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## CONCEPT NOTE

### Side Event at the 62nd Session of the Human Rights Council

### DRTD@40 and Sustainable Development Agenda: Youth Perspectives on the Right to Development in the Global South

**Date: 3 July, 12h-13h, Room XVI, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

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#### Background

This year marks 40 years since the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development (DRTD), a landmark international instrument adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1986. It recognises development as an inalienable human right that has evolved through normative advances and institutional mechanisms, such as the Working Group and the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development. The right to Development (RtD) has a renewed political momentum through both the DRTD@40 process and ongoing negotiations for a legally binding international instrument. Simultaneously, the international community is beginning to conceptualise the multilateral framework that will succeed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Youth today constitute the largest generation in history, predominantly residing in the Global South, and will be the primary rights-holders shaping the future of this new era of global governance. However, young people in developing countries are disproportionately affected by persistent structural asymmetries, including widening digital divides, unequal access to technology transfer, and systemic debt distress. Furthermore, developing nations face the critical, intersecting challenge of navigating global crises while securing and maintaining sufficient policy space for development policies, including economic diversification and industrialisation.

Despite being on the front lines of these cascading challenges, youth perspectives are insufficiently reflected in high-level RTD deliberations. This side event creates a dedicated platform for youth voices to articulate their understandings, priorities, and means of implementation of the RtD. By foregrounding youth perspectives, the event aims to contribute to a forward-looking, inclusive, and action-oriented interpretation of RTD, ensuring that the DRTD@40 momentum drives systemic reform and intergenerational justice including towards 2030 and in the post-2030 global architecture.

#### Objectives



The side event aims to:

- **Amplify youth perspectives** on the meaning, relevance, and future of the Right to Development, particularly concerning structural economic reform and digital sovereignty.
- **Bridge normative RTD frameworks**, including the operationalisation of a binding legal instrument, with the lived experiences of young people from diverse regional and socioeconomic contexts.
- **Inform ongoing multilateral processes**, including the DRTD@40 discussions and post-2030 agenda-setting, with youth-driven insights and actionable recommendations.
- **Encourage intergenerational dialogue** between youth, UN actors, Member States, and civil society to strengthen international cooperation.

### Guiding Questions

- What does the Right to Development mean for youth today, 40 years after its adoption, and how must it evolve to anchor the post-2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals?
- How can RTD frameworks respond more effectively to the structural challenges facing young people in the Global South, particularly regarding debt burdens and technological asymmetries?
- How can the international community ensure that youth have a voice in defending the Right to Development?
- What role should youth play in shaping RTD policy, operationalising a binding legal framework, and ensuring accountability at national and global levels?

### Agenda:

Time	Segment	Speaker / Moderator
12:00 – 12:10	Opening Remarks	<b>Pia Oberoi</b> , Chief, Right to Development Section (OHCHR) <b>Daniel Uribe Terán</b> , Lead Programme Officer, South Centre
12:10 – 12:30	Youth Panel Interventions	<b>Introduction:</b> Shyami Puvimanasinghe, (Advocate on the Right to Development) <b>Moderator:</b> Srruthi Elango (OHCHR) <b>Panelists:</b> Triana Gil, Rana Nur Aydin, Cristopher de la Torre Garzon, Raphaëlle Delcayrou
12:30 – 12:50	Interactive Discussion	Audience, Member States, and UN Mechanisms



12:50 – 12:55	<b>Closing Reflections &amp; Key Takeaways</b>	<b>David Fernández Puyana</b> , Permanent Observer of UPEACE to the UN Office
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## Expected Outcomes

- **Enhanced visibility** of youth-led perspectives and Global South priorities in RTD discourse at the Human Rights Council.
- **Identification of youth-specific recommendations** for advancing the Right to Development as an operational and binding framework.
- **Stronger institutional linkages** between youth movements, UN mechanisms, and RTD stakeholders.
- **Substantive contribution of youth insights** to the DRTD@40 political declaration and the foundational dialogues for the post-2030 global development agenda.