

Joint NGO Statement to the Human Rights Council on the the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Transnational Corporations.

Friday 10 March 2017

UN Human Rights Council, 34th session

9 March 2017

Agenda item 3: Report of the IGWG on transnational corporations

Oral Statement delivered by Sandra Ratjen

Thank you Chair,

This intervention is made on behalf of Franciscans International, International Commission of Jurists, Colombian Commission of Jurists and the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH). All are members of the civil society coalition: "Treaty Alliance".

Our organizations welcome the report on the second session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with respect to human rights.

We are encouraged by the growing participation of States and other stakeholders in interesting and constructive discussions but remain concerned by the failure of some States to truly engage constructively with the process.

Civil society groups documented in these years countless cases of business involvement in human rights abuses. This demonstrates that existing mechanisms could be useful but are not sufficient and that a new binding instrument at the global level is needed. The treaty should address all business enterprises and give States the tools to tackle the particular challenges posed by transnational corporations, providing the necessary protection to victims of human rights abuses, including Human Rights defenders who are targeted for their work and opinion.

Access to effective remedy and reparations remain problematic at the domestic and cross-border levels. In order to achieve the effective protection of human rights from business related abuses, the treaty should build on and go beyond existing international human rights standards and instruments.

We call on the Chair-Rapporteur to present a draft elements paper in accordance with the mandate of the Open ended Working Group. This paper should be as detailed as possible and reflect the discussions of the first two sessions, in order to facilitate the start of meaningful negotiations at the third session in October 2017. We urge all stakeholders, especially States, to engage in constructive and substantive discussions on the content and scope of this instrument in the perspective of the third session.

Thank you Chair,

P.S.

International Commission of Jurists, ICJ
Franciscans International