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Mandate of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to development

Consultation for the 2025 reports

Monday, 17 March 2025, 13:00- 14:30
Room XXIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Mr Surya Deva, will present his 2025 reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly respectively on the following themes: (A) "*Nexus between gender equality and the right to development*"; and (B) "*Financing for inclusive, sustainable and participatory development*".

To inform these two thematic reports, the Special Rapporteur seeks to collect input from States and other stakeholders through a public call for input (with a deadline of 31 March 2025). In addition, he is also organising several in-person and virtual consultations in different world regions. This *in-person only consultation* in Geneva on the margins of the Human Rights Council session is part of such consultations.

(A) Nexus between gender equality and the right to development

Article 8 of the Declaration on the Right to Development provides that States shall ensure "equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income". States should also undertake effective measures "to ensure that women have an active role in the development process". Yet, as the Special Rapporteur in his vision report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/54/27) highlighted, girls and women continue to face various forms of discrimination (including the gender pay gap, sexual harassment and gender-based violence) in both private and public spheres. They are also impacted disproportionately by conflicts, climate change and new technologies. Moreover, women continue to bear an unequal burden of unpaid domestic/care work and are under-represented in positions of power and leadership in the workplace as well as in the political sphere.

As the world community prepares to mark the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the SDG 5 is set to be reviewed at the 2025 High-Level Political Forum, this report to the Human Rights Council will unpack the critical nexus between gender equality and the right to development. It will especially focus on the relevance of intersectionality and the participation of girls and women in decision-making processes concerning all four facets of the right to development: economic, social, cultural and political development.

Specific questions / issues:

1. What additional law and policy reforms should be introduced to achieve substantive gender equality? How to bring effective changes to existing patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes?
2. How could States, UN agencies, companies and civil society integrate better an intersectional approach to gender equality concerning girls and women?
3. What should be done to ensure active, free and meaningful participation of girls and women in development-related policies, programmes and projects at all governance levels? What role could women's organisations play in this regard?
4. How is gender-based discrimination and violence undermining the right to development of girls and women? What more should be done to end all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and women?
5. What steps should be taken by governments and companies to support economic independence and empowerment of women? How to deal with the double/triple burden faced by women?
6. What are the good practices to enhance the representation of women in positions of power and leadership in both private and public sectors?
7. What should be done to deal with differentiated and disproportionate impacts of climate change, conflicts and new technologies on girls and women?
8. Are there any good practices concerning gender-responsive policies adopted by States? What more should be done for gender mainstreaming in governance processes?

(B) Financing for inclusive, sustainable and participatory development

Realizing the right to development requires resources, including access to finance and technologies. However, many States – especially Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – continue to face serious challenges in mobilizing or accessing the financial and technological resources required to meet their development needs and priorities. Corporate tax evasion, illicit financial flows, growing debt burden, unfair international financial architecture, and multiple crises of conflicts, climate change and cost of living are exacerbating such challenges and in turn undermining the goal of leaving no one behind.

In the Pact for the Future, States agreed to take bold, ambitious, accelerated, just and transformative actions to implement the 2030 Agenda, place the eradication of poverty at the centre of efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda, and close the Sustainable Development Goal financing gap in developing countries. Hence, the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) provides a vital opportunity to implement the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda and overcome existing barriers to financing for development. Against this backdrop, the Special Rapporteur's report to the General Assembly will articulate equitable and transformative financing pathways for inclusive, sustainable and participatory development.

Specific questions / issues:

1. What are the main barriers and constraints encountered in the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda? What are the most urgent actions that could be taken to overcome these barriers and constraints?

2. What measures should be taken to enlarge the fiscal space and capacity of countries, especially SIDS and LDCs, which struggle to access long-term and predictable funding to finance climate action, implement the SDGs and realize human rights?
3. How to ensure that the resource mobilization for development does not exacerbate the existing debt burden of developing countries?
4. How to ensure that the process leading to the FfD4 conference is inclusive and participatory and that the positions of LDCs and SIDS as well as civil society actors and marginalized communities are reflected in the outcome document?
5. What measures should be taken to strengthen existing sources of financing for development (e.g., raising tax-to-GDP ratios, South-South and triangular development cooperation) or to advance new potential financing tools (e.g., taxing the super-rich or debt swaps for social protection and climate action)?
6. What practical steps could be taken for a meaningful reform of the international financial architecture (including the quota and voting rights systems) to ensure democratic and representative decision-making?
7. What are the plans in your country to meet the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income to be allocated for official development assistance?
8. How to strengthen international cooperation for knowledge sharing, technical assistance, capacity building and technology transfers to achieve inclusive, sustainable and participatory development?

Contacts

For further information or in case you need assistance in accessing the venue of the consultation, please contact Ms Antoanela Pavlova supporting the Special Rapporteur mandate at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva (hrc-sr-development@un.org).

Please check the mandate website for details about the work of the mandate or make a request to be included in the mandate email list for regular updates (see contact details above).