



**CHAIR  
NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT  
GENEVA CHAPTER**



**STATEMENT**

**delivered by Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov,  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement  
at Biennial panel discussion on the Right to Development**

**Geneva, 17 September 2020**

Madame Chairperson,

1. I would like to extend my appreciation to the OHCHR for inviting me as a panellist at today important discussion.
2. While the normative basis for today's panel discussion derives from the Human Rights Council's Resolution 42/23 of 27 September 2019, grim realities of our world, especially in the period of COVID-19 pandemic, attach additional importance to this panel discussion. The theme of the discussion speaks for itself, as the realization of the right to development has to be carried out in the situation when the UN Member States around the globe are fighting against the unprecedented effects of COVID-19, which has created a huge burden on their health systems, societies, and economies.
3. The theme of today's panel discussion is timely because the pandemic situation has shown the importance of international cooperation to mitigate the results of this health calamity. The global pandemic has made a strong negative impact on all countries around the world, especially the developing countries, creating further difficulties for the realization of the right to development.
4. Being one of the priority areas for the Non-Aligned Movement, the right to development has been on the agenda of the United Nations for quite a long time. Upon the initiative of the NAM, the relevant documents related to the right to development have been adopted and various mechanisms have been established to that end in the UN fora.
5. In the Final Document of the 2019 NAM Baku Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Movement agreed to promote and protect all universally recognized human rights, in particular the right to development as a universal and inalienable right and as an integral part of all universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms.

6. In Baku, the NAM Heads of State and Government urged the UN human rights machinery to ensure the operationalization of the right to development as a priority, including through the elaboration of a Convention on the Right to Development.

7. The open-ended discussion on the right to development organized by Azerbaijani NAM Chairmanship on 12 February 2020, highlighted the importance and potential of the constructive engagement by different stakeholders in achieving the realization of the right to development. In this regard, the NAM expects constructive engagement of all stakeholders at the upcoming 21st session of the Working Group on the Right to Development, in which the elaboration of the legally binding instrument on the right to development would be commenced.

8. Upon the initiative of the Azerbaijani NAM Chairmanship, the Contact Group of the NAM countries to combat coronavirus was set up, and on 4 May 2020, the online Summit of the NAM Contact Group was held. The Summit established the NAM Task Force for development of a database of humanitarian and medical needs of the NAM Member States, to be presented to donor countries and international organizations for the provision of feasible assistance. Azerbaijan, in its national capacity, donated 10 million USD to the World Health Organisation to support the most affected NAM Member States. At the initiative of the Azerbaijani NAM Chairmanship, and with support of 135 UN Member States, the special session of the UN General Assembly in response to COVID-19 has been convened and is presently going on.

9. The NAM expresses its concern of the global threat posed by COVID-19 and underscores that the control of the pandemic relies on proper preparedness, prevention, resilience-building, and greater national, regional and international collaboration and actions to address this challenge in an effective and timely manner. Equitable access, fair distribution and affordability of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines for COVID-19 are important priorities for developing countries and least developed countries.

10. The negative effects of the unilateral measures also exacerbate the difficult situation resulting from COVID-19, hindering the well-being of people of affected countries and creating obstacles to the full realization of their human rights, including the right to development. It is important to secure safe access to COVID-19 related medicines for everyone in all countries.

11. The NAM reiterates its belief on the importance of the international cooperation in addition to the national policy measures for realization of the right to development and mitigation of the negative effects of COVID-19 pandemic. The NAM believes that all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, are universal, indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated, and there is an urgent need to make the right to development a reality for everyone.

Thank you.