Leaving no one behind: the role of human rights in reforming the sovereign debt architecture and going beyond GDP

11 February 2025 | 10:00-17:00 CET |

10:00 -10:40, Opening Session

Chair: H.E. Mr. Yackoley Kokou Johnson, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Togolese Republic to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Opening remarks:

- **H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations Office at Geneva, President of the Human Rights Council
- **H.E. Mr. Bob Rae**, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (video message)
- **Mr. Volker Türk**, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (video message)

Keynote address:

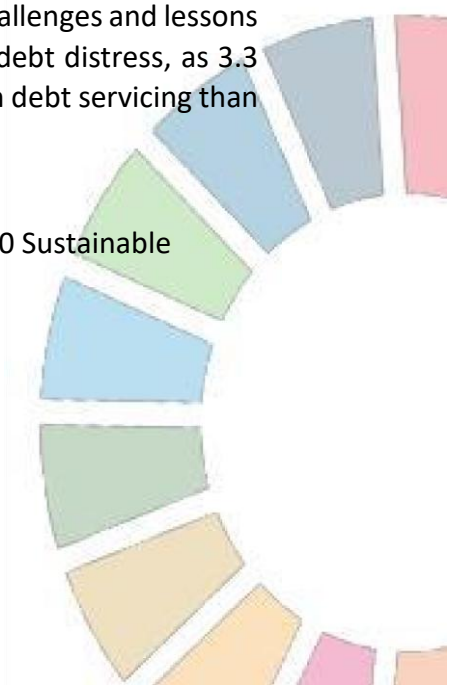
- **H.E. Ms. Alicia Bárcena**, Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, Mexico (video message)

10:40-13:00, Session 1: Reforming the global debt architecture to accelerate progress on human rights and the SDGs

This session will discuss how human rights norms and standards can guide the global debt architecture review called for in the Pact for The Future (Action 50). The session also provides an opportunity for participants to share good practices, achievements, challenges and lessons learned on advancing human rights and the SDGs at a time of growing debt distress, as 3.3 billion people live in countries where Governments are spending more on debt servicing than on education and health.

Keynote remarks:

- **Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin**, UN Special Envoy on Financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (video message)



Panel discussion with:

- **Mr. Javier Palummo,** Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights (REDESCA) at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)
- **H.E. Ms. Patricia Ann Hermanns,** Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva
- **H.E. Mr. Mxolisi Nkosi,** Ambassador and Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations Office at Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland
- **Ms. Yuefen Li**, Senior Advisor on South-South Cooperation and Development Finance, South Centre, Geneva and former UN Independent Expert on Foreign Debt and Human Rights
- **Dr. Ahilan Kadirgamar,** Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka

Moderator: Mr Luiz Vieira, Coordinator, The Bretton Woods Project

15:00-17:00, Session 2: Applying a human rights lens to going beyond GDP

This session will discuss how the development of measures of progress on sustainable development that complement and go beyond gross domestic product as called for in the Pact for the Future (Action 53) can integrate human rights, including a human rights-based approach to data, the human rights economy, the right to a clean, safe and healthy environment, the right to development and gender equality.

Panel discussion with:

- **Professor Olivier De Schutter,** UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights
- **Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya,** Economist and Public Policy Analyst, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Dhaka, Bangladesh and member of the United Nations Committee for Development Policy (CDP)
- **Ms. Ana Isabel Arenas**, Feminist Economist and Activist, member and co-founder of the Feminist Economy Table of Bogotá and the Intersectoral Table of Care Economy
- **Ms. Myrah Nerine Butt**, Oxfam in Asia, Gender Justice Policy and Advocacy Manager
- **Dr. Macdonald George Obudho,** Director General, National Bureau of Statistics, Kenya

Moderator: **Ms. Anu Peltola,** Director of Statistics, UNCTAD



16:50-17:00, Closing

The Chair will make concluding remarks and close the meeting.

