



## Realizing a vision for transformative development

### Author Roundtable

#### **“Realizing the Right to Development: Essays in Commemoration of 25 Years of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development”**

Organized by OHCHR in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York

Monday, 9 December 2013

3 - 6 p.m.

ECOSOC Chamber,  
United Nations Headquarters, New York

#### **Background**

In the UN Declaration on the Right to Development of 4<sup>th</sup> December 1986,<sup>1</sup> the General Assembly enshrined and adopted a people-centred vision for a transformative development paradigm. The right to development has since been continuously and consistently reaffirmed not least in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the 2000 Millennium Declaration, the 2002 Monterrey Consensus, the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the 2010 MDGs Review Summit, the 2011 Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs for the decade 2011-2020 and the outcome documents of the thirteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIII), and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012.

The twentieth anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action this year provides the international community with an opportunity to re-ignite the Declaration's most salient elements. In Vienna, all Member States unequivocally reaffirmed that the right to development is a universal and inalienable human right. They agreed that to advance the realization of this right, States must cooperate to ensure development and eliminate obstacles to development. And they recognized that lasting progress in implementing the right to development requires effective development policies at the national level, and equitable economic relations and a favourable economic environment at the international level.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> GA resolution 41/128.

<sup>2</sup> Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, A/CONF.157/23, para.10.

There is still a long way to go to realize the commitment in the Millennium Declaration to “making the right to development a reality for everyone.” Indeed, this right entitles all people everywhere “to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development”<sup>3</sup> and therefore calls for people-centred development; a human rights-based approach to development; active, free and meaningful participation of people in development; equity and non-discrimination; self-determination and sovereignty over natural resources. These principles can only be realized through the formulation of appropriate national and international development policies; effective international cooperation; reforms at the national and international levels; removal of obstacles to development, including human rights violations, racism, colonialism, occupation and aggression; promotion of peace and disarmament, and the redirecting of savings generated therefrom to development for individuals and peoples.

In establishing the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the General Assembly entrusted the High Commissioner with a duty to mainstream the right to development across the UN system<sup>4</sup> and beyond, and to strengthen the global partnership for development<sup>5</sup>. All bodies and agencies of the UN are likewise expected to mainstream the right to development, and all parties in a world of multi-stakeholder governance have a role to play in realizing this right. This can only be achieved through human rights-based policy coherence, collaboration and collective action, including in the making of a post-2015 agenda for sustainable development respectful of all human rights.

As a contribution to this endeavour, the High Commissioner for Human Rights will launch a book entitled *Realizing the right to development: Essays in Commemoration of 25 Years of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development*. In her Foreword to this publication, she sets out the motivation of this project: ‘Across the globe, millions are suffering the merciless, often devastating, effects of the many global crises of our age. The global financial and economic crisis, the food crisis, the energy crisis and the climate crisis have converged in a multi-front assault on human dignity. And our institutions of governance, at both the global and national levels, have been at best negligent, and at times complicit, in this onslaught. As a result, in both North and South, the opening years of the twenty-first century have been marked by growing poverty, inequality, hunger, desperation and social unrest.’... ‘The call now....is for accountable and democratic economic and political governance under the rule of law - at both the national and international levels...’<sup>6</sup>

## **Objectives**

In ‘*Realizing the right to development*’ OHCHR aims to advance understanding, and ultimately, realization of the right to development. The Author Roundtable, including a question and answer session with the audience, will provide an opportunity for specific and focussed discussion based on the chapters:

- To reflect on the Declaration on the Right to Development - to consider the way forward in realizing its vision for transformative development, including through the post-2015 agenda for sustainable development, holistic development policies at the national level; and continued efforts of the Working Group on the Right to Development;

<sup>3</sup> Article 1, UN Declaration on the Right to Development.

<sup>4</sup> GA resolution 48/141.

<sup>5</sup> GA resolution 67/171.

<sup>6</sup> Foreword by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, ‘*Realizing the Right to Development*’, Geneva, 2013.

- To explore the potential of the right to development in the management and regulation of globalization, in addressing interconnected multiple challenges, and discussing links between global regimes for trade, investment, finance, technology sharing, intellectual property, labour, climate and the environment;
- To identify how international cooperation can be strengthened including through the UN system, to ensure development and eliminate obstacles to development, and facilitate discussion on accountability including individual, collective, shared, and common-but-differentiated responsibilities, and extra-territorial obligations of economic actors as well as global governance and reform;
- To consider ways forward in awareness raising and full integration of the right to development in human rights and development related education, and to enhance civil society engagement for the practical implementation of this right at all levels.

## **Programme**

The Author Roundtable will be held from 3 to 6 p.m. on Monday, 9 December 2013, in the ECOSOC Chamber, at the UN Headquarters, New York. Several authors of contributions to '*Realizing the Right to Development*' will participate in the Roundtable discussion. They will present the essence of their contributions, projected to the theme of realizing the transformative vision of the Declaration on the Right to Development, and engage in an interactive discussion with respondents and each other: Speakers in the first session will be: Ms. Tamara Kunanayakam, Mr. Stephen Marks, Mr. Raymond Atuguba, Mr. Francisco Sagasti, Mr. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, Ms. Shyami Puvimanasinghe and Mr. Obiora Okafor. Speakers in the second session will be: Mr. Robert Howse, Mr. Roberto Bissio, Ms. Lisa Forman, Mr. Marcos Orellana, Ms. Susan Randolph and Ms. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr.

The New York Roundtable will be opened by Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, OHCHR New York. The Roundtable and question and answer session will be co-moderated by Mr. Philip Alston, John Norton Pomeroy Professor of Law, New York University, and Ms. Michele Auga, Executive Director, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, New York Office. Ms. Sara Burke, Senior Policy Analyst, FES, NY will be Rapporteur.

Member States, representatives from the UN system including its specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations are invited and encouraged to actively participate in a forward-looking exchange on realizing the right to development.

*The Author Roundtable will be preceded by the Book Launch by Ms. Navi Pillay,  
High Commissioner for Human Rights, from 1-2.45p.m.  
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