Statement Bonaire Human Rights Organization

WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2026

THE EXPERT MECHANISM ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT THIRTEENTH SESSION, 21–23 APRIL 2026

PROGRAMME OF WORK

11:30 – 13:00 (ii) Peace and security and the right to development - Presented by J. Ibáñez

Statement by Davika Bissessar Shaw – President, BHRO

Peace and Development

Chair, Distinguished Experts,

The Bonaire Human Rights Organization Foundation expresses its appreciation for the opportunity to contribute to this important dialogue.

Peace and development are fundamentally interdependent. Sustainable development cannot be achieved in the absence of peace, and lasting peace cannot exist without justice, equality, and the full realization of human rights. For small island communities and minority populations, this relationship is particularly acute, as development processes often unfold in ways that risk marginalizing local voices and eroding cultural identity.

A human rights-based approach to development must therefore ensure that communities are not merely recipients of policy, but active participants in shaping their socio-economic future. Meaningful participation is not only a procedural requirement—it is a cornerstone of equality, dignity, and self-determination.

In this context, BHRO respectfully raises the following questions:

First, how can the Expert Mechanism further operationalize the principle of meaningful participation in situations where communities are formally integrated within a State, yet face practical limitations in influencing development policies that directly affect their cultural and socio-economic future?

Second, in light of the increasing recognition of cultural rights within the right to development framework, what concrete measures can States adopt to ensure that small island communities and minority populations are able to preserve their cultural identity while actively benefiting from development processes, particularly in rapidly evolving socio-economic environments?

Chair,

Ensuring that development is inclusive, participatory, and culturally respectful is essential not only for achieving equity, but for sustaining peace itself.

I thank you.