



## Investing in sustainable recovery, advancing gender equality and strengthening partnerships – Towards a renewed social contract anchored in human rights

Pursuant to its resolution 43/19, the United Nations Human Rights Council held the [fourth Intersessional meeting for dialogue and cooperation on human rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) on 18 January 2022.

The meeting was convened under the theme “[Investing in sustainable recovery, advancing gender equality and strengthening partnerships – Towards a renewed social contract anchored in human rights](#)”. Special focus was placed on [SDG 5](#) (achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls) and [SDG 17](#) (strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development) as well as the overarching promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) to leave no one behind and to reach those furthest behind first.



The meeting, chaired by **Lansana Gberie**, the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations Office in Geneva, brought together representatives from Member States, United Nations, National Human Rights Institutions, academia and civil society. Opening remarks were delivered by **Federico Villegas**, President of the Human Rights Council, and **Nada Al-Nashif**, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. **Mirtha Vásquez Chuquilín**, Prime Minister of the Republic of Peru, delivered the keynote address.

The thematic session featured five panellists: **Diane Rosemary Elson**, Emeritus Professor of the University of Essex; **Sanyu Awori**, Manager of the Building Feminist Economies initiative of the Association for Women’s Rights in Development; **Ahmad Taufan Damanik**, Chairperson of the National Commission on Human Rights of Indonesia; **Osnat Lubrani**, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Ukraine; and **Adriana Quiñones**, Director a.i. of the UN Women’s Liaison Office in Geneva. The discussion was moderated by **Felix Kirchmeier**, the Executive Director of the Geneva Human Rights Platform at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

In the context of severe socio-economic consequences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, deepening poverty and compounding inequalities, the meeting highlighted the importance of [adopting policies grounded in human rights and gender equality](#) to resume progress in realizing the 2030 Agenda and to work towards a [renewed social contract anchored in human rights](#) that the UN Secretary-General has called for in his report entitled [Our Common Agenda](#).

Speakers affirmed the need to transform the economy and [orient economic policies towards reducing inequalities and advancing human rights and environmental sustainability](#). Reversing the impacts of the pandemic requires [moving from ad hoc, temporary, and emergency measures to longer-term investment for the realization of economic and social rights](#).

The meeting also concluded that [increased investment in public social services, transforming the care economy, and holistic gender-transformative measures are essential for advancing SDG 5](#).

The [full report](#)<sup>1</sup> of the meeting constitutes an official input to the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) for its 2022 session, while this note serves to highlight the key messages and conclusions. You can view the meeting in its entirety [here](#).

<sup>1</sup> Full report (advanced unedited version): [A/HRC/49/59](#)



## Conclusions and key messages:

1. Integrating human rights into economic policymaking is paramount to resume progress on the SDGs, dismantle inequalities, and create a renewed social contract anchored in human rights.

2. Our efforts need to focus on creating an economy that invests in human rights and works for everyone, an economy that advances environmental sustainability, social justice, and long-term wellbeing of people.

3. It is important we complement the narrow focus of GDP and re-think how to measure the extent to which people enjoy their human rights, including the right to a healthy environment.

4. We need greater dialogue between economists and human rights experts to orient economic policies towards reducing inequalities and realizing all human rights for all.

5. Reversing the impacts of the pandemic requires moving from ad hoc, temporary, and emergency measures to longer-term investment for the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights, including universal, inclusive and human rights-based social protection systems.

6. States should mobilize resources to invest in health care, social protection, education, housing and environmental solutions. Resuming progress on the 2030 Agenda requires: (a) progressive taxation systems; (b) strengthening the capacity to collect taxes; (c) fighting tax evasion and illicit financial flows; (d) tackling corruption; (e) repositioning public expenditure; (f) enhancing international cooperation and increasing ODA; (g) fiscal transparency, strong civic space, and scrutiny on public spending, and (h) development financing aligned with States' human rights obligations to maximise available resources for economic and social rights.

7. The pandemic has caused a significant setback in gender equality. It exacerbated gender-based violence and discrimination, reversing the meagre progress on gender equality achieved over the recent decades.

Increased investment in public social services and holistic gender-transformative measures are important if we are to resume progress on SDG 5.

8. Transforming the care economy through more equal distribution of care responsibilities, rewarding unpaid and underpaid care workers, and ensuring gender equality in livelihoods are key for gender-equal recovery.

9. Transitioning to environmental sustainability can advance human rights and gender equality. Women's participation in the design and implementation of new energy systems is essential. Developed countries need to increase their climate finance to support 'gender-just' transitions in the poorest countries.

10. COVID-19 recovery and implementation of the 2030 Agenda must be guided by accurate and disaggregated data, with a human rights-based approach to data collection.

11. The adverse impacts on human rights related to business activity should be addressed through human rights due diligence as well as a smart mix of measures in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

12. The HLPF, relevant regional processes, as well as national and local 2030 Agenda follow-up and review should make use of and operationalize recommendations emanating from the [UN human rights system](#).

States should integrate the analysis and recommendations of the UN human rights mechanisms in their Voluntary National Reviews, national development strategies and implementation plans. The Human Rights Council-mandated independent experts should be increasingly engaged in the HLPF processes and discussions. The UN human rights mechanisms should continue to provide guidance and recommendations on how to use the human rights framework to identify those left behind to achieve inclusive and sustainable development.