

**Speaking Points for the
Open Working Group Session on Human Rights, the Right to Development
and Global Governance
13.12.2013, New York**

Human Rights and Right to Development:

- If we truly do not want to leave anyone behind, human rights need to be the very foundation of the new agenda.
- A truly universal agenda applicable to all countries should build on the universality of human rights, respect for which is at the very core of human development. From a *human rights* perspective, poverty eradication and sustainable development for all is a matter of justice. A human rights vision is universal, based on the dignity and equality of all human beings, without discrimination, protected through strong and independent rule of law institutions.
- The MDGs were inspired by the values and principles of the Millennium Declaration (freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature) – values which are still fundamental today. We need to build on lessons learnt from the MDGs in order, for example, to tackle gender inequality and human rights violations against women and girls in all their dimensions.
- Yet, as has been stressed by many, the MDGs do not reflect the right-based development approach which includes protection against discrimination of any kind. Such an approach could better focus the Post 2015 agenda on people, on their expectations and needs, empowerment and well-being.
- Since human rights and sustainable development objectives are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, addressing human rights issues within the Post-2015 Agenda will be essential for truly sustainable development.
- We already have a good basis to draw from: The Rio+20 Outcome Document as well as the UN Millennium Declaration provide a good point of departure as they reaffirm the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development. The Rio+20 Outcome Document also includes special provisions on the rights of particular groups and integrates key elements of the human rights-based approach to sustainable development. In addition, we should build on the lessons learnt from the Agenda-21-process in order to reflect the interdependency of human rights and the social, economic and environmental conditions for sustainable development.
- A human rights-based approach includes civil and political rights and issues such as political participation, personal security and access to justice, which have been neglected in the implementation of the MDGs. Furthermore, human rights and existing international standards and principles are helpful in identifying goals, targets and indicators for measurement as we have a common set of key issues to focus on.
- Implementing and fulfilling the sexual and reproductive rights and health of adolescents, women and men to a healthy life is just as vital for sustainable development now as when the MDGs were agreed in 2000. Strengthening inclusive sexual and reproductive health services and gender sensitive comprehensive sexuality education are effective strategies to realize these rights.

- In this context, we are pleased that in the resolution on the human right to drinking water and sanitation adopted for the first time by consensus in the 3rd Committee of the General Assembly, all Member States agreed on the necessity to ensure an adequate place for the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation in the discussion and the design of the post-2015 development agenda.
- The right to development, as defined in the 1986 Resolution 41/128, implies and relies on the full realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It highlights the respect for human rights as a precondition to enable any person to assume responsibility for development and to enjoy it.
- Reference to human rights fosters accountability of duty-bearers and empowerment for right-holders. The post-2015 consultation processes yielded calls for mechanisms to ensure reporting, redress and accountability. Political, administrative, judicial, quasi-judicial and social accountability mechanisms are important to ensure that relevant institutions have clear responsibilities, are answerable for them, and are subject to enforceability when delivery fails. At local, national, regional and global levels, mechanisms can draw from and build on existing human rights mechanisms as well as experiences with participatory methodologies, and the involvement of civil society.
- Of course, the implementation of the post-2015 agenda will not be carried out by states alone. We need to take into account the integration of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights into the post 2015 agenda.
- The principles of equality and non-discrimination provide the basis to adequately prioritize resources to realize the human rights for all individuals. It is mandatory to ensure that those who are vulnerable and marginalized are now specifically targeted: on the basis of adequately disaggregated data, new resources must therefore be prioritized accordingly.
- Monitoring and accountability mechanisms need to be significantly improved compared to the MDG system and should ensure effective and meaningful participation of all stakeholders. Data availability and quality, especially if monitoring is to be in line with human rights standards and principles, remains an enormous challenge.

Global Governance:

- The world is facing increasing interdependences in the economic, social and environmental areas and security challenges. These global challenges call for a multilateral framework with enhanced transparency, effectiveness, coherence and reduced fragmentation as recommended in the Rio+20 Outcome Document.
- Global governance should be strengthened for improving international trade and financial systems, the environmental global governance or the shared management of natural resources. We would like to highlight a few measures which will be critical for creating a global favourable environment for sustainable development:
 - Food security won't be achieved if a number of governance issues at the international and at the country level, including the reduction of agricultural prices volatility, are not successfully addressed.
 - Domestic resource mobilization will remain limited and threatened if we don't collectively adopt stricter rules against tax evasion, illicit flows or tax heavens.
 - Water security will remain challenging if we don't promote shared management of water resources and better water quality.

- The new universal, intergovernmental, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, set up under the auspices of both the UN GA and the ECOSOC, is one important step towards a strengthened institutional framework for sustainable development and the post-2015 agenda. As envisioned by the UN Secretary General for its inaugural meeting, a strong HLPF “will take the international community in new directions, guide the UN system and hold it accountable”. It should: 1) promote policy coherence within the UN system; 2) integrate sustainable development in UN-system wide policies and programming; and 3) provide an opportunity for conducting regular reviews – in our view preferably a constructive mutual review amongst member states – on the follow-up and the implementation of sustainable development objectives in the context of the post-2015 agenda.
- The United Nations holds a central role in an inclusive and transparent multilateral system. It needs to work more efficiently and effectively. The international financial institutions and multilateral development banks are decisive actors for financial stability and for development. As such, they should integrate sustainable development into their work programs in accordance with their respective mandates.