



ADHRB Oral Statement: 1st Session IGWG Business & Human Rights

Panel IV: Human Rights to be covered under the Instrument with respect to activities of TNC's
and other business enterprises

Madam Chairperson,

Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain welcomes the opportunity to address the intergovernmental working group and the panel of experts. We encourage the efforts being made by the working group to develop a legally binding instrument for transnational corporations with a view towards establishing their contribution to the universal promotion and protection of human rights.

In the interest of developing a robust and effective instrument, we strongly believe that the treaty must recognize the wide impact that transnational corporations and business enterprises have on human rights in all areas. This requires an evolving and inclusive definition of the wide range of business activities that impact on the human rights of communities with specific attention to vulnerable groups, in a thorough recognition of concrete examples.

With this in mind, we ask the Working Group to consider a pertinent example that we have documented very closely in the Gulf Region: the often severe and widespread human rights impact of international sporting events. This has been raised as a grave concern in the run up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar regarding the rights of migrant workers.

On this point, we would like to emphasize that while ensuring adequate labor standards in line with already established international labor standards is an already existing duty of States, a legally binding instrument on the responsibility of TNCs and other business enterprises with regard to human rights should clearly outline a duty for TNCs and all business entities to ensure right of workers to a safe and healthy working environment in their related activities.

This was touched upon by Ms. Ortiz during her presentation, and we hope that this treaty can strengthen the work of the ILO in this regard. To ensure that these rights are protected we also reiterate the importance of a full scope of this treaty to apply to all business enterprises, regardless of the domestic, transnational, public or private nature of the enterprise, and all human rights violations, so as to avoid the diversion of accountability in such circumstances.

Thank you.