



**HRC56 – Annual full-day discussion on the human rights of women  
Panel 2: Human rights economy and women human rights**

**BENELUX Statement**

**(28 June 2024)**

Thank you, Mr. President.

This statement is on behalf of the Benelux: Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. We align with the EU statement.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact not only in terms of public health, but it also exposed profound inequalities. UN WOMEN warned early on that the pandemic had unleashed a serious increase in sexual and gender-based violence. Some governments resorted to austerity measures, despite a complete lack of evidence of their effectiveness and indeed much to suggest the contrary. Women and girls are among the hardest hit.

A Human Rights Economy places the economy at the service of human beings and not vice-versa: a systematic reprioritisation of macro-economic measures according to their contribution to the fulfilment of civil and political, and economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights would not only be in line with our obligations under international human rights law: it would also make perfect economic sense.

This requires placing women's and girls' rights and well-being at the centre of our economic, fiscal, and industrial policies and taking corrective measures to counterbalance gender inequalities and fight patriarchal stereotypes. It also means identifying and tackling multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, marginalisation, and exclusion in our societies.

We welcome the measures recommended by the panellists and would like to ask them if they see a correlation between anti-rights movements and regressive economic policies which disregard the principles of the human rights economy, and regression in women's and girls' rights.

Thank you.

(246 words - 1m30s)