

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
37^o session, 9th of March 2018
Item 3: General debate

ORAL INTERVENTION OF PEACE BRIGADES INTERNATIONAL SWITZERLAND

Speaker: Kim-Mai Vu

Mr. President,

PBI welcomes the presentation of the report on the third session of the open ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights.

Human rights defenders in the field of business and human rights face a growing number of attacks from both States and non-State actors, such as stigmatization, criminalization, physical attacks and sometimes death. The work of human rights defenders is crucial to achieving justice for victims, combating corruption, respecting indigenous cultures and rights, and achieving sustainable and positive changes.¹

PBI reiterates the importance of the participation of civil society and human rights defenders as crucial to the success of the process. Human rights defenders should be given sufficient opportunities to engage meaningfully in the 4th session.

Human Rights defenders should be a central part of the substance of the future instrument. For all the above, we consider it essential that provisions for the prevention of attacks against human rights defenders, communities and organizations of affected population be included as a fundamental element throughout the instrument.

The future instrument should emphasize the obligation of States in relation to meaningful participation and protection of human rights defenders, communities and organizations working in the context of business and human rights. Furthermore, PBI would like to underline the importance of prevention as well as effective access to justice and remedy to reduce the current climate of impunity that many powerful companies enjoy.²

Many thanks

¹2017 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders A/72/170

²<http://www.cidse.org/publications/business-and-human-rights/business-and-human-rights-frameworks/cidse-contribution-to-the-un-treaty.html>