



53rd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 19 June – 14 July 2023

Interactive dialogue with the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

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Mr. President,

APG23 thanks the Working Group for its report on building capacity for the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

As a civil society organization directly engaged in human rights issues on the ground and through advocacy actions, APG23 has witnessed how peoples and communities, especially the more vulnerable, can be heavily affected by business-related human rights violations. While still facing the lack of adequate and enforceable legally binding instruments on the issue of business and human rights, both at international and often also at national level, the actual and potential victims of such violations need to be protected and supported by every possible means.

In this challenging context, the UNGPs can play a further positive and progressive role, and any effort to enhance their full, widespread and effective implementation is essential. The punctual findings of the report - along with the policy suggestions resulting from the ambitious Working Group's approach to capacity-building - can provide a constructive common ground to advance the knowledge and implementation of the UNGPs.

In this regard, we want to highlight two critical aspects:

- 1) The need to invest extensively in local ownership and in a rights holders-centred approach, by bolstering the capacity of rights holders - especially human rights defenders, endangered communities and indigenous peoples - to access remedy and grievance mechanisms, and to properly engage with relevant processes such as standard-setting and due diligence.
- 2) The need to devote particular attention to the governance schemes of the proposed capacity-building knowledge hubs and global fund, that should ensure the primacy of rights holders and avoid any legitimacy drain, power asymmetry and conflict of interests, especially in case of multi-stakeholder and public-private partnership structures.

Thank you!