



## General Assembly

Distr.  
GENERAL

A/HRC/11/NGO/44  
9 June 2009

ENGLISH ONLY

---

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL  
Eleventh session  
Agenda item 3

### PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

**Joint written statement\* submitted by Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities), CIVICUS - World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches (CCIA/WCC), Franciscans International (FI), the International Council of Women (ICW-CIF), the International Movement ATD Fourth World, non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, and Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers), the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Pax Romana (International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs and International Movement of Catholic Students), the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), the World Organisation Against Torture, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, and FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN), a non-governmental organization on the Roster**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[22 May 2009]

---

\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

### **Draft guiding principles on extreme poverty and human rights**

We, the NGOs signatory to this statement, strongly support the process to develop Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights and believe that the current financial and economic crisis highlights the urgent need for such a tool that lays out a human rights based approach to tackling extreme poverty.

Every day, the situation of those already living in extreme poverty is becoming even more untenable and every day, more and more people are falling into extreme poverty in both the North and the South. Several of the organizations that prepared this statement are in daily contact with those subjected to such inhumane conditions and thus can give direct testimony to the dehumanizing and debilitating impact of extreme poverty.

Extreme poverty is one of the most serious human rights challenges for the international community. It is both a cause and a consequence of multiple human rights violations. The international community must make it a priority to address this situation and work towards the creation of a tailored response to the human rights violations of those living in extreme poverty and the obstacles they face in the realisation of their rights. The Draft Guiding Principles (DGPs), based on existing human rights norms should be a key instrument in this direction.

The tragic situation of all those living in extreme poverty requires Members of the Human Rights Council to take action on this issue as a matter of priority. We feel that the very constructive consultations that have taken place on the DGPs constitute a step in the right direction. The January 2009 technical seminar suggested inter alia that they be operational, action-oriented, accessible, and with language and terms conforming more systematically with existing international human rights law. The seminar also confirmed that the DGPs should focus on persons living in extreme poverty in *all* countries of the world. Regular consultation should continue until the final drafting stage with the full participation of NGOs, especially those in which people in situations of extreme poverty express their views. If revised in this spirit, the DGPs will provide governments at the national and local levels, and international bodies a comprehensive guide for the development of new policies and programmes that have the potential to ensure that the rights of children and their parents are met, and thus break the vicious cycle of inter-generational transmission of extreme poverty.

The finalisation and adoption of these DGPs is critical because:

- The DGPs are based on the indivisibility, interdependence, and universality of human rights and thus confirm the importance of a multi-pronged human rights based approach to extreme poverty.
- The DGPs emphasise that it is important for services and programmes to reach all members of society and not just those who are easiest to reach.
- The DGPs aim to foster and promote the participation of people living in extreme poverty in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all policies which concern them. Building on the experience of those who are the most concerned helps to ensure the effectiveness of anti-poverty strategies.

- The formulation of a common framework will also help to harmonise action, improve partnerships at all levels and build the foundation for efficient and effective multi-stakeholder dialogue.

We believe the improvement, adoption and implementation of the DGPs should be seen as a priority by all relevant stakeholders, bearing in mind the seriousness and tragic impact of extreme poverty. We look forward to the emergence of consensus on the DGPs and their recognition as an efficient and valuable tool providing practical guidance and facilitating the effective implementation of existing human rights norms in the context of extreme poverty.

We strongly support the draft resolution tabled by the Permanent Mission of France, which requests the Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty to revise the text based on the comments received during the consultations and to present a new draft to the Human Rights Council.

The Independent Expert possesses both the necessary expertise and credibility to effectively revise the text, continue to carry out consultations with all stakeholders – including those living in extreme poverty – and promote consensus amongst them. In addition, over two years of consultations have already provided a wealth of valuable suggestions that need to be forged into a new revised version.

**We call on the Human Rights Council to continue to support fully the process to develop Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights and to mandate the Independent Expert on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights to revise the draft text in line with consultations undertaken.**

-----