

United Nations Human Rights Council

38th Regular Session

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

Joint Statement by Conectas Human Rights, together with Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos – INESC, FIAN Brasil and Plataforma Dhesca Brasil

Delivered by Mr. Caio Borges

21 June 2018

Mr. President,

We would like to welcome the special rapporteur on extreme poverty, Philip Alston, for his report on the IMF and its impact on social protection. In highlighting the enormous influence the Fund has on defining fiscal and monetary policies around the world, Mr. Alston points to the importance of a genuine engagement in social protection, in opposition to a tokenistic commitment to minimum safety nets for the poorest of the poor.

Mr. Alston also highlights the lack of concern for gender issues in the broader context of macroeconomic policies proposed by the IMF. The adoption of a constitutional amendment approved by Brazil in December 2016, freezing public spending for the next 20 years, is used as an example.

Labelled the "harshest austerity package of the world" by Mr. Alston, the amendment intensified restrictions on social rights enacted in Brazil since 2015, including reduction of 58 percent in policies towards women victims of violence.

A recent study points to the spending ceiling established by Brazil will increase a very sensitive social indicator: the infant mortality rate in Brazil by 8.6 percent by 2030, impacting on 124,000 new child hospitalizations and about 20,000 deaths of children up to five years old. Also, in just one year, from 2016 to 2017, the number of people in situation of extreme poverty in Brazil went from 13,4 million to 14,83 million, an increase of 11,2%.

We reiterate Mr. Alston's call for the IMF to adopt genuine changes in its institutional policies, to take seriously its impact on social protection and to diversify its perspective, which owes contributions and looks beyond the community formed in the elite universities of the United States and UK.

Thank you.