**ESCR-Net Oral Intervention**: **General Statements**
***Monday, 26 October 2020 (10:00 – 13:00)***

Thank you, Chairperson, Greetings from Southeast Asia.

In the time since the last session of the IGWG, we have seen ongoing serious human rights violations against communities by corporations acting with impunity and sometimes with the protection of our governments.

In Southeast Asia and elsewhere, many governments continue to privilege the corporate elite and the wealthiest 1% in their COVID economic recovery packages. This is why in places like Yangon Myanmar, the urban poor have been driven to hunt for rats and snakes to feed their children because their livelihoods have not been protected.

This is why ESC-Net stresses that social movements and affected communities must be central to the Treaty process. Their lived experiences and demands for justice must resonate in the process and drafting of the LBI.

We warmly welcome some key improvements in the second revised draft Treaty such as stronger language on gender, human rights defenders, and victims. We urge states to maintain these improvements and do much more. We urge States and members of the IGWG to put aside the noise that continues to say that we must put profit above people as a pragmatic measure in response to COVID-19. We cannot afford to erode the lives and livelihoods of people because people continue to be central to environmental and economic sustainability.

This is why we urge you to listen to my colleague’s submissions with open hearts and open minds.

Thank you.