

17th Session of the Human Rights Council

Joint oral statement by The International Movement ATD Fourth World, Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, BICE, CIVICUS, COHRE, FIAN International, Franciscans International, The International Commission of Jurists, The International Council of Women, The International Disability Alliance, The International Federation of Social Workers on the Report of the Independent Expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty

Thank you, Mr. President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of eleven non-governmental organizations.

We have read with great interest the report on the design of human rights-based recovery measures, as well as the two country reports on Ireland and Vietnam. The three reports show that social and economic policies based on human rights are crucial to protect the most vulnerable from the impact of crises, and can vastly improve the situation of persons and families living in extreme poverty. We would like to concentrate on two major policy conclusions that were brought out by these reports.

1. We strongly support the idea of a social protection floor. In human rights terms this idea means that all people – and in particular those living in extreme poverty – have legal entitlements or social protection guarantees provided by the State. It is important that social protection programmes are sensitive to social and cultural diversities and reinforce, rather than replace, existing informal solidarity structures and practices. In such a framework persons are empowered and become right-holders.
2. We also particularly support the recommendation of the Independent Expert for States to construct permanent structures and pathways for consultation with individuals, civil society, community organizations, grass-roots organizations and the academic community. In particular persons living in extreme poverty need to be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social protection and other policies that have an impact on vulnerable groups. Their involvement makes them active participants, and ensures that policies and programmes are more effective and efficient.

We congratulate the Independent Expert on her three comprehensive reports, as well as the consistent commitment she has demonstrated to the issue of extreme poverty during her three years of work for the Human Rights Council. We strongly support the draft resolution on Human rights and extreme poverty which would renew the mandate of the Independent Expert for a period of three years, under the same terms. We also support the proposed change of the mandate's title from Independent Expert to Special Rapporteur, as this promotes harmonization and consistency between the procedures.

Thank you.