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

The role of regional mechanisms in realizing the right to development
Wednesday, 22 April 2026, 15h-16:30h

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Regional mechanisms are a clear expression of international cooperation and multilateralism in action.

The Declaration on the Right to Development affirms that "States have the duty to co-operate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development." It likewise calls on States to promote universal respect for human rights and to eliminate obstacles to development resulting from the failure to observe civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Regional mechanisms — in the area of human rights, peace and security, and development — are precisely one of the most concrete manifestations of that duty.

Today's panel invites us to reflect on a question that is both timely and urgent: what role can and should regional mechanisms play in the realization of the right to development?

The Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development is fully aware that the challenges we face — including those related to the realization of the right to development — "are deeply interconnected and far exceed the capacity of any single State alone." They must therefore "be addressed collectively, through strong and sustained international cooperation."

In this regard, our Mechanism considers regional mechanisms to be strategic partners— working alongside the United Nations system to promote, protect and operationalize the right to development of individuals and peoples.

As outlined in the concept note, three core questions will guide our exchange today:

First: to what extent have regional mechanisms promoted, protected and ensured the realization of the right to development — whether directly, through its invocation as an autonomous right, or indirectly, through its relationship with

other rights and the Sustainable Development Goals? We are particularly interested in identifying good practices in this regard.

Second: What are the main challenges and obstacles faced by regional mechanisms in this area? Today, we face significant challenges with regard to the multilateral system, international cooperation, and, more broadly, respect for international law. We would welcome your perspectives on how these challenges affect the exercise of your functions and mandates.

Third: forty years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development, what strategies and activities could regional mechanisms implement — in the short, medium and long term — to further advance the realization of this right at the regional and global levels?

Excellencies,

As the Pact for the Future reminds us, despite the setbacks and profound transformations we are witnessing worldwide, there remains ‘a moment of hope and opportunity.’ An opportunity to reaffirm the universal achievement represented by the very existence of regional mechanisms for human rights, including the right to development.

Our Mechanism looks forward to learning from your experiences, your good practices, and your vision for the future. This exchange will be an invaluable contribution to our ongoing work on the right to development.

Thank you.