if this goal were not achieved. We should also remain cognizant of the fact that the debate surrounding the elaboration of a binding instrument is already yielding positive results, with the recent adoption amongst others of legislation on modern slavery, due diligence, and child and forced labour in some developed countries. The persuasive value and political impact of an instrument of this nature must, therefore, not be discarded.

Mr. Chair,

As the work of the Working Group continues, we must remain cognizant of attempts to undermine or undo this process. We have witnessed over the years the number of States, NGOs and other stakeholders who have thrown their weight behind this process which underscores the importance of these intergovernmental negotiations. We therefore welcome the participation of accredited NGOs and CSOs during this session of the Working Group and look forward to constructive and fruitful discussions with all participants. Namibia as per usual practice will constructively engage in the negotiations.

I thank you.