



CONCEPT NOTE

**The Right to Development: the Centrality of Women's Human Rights
Side Event at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (59th Session)
Co-sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Uruguay, the Permanent Mission of Fiji (tbc),
UN Women (tbc) and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)**

The right to development, as well as women's human rights and their essential role in development have been recognized and reaffirmed multiple times by member states in different international forums and agreed outcome documents, including at highest level in the Millennium Development Declaration in 2000 and outcome document of the Rio Summit in 2012 "The Future We Want".¹ This side event will focus on why and how women's human rights are integral and central to realizing the "right to development". Equally, women's human rights cannot be fulfilled without protecting and promoting the right to development. The side event will invite speakers from South countries in various regions to explore how development, equality, sustainability, peace, human rights are crosscutting, mutually reinforcing and inextricably interlinked, and what development framework, laws and policies, and accountability mechanisms are needed to ensure that human rights of women and rights related to gender equality, are recognized as the ultimate end of development.

This event will take the form of an interactive dialogue among key stake holders.

Background:

The synergy between human rights and development has evolved over the years. One of the main achievements of the first world conference on human rights held in Tehran in 1968 was the declaration that "the achievement of lasting progress in the implementation of human rights is dependent on sound and effective national and international political, economic and social development."

In 1986 governments agreed in the Declaration of the Right to Development that "States have the duty to co-operate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development. States should realize their rights and fulfill their duties in such a manner as to promote a new international economic order based on sovereign equality, interdependence, mutual interest and co-operation among all States, as well as to encourage the observance and realization of human rights."²

In the mid-nineties came the momentum to mainstream human rights more concretely into all development initiatives. This was the advent of the rights based approach to development adopted by many UN Agencies and the World Bank.

¹ This includes international conventions, key consensus agreements and their periodic reviews, and in high level declarations, such as CEDAW and CRC, the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development in 1986, Agenda 21 in 1992, the GA Declaration on Human Rights in 1993, in the ICPD POA in 1994, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the World Summit on Social Development in 1995, in the Millennium Declaration in 2000, and in the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 entitled "The future we want".

² Declaration of the Right to Development A/RES/41/128 (para 3)



There is much evidence to show that there can be no development without women's and girls' human rights and there is no human rights without development. A failure of development is also a serious denial of human rights, especially the human rights of girls and women, and vice versa.

Gender-equitable and just development laws, policies and institutions at global, regional and national levels combined with sufficient financing, provide a strong and conducive environment for respecting, protecting and fulfilling all human rights including the human rights of girls and women. Without such an environment, all human rights – economic, social, cultural, civil and political, and including sexual and reproductive rights – are in jeopardy.

In the outcome document of the Rio Summit in 2012, “The Future We Want – Outcome of UN conference on sustainable development”, member states reaffirmed “the importance of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the right to development and the right to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food, the rule of law, gender equality, the empowerment of women and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development.”³

DAWN and our co-sponsors cordially invite you to participate in this side event and to dialogue with women's human rights activists, policy makers and development practitioners around issues of sustainable development, women's human rights and gender equality in the context of accelerating implementation of BPfA and the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Annex: Profile of organization:

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) is a network of feminist scholars, researchers and activists from the economic South working for economic and gender justice and sustainable and democratic development. DAWN provides a forum for feminist research, analyses and advocacy on global issues (economic, social and political) affecting the livelihoods, living standards, rights and development prospects of women, especially poor and marginalized women, in regions of the South. Through research, analyses, advocacy and, more recently, training, DAWN seeks to support women's mobilization within civil society to challenge inequitable social, economic and political relations at global, regional and national levels, and to advance feminist alternatives.

Website : www.dawnnet.org

³ Outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 entitled “The future we want” (para 8)