Statement by His Excellency Dr. Hadi bin Ali Al-Yami
Executive Director of the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission
OIC At the Thirteenth Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Thematic Discussion on
"The Role of Regional Mechanisms in Realizing the Right to Development"

22 April 2026

(Video Message)

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Honorable Chair of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development and distinguished Experts

The right to development remains a priority for the Commission. In this regard, the Commission has established a specialized working group on the right to development, which holds its regular sessions every two years. We were particularly pleased to welcome Mr. Mihir Kanadi, a member of the Expert Mechanism, who participated in the thematic discussion and proceedings of the working group during the twenty-sixth regular session held in December 2025. It reflects our commitment to strengthening cooperation with United Nations human rights mechanisms.

Excellencies,

The Commission has consistently contributed to promoting the right to development, and the adoption of the Abu Dhabi Declaration in 2016, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development, is a testament to this commitment. The Abu Dhabi Declaration remains an important reference in the ongoing discussions on the preparations of a legally binding instrument.

In this context, the Commission has consistently called for the adoption of a legally binding covenant on the right to development. I am pleased to note that the draft covenant is now nearing its final form. The Commission will continue to provide its full support for this important process, and it is expected that the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation will support its adoption at the United Nations, thereby strengthening the normative and legal framework for the realization of this fundamental right.

Excellencies,

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development, it is essential to reflect on the role of regional human rights mechanisms in translating this right into tangible results.

Regional mechanisms, including the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission, occupy a unique position that allows them to bridge international standards with local realities by promoting evidence-based policies, building capacity, providing technical support, and facilitating the exchange of best practices among Member States. In the short term, these mechanisms facilitate knowledge sharing and strengthen national capacities. In the medium term, they contribute to supporting legislative and policy reforms. In the long term, they contribute to establishing inclusive, resilient, and equitable development systems based on human rights principles.

Excellencies,

Our world today is characterized by stark contrasts between abundance and poverty, between overconsumption and scarcity, and between strength and fragility. As we speak, millions of people are suffering from hunger, injustice, and exclusion. Global inequalities, both between and within countries, are alarming. Ironically, the global system, designed to serve humanity, remains deficient in justice and humanity.

In this rapidly evolving global landscape, the realization of the right to development is increasingly influenced by emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI). While AI offers tremendous opportunities to accelerate development, it also presents challenges related to inequality, digital exclusion, and governance. For many OIC member states, bridging the digital divide remains crucial to ensuring equitable access to development opportunities.

Therefore, it is essential to ensure that technological progress is guided by a human rights-based approach, grounded in transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and non-discrimination.

Regional mechanisms play a pivotal role in this regard, by setting normative guidelines, promoting cooperation, and supporting Member States in harnessing technology to achieve sustainable and inclusive development. In this context, the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) expresses its full readiness to enhance cooperation with the United Nations Mechanism of Experts on the Right to Development and other relevant bodies, including through the organization of joint activities to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development.

Excellencies,

Today, forty years later, this occasion provides an opportunity to reflect on and assess the progress we have made towards realizing the lofty ideal of “leaving no one behind.”

Despite the progress achieved, the realization of the right to development remains uneven, particularly in areas affected by conflict, economic disparities, and structural inequalities. Addressing these challenges requires strengthening international cooperation, establishing equitable economic systems, transferring technology, and building capacity, along with a firm commitment to removing obstacles to development.

In conclusion, the right to development must be realized not merely as an aspirational concept, but as a binding and implementable framework to ensure that all individuals and communities fully enjoy their human rights.

The Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation reaffirms its commitment to working with regional and international partners to advance this agenda, ensuring inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development for all.

Thank you.