



**SIKH HUMAN RIGHTS GROUP**  
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## **45th Human Rights Council, September 2020**

### **ID with Special Rapporteur on Human Rights to safe drinking water and sanitation**

We thank the Special Rapporteur whose reports offer critical analysis after a decade since water and sanitation was recognised as a right. There is much to think and work on.

We sympathise with those who say that human rights simply represent pie-in-the-sky ideals. In this chamber there is a drive for ever increasing commitments to more human rights without reference to what is realistic on the ground.

On the basic issue of affordability, If human rights are fundamental, why is there a financial transaction involved in the enjoyment of right to safe drinking water and sanitation. Other fundamental rights are not financially transactional rights.

We feel that those below poverty line and those unable to afford should be provided with a minimum level of free safe water and sanitation throughout the world.

Secondly there needs to be emphasis on safe water. Groundwater in many places is polluted from excessive fertilisers and landfill sites making it medically unsafe.

Thirdly we don't see how States that pay a significant percentage of their GDP to service debt to international Banks and developed



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countries, are going to meet this development right without compromising on other rights. A reference to debt relief would have been welcome.

We agree with SR that more thinking is needed on accessibility and provision. We also suggest that rain water harvesting and provision of individual or shared portable water tanks could assist where piped water is difficult. Ref: A/HRC/45/10 & A/HRC/45/11