



# Europe Third -World Center

Research and publication Center for Europe – Third World relation

rue Amat 6  
CH-1202 Genève  
Tel. +41 (0)22 731 59 63  
Fax +41 (0)22 731 91 52  
E-mail: [contact@cetim.ch](mailto:contact@cetim.ch)  
Site Web: [www.cetim.ch](http://www.cetim.ch)

**Working Group on the Right to  
Development  
19th session (23-27 April 2018)  
Agenda item (f)**

## **CETIM oral statement Check against delivery**

Mr Chairman,

The discussion within the Working Group this morning deals with the implementation of the right to development. Most of the elements contained in the two documents presented to the Working Group<sup>1</sup> for the drafting of a convention on the right to development are significant and praise-worthy. However, we should like to remind the assembly that the basic reference for the right to development is the *Declaration on the Right to Development* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1986 in order to achieve the desired objective. This *Declaration* was adopted at the time by one vote against and several abstentions, but it found unanimous support among the member states at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993.

Having said this, we wish to make several proposals regarding the measures to be taken in order to eliminate the obstacles to the realization of the right to development. In our opinion, the following are the most important and urgent measures to be taken.

1. Respect for the sovereignty of states and of the right of peoples to decide their own future: the right of peoples concerns above all their right to participate in decision-making, a right that is violated today everywhere in the world.
2. International cooperation must be based on good faith. The recourse to threats, black-mail, conditions and the use of force must be eliminated.
3. Current rules for trade and investment must be radically changed, for they favor the monopoly of transnational corporations in all areas and constitute a major obstacle to the realization of the right to development. These rules must be subordinated in particular to the right to development and in general to human rights.
4. Foreign debt continues to be a burden for many of the countries of the Global South. Furthermore, it is subject to conditions and does not serve the development of the

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<sup>1</sup> Standards for the implementation of the right to development: Report of the Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the Right to Development, A/HRC/WG.2/17/2, 16 Mars 2016; NAM Proposal on Set of Standards regarding the implementation and realization of the Right to Development, A/HRC/WG.2/18/G/1, 5 April 2017.

countries concerned but constitutes an instrument of domination in the hands of the powerful at any given time.

5. Radical measures must be taken against fraud and tax evasion, which deprive states of substantial income with which to honor their commitments in the realization for their populations of the right to development in particular and human rights in general.

6. At present, transnational corporations have many rights but no responsibilities. It is urgent to impose a legal framework on their activities to prevent them from violating the right to development and other human rights. As you know, another intergovernmental working group of the Council is entrusted with drafting binding norms for these entities, but its work is systematically obstructed by a group of states. States must commit themselves resolutely to assure the success of this process especially since the activities of these entities henceforth threaten democracy and the sovereignty of states.

Regarding an implementation mechanism for the right to development, it could be a treaty body, as is customary for the United Nations. However, the scope of the power to be granted to this body must be determined in such a way that its decisions will be implemented.

Mr Chairman,  
I thank you for your attention.

Geneva, 26 April 2018