

HRC32 - GoF ESCR statement – as delivered on 23.06.2016

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Argentina, Belgium, the plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Chile, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Namibia, Spain, Uruguay and my own country, Portugal. The Group of Friends of ESCR is a broad association of States, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as civil society institutions, which have coalesced around a shared commitment to the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights.

Mr President,

The members of the Group of Friends of Economic, Social and Cultural rights share a commitment to cooperate with the UN bodies tasked with the promotion and protection of human rights, and in particular with their efforts to strengthen the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights without discrimination of any kind. The promotion of ESCR in the multilateral framework requires a solid, functional and active institutional component, and the Group welcomes the dedication and work of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the staff of his Office, with whom we have already established ties and undertaken initiatives which we hope, over time and through meaningful cooperation, will expand in reach for the UN system. The Group of Friends affirms its willingness and readiness to strengthen and deepen cooperation with the OHCHR and looks forward to renewed opportunities for its enhancement.

Mr. President,

We are of the opinion that Special Procedures mechanism of the Human Rights Council play a role of utmost importance in the promotion of human rights in general. Their contribution to economic, social and cultural rights' visibility and mainstreaming cannot be overstated. The ability of Special Procedures mandate holders to interact with states on an independent, substantive and mutually beneficial manner in order to enhance their efforts to promote ESCR is significantly valued by the Group of Friends, and in this regard we call upon all states to support the mandate holders in fulfilling their mandates. The Group welcomes the work developed so far

by the Special Procedures' mandate holders specifically dedicated to ESCR, and commends efforts made by them to approach ESCR from an interdisciplinary perspective.

I conclude, Mr. President, by appealing to all stakeholders to continue to engage constructively with each other with a view to strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights, and by reiterating the Group of Friends' goal of deepening its interaction with the Special Procedures mechanism of the Human Rights Council.