

The 25th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development

Joint Statement of Chairpersons of the UN Treaty Bodies

The 4th of December 2011 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Right to Development (the Declaration).¹

In our capacity as Chairpersons of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies set up to monitor the implementation of the core human rights treaty obligations at the national level, we welcome the commemoration of this special anniversary of the Declaration. We believe that this anniversary provides a unique and timely opportunity to reiterate the principles and elements set out in the Declaration.

It is significant that the Declaration, in its definition of the right to development,² does not reduce development to purely economic aspirations or goals but articulates a broad, comprehensive understanding of development at national and international levels. The right to development finds clear resonance in various human rights treaty provisions, which emphasize the multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and complex nature of development processes and the need for development to be inclusive, equitable and sustainable.

The Declaration indeed proclaims that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are indivisible and interdependent and equal attention must be paid to civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights³. In fact, there are many similarities and striking complementarities between the Declaration and the human rights treaties. Many elements of the right to development are reflected in human rights treaty provisions and jurisprudence of treaty bodies, including on self-determination; fair distribution of resources; equality and non-discrimination, particularly on grounds of sex, gender, age, race and disability; active, free and meaningful participation; accountability and transparency; substantive rights relating to adequate standard of living, including food, water and sanitation, housing, health services, education, employment, enjoyment of culture; freedom of expression, assembly and association; and international assistance and cooperation.

For all the reasons given, we are resolved to make a concerted effort to promote a development-informed and interdependence-based reading of all human rights treaties, so as to highlight and emphasize the relevance and importance of the right to development in interpreting and applying human rights treaty provisions and in monitoring compliance with these provisions. In this way, we shall contribute to further the realization of the right to development by ensuring that the necessary conditions are in place for achieving economic and social progress and development for all, including vulnerable individuals and groups.

Mr. Abdelhamid EL JAMRI	Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW)
Mr. Malcolm EVANS	Sub-Committee on Prevention of Torture OPCAT (SPT)
Mr. Claudio GROSSMAN	Committee Against Torture (CAT)
Mr. Anwar KEMAL	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
Ms. Zonke MAJODINA	Human Rights Committee (CCPR)
Mr. Ronald Clive McCALLUM	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
Mr. Ariranga PILLAY	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
Ms. Silvia PIMENTEL	Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
Mr. Jean ZERMATTEN	Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

1 July 2011, Geneva

¹UN Doc. A/RES/41/128, 4 December 1986.

²Article 1

³Article 6(2) of the Declaration