

**Oral Statement to the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, Pedro Arrojo Agudo, under Item 3 of the 51st session of the Human Rights Council**

*14 September 2022*

Thank you, Mr. President.

We welcome the report and thank the Special Rapporteur for highlighting the human rights concerns raised by treating water as an **economic good**. We support the Special Rapporteur's invitation to shift the paradigm towards an **ecosystem-based approach** that promotes the **sustainability of the water cycle** and is in line with Indigenous' peoples understanding of water as a **common good**.

This report is an important contribution to a current decisive debate on the increasing privatization of public services, including rural water and sanitation management. We join the Special Rapporteur's concern regarding such processes as it gives rise to specific human rights risks, including the availability, accessibility, quality, acceptability, and sustainability of water services.

Mr. President, we also emphasize the importance of the Guidelines on the Right to Water in Africa, launched by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, as these guidelines reassert the crucial need for States to ensure that water is managed and delivered in a non-commercial way, with public participation, for the public good.

We invite the Special Rapporteur to continue to call upon States to guarantee quality, transparent, gender-transformative, participatory, and democratically governed public services, including the provision and management of water and sanitation.

Thank you.

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