The 13th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda
Implementation of the mandate and programme of work –
Consideration of thematic studies
Conference Room 6, United Nations Headquarters, New York

An interactive chapter-by-chapter discussion on the draft international covenant on the right to development

Thursday 23 April 2026, 10:00 to 13:00

Unofficial transcript of the oral statement by Cuba

I am extremely grateful for the organization of this interactive dialogue. We know that we've got difficult days here in New York, and we have had a lot of meetings at the same time. We would like to express our full support to the Expert Mechanism, and we thank the Special Rapporteur and the Working Group on the Right to Development for that work. I express my appreciation generally and my thanks also, in general, to the distinguished panellists.

Thank you all for your briefings, in particular Mrs. Diana and Mr. Kanade. Thank you. This is the fifth or sixth time that I've had the pleasure to listen to you talk about the compact draft Covenant. And it's a real pleasure because every time you do it, you talk from the point of view of satisfaction, of being a comprehensive part and living through the drafting process of the compact.

Now, for a developing country like Cuba, that is also proud to be a coordinator of the Working Group on Human Rights of the Non-Aligned Movement, the right to development is of the utmost importance, and we want to make sure that at the 40th anniversary of the Declaration, the Covenant does not slip through our fingers. And this is under the relevant resolution of the Human Rights Council, which is very important. We are also closely paying attention to some of the initial comments that have been made over the last three years. There have been six sessions of the Human Rights Council since the Covenant negotiations were submitted to New York, and there are differing points of view on the text.

We agree with you that the text that we have here from the Human Rights Council resolution is not a zero draft. It's the result of an extensive consultation process that took place in Geneva. As such, if I may, I'd like to ask you if you could tell the room exactly how the rounds of consultations were and what were the main thematic areas that were debated, the main elements, the main clusters that you think were the main issues of concern and how they were addressed in the general explanations, above and beyond the general comments on this. Now, I would like to know whether you believe that Article 33 of the Covenant on reservations gives enough comfort for States that may have specific concerns on the compact and if it provides for these concerns to be resolved. So, these are the two main questions that I wanted to put on the table and ask you.

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