



***32nd Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on
Extreme Poverty and Human Rights***

Oral statement delivered by Allison Corkery (check against delivery)

Thank you Mr President,

The Center for Economic and Social Rights welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights.

The report spotlights a significant paradox. At the same time that normative standards on economic and social rights have become more firmly consolidated, economic policy trends have undermined the willingness and capacity of states to fulfill them. The institutions tasked with protecting these rights, meanwhile, have struggled to reverse such trends.

This paradox was vividly illustrated in our organization's research on the Universal Periodic Review, cited in the Special Rapporteur's report. Less than one in five recommendations focused on economic and social rights; the vast majority were on education, labor or health, while other rights were rarely mentioned; and two thirds did not identify any particular action that should be taken.

In calling out this paradox, the Special Rapporteur's report provokes much needed debate on how to overcome the continued hierarchy between rights. The Center for Economic and Social Rights offers three reflections on how this debate could be advanced.

First, it is crucial to recognize that economic policy, like any other public policy, reflects a government's priorities about whose interests are most important and whose can be ignored. As such, economic policy, including tax policy, must be subject to human rights scrutiny.

Second, methodological innovation in monitoring economic policy from a human rights perspective offers *a means* to advance the institutionalization and accountability of economic and social rights. So it is important to understand the realities in which these techniques are being implemented.

Third, civil society organizations, alone, cannot achieve the deep societal change required for realizing economic and social rights. Nevertheless, they often drive it. The work undertaken by defenders to mobilize for greater protection of economic and social rights must be better supported.

As we mark the 50th anniversary of the two international Covenants, we call on member states to rectify the persistent imbalance in the recognition and institutionalization of the respective rights they enshrine, and urge international monitoring bodies to rise to the challenge that ensuring accountability in this area poses.

Thank you.