

49th session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights

Statement by Action Canada for Population and Development

9 March

Thank you, President.

Action Canada makes this statement on behalf of the Sexual Rights Initiative and AKAHATA.

We welcome the Independent Expert's priorities and focus on groups subjected to socioeconomic discrimination, who suffer the impacts of austerity and other obligations imposed by financial institutions, including cuts to States' expenditures on health, education and social protection by deregulation, taxation reduction and the privatization of the public sector.

In doing so, we encourage you to engage with feminist analysis and critiques of neo-liberalism, corporate power, and its collusions with patriarchy, racism and militarism, and are ready to engage with your mandate in this area.

At the UN too, corporate capture is evident in resistance to the binding treaty on transnational corporations,¹ the blocking of a TRIPS waiver on COVID-19 vaccines, the continuing reliance on public-private partnerships,² and the subordination of Global South States to multilateral agencies such as the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and their impositions.

Foreign debts do not raise living standards nor improve the level of development. Instead, they bring peoples more inequality, oppression and hopelessness, and leave States far from any possibility of fulfilling their obligations on the full enjoyment of all human rights.

Thank you.

¹ See for instance the work of the Feminists for a Binding Treaty: "Corporate abuse is a feminist issue."
<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/corporate-abuse-feminist-issue/>

² See for instance Barbara Adams and Jens Martens: "Fit for whose purpose? Private funding and corporate influence in the United Nations." Global Policy Forum, 2015.
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2101Fit_for_whose_purpose_online.pdf ; DAWN Informs: PPPs and women's human rights: Feminist analysis from the Global South. March 2021.
https://dawnnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/DAWN_Informs_on_PPPs_March2021.pdf