



**Oral Statement**  
**Human Rights Council – 52<sup>nd</sup> Session**  
**HL meeting on the 35th anniversary**  
**of the Declaration on the Right to Development**

The Right to Development is worth celebrating: its multi-dimensional nature and focus on well-being make it the perfect framework to protect human rights and realize the SDGs.

Unfortunately, today's various crises<sup>1</sup> still prevent its realization. Many of these, are deeply rooted in our current economic system.

This is why we argue it is high time to recognize the inadequacy of GDP as a measure of well-being and development, to move away from the growth mantra, and to understand that our economy should care for its people and planet, not prosper at their expense.

Care is a key word as it is at the heart of well-being. Economies depend on care work to survive and thrive. As we care for our children, we invest in the future.

The UN Secretary-General rightly emphasized this when he said: 'The pandemic has shown us who is doing the work that really matters: nurses, teachers, care workers. As we recover, we need to remember this. It is time to end the inequities of unpaid care work and create new economic models that work for everyone'<sup>2</sup>.

That our current economic system does not factor in unpaid care work is the cause of much economic hardship and injustice for women, especially mothers<sup>3</sup>.

Development is understood as a comprehensive process aiming to improve the population's health and happiness. An equipped economic system should thus recognize, value, and support the work of caring for each other and for the planet.

Let's follow the example of governments such as Finland, Iceland, New Zealand, Scotland, and Wales, which are already transforming into well-being economies<sup>4</sup>. Let's encourage similar initiatives at the local level<sup>5</sup>.

Our call today is for Member States to collectively 'move beyond GDP' and put this issue on the UN agenda as a step forward to the realisation of the right to development.

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<sup>1</sup> Covid-19, but also climate change, environmental degradation, rising inequalities...

<sup>2</sup> Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General, Town Hall with Young Women from Civil Society Organizations on 31 August 2020

<sup>3</sup> 2013 Report of the Special Rapporteur on poverty to the UN GA on unpaid care work and women's human rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-poverty/annual-reports-1999-2014>

<sup>4</sup> See the work of the Wellbeing Economy government partnership (WEGo) and the wellbeing economy alliance (WEAll): <https://weall.org/>

<sup>5</sup> See in particular the Doughnut Economics Action Lab (DEAL) <https://doughnuteconomics.org/>

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