

**United Nations Human Rights Council**  
**37th Regular Session**

**Interactive Dialogue with the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights**

*Joint Statement by Conectas Human Rights, together with Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos – INESC and Oxfam Brasil*

Delivered by Mr. Gustavo Huppes

*March 1st, 2018*

Mr. President,

We would like to open this statement by expressing our deep consternation and dissatisfaction with the Brazilian government's decision to cancel, in the last minute, the long-scheduled official visit to Brazil of the Independent Expert on foreign debt and human rights, planned to take place in the coming days. The alleged reasons of the cancelation are not plausible. A coalition of 60 organizations has been working for months to mobilize local stakeholders and prepare grassroots information to contribute to this mission.

Austerity measures are dramatically affecting the enjoyment of human rights in Brazil. Constitutional Amendment 95, which came into force in late 2016, and froze for 20 years the expenditures on public policies, has been labelled the "harshest austerity package of the world" by the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights. This amendment exacerbated restrictions on social rights enacted since 2015, including budget cuts of 70 percent in food security policies, 19 percent in education policies, 17 percent in health policies and 55 percent in policies towards women victims of violence.

In this context, the development of guiding principles for assessing the human rights impacts of economic reform policies is a paramount step to help different stakeholders evaluate them on the basis of existing human rights standards and visiting the countries that implemented these policies is a key tool available to the Independent Expert to assess these impacts on the lives of peoples.

This government has been guiding its actions with eyes on the elections. We fear that the cancellation of this visit might be just another example of a measure based on electoral convenience, with nefarious side effects to human rights. We request the Brazilian government to reconsider its decision to cancel the visit and to reschedule it before the end of 2018.

Finally, we call the attention to the lawsuits pending before the Brazilian Supreme Court questioning the constitutionality of Amendment 95. We are confident that they will be judged by reference to international human rights law, including the principles of prohibition of a social regression and non discrimination.

Thank you.



