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## **South Centre Statement**

### **23rd Session Working Group on the Right to Development**

**15 – 20 May 2022**

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Excellencies and distinguished delegates, the South Centre, as an intergovernmental organization of developing countries, has strongly supported States' efforts towards fully realizing the right to development. We thank you Mr. Chair for all the hard work that you and the Secretariat have made to move forward the agenda of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Right to Development.

We are celebrating this year the 35th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development (RtD). The RtD has become since then a well rooted human right. However, the realization of the RtD has been slow and uneven. Misinterpretation of the RtD and inertia to reform the international governance altogether have made realising the RtD challenging. With the still lingering COVID 19 pandemic, a weakened multilateral system and increased geopolitical tensions, new obstacles for its realization have emerged. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has vindicated the relevance of the RtD: it has shown that development, as a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, is key for the realization of human rights.

Although in this context we need to increase the international efforts to effectively realize the RtD, there seems to be insufficient engagement by many countries in the relevant intergovernmental processes. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to encourage and mobilize the participation of all countries in such processes. This Working Group is in a remarkable position to provide a platform for a participatory process that allows for the exchange of views and to build the necessary consensus to move forward.

We know that treaty making processes often face difficult moments where consensus building becomes difficult, but there is a major opportunity to clarify conceptual differences and create bridges to operationalize the RtD. Broader engagement and participation by civil society, think-tanks, and academia could contribute to improve awareness on the RtD as well as to provide evidence on the practical

implications of the RtD and thereby contribute to narrow down divergences in the understanding and operationalization of this right.

The South Centre expresses its appreciation of the important role that the Non-Aligned Movement has played in promoting the concept of RtD and consensus building.

Finally, it is worth noting that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the RtD are mutually reinforcing. The tangible link between the RtD and sustainable development provides the opportunity to locate the RtD at the core of the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda.