

SDGs – Human rights, the right to development, global governance

December 13th, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will speak on behalf of Poland and Romania and would like to focus my intervention on some elements that are of particular importance to our countries. But firstly, allow me to associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the EU.

Mr. Chair,

Development will not deliver for the poorest and most marginalized people in the world without a strong focus on human rights. The post-2015 agenda needs to tackle discrimination, exclusion, and inequality, and guarantee the participation of poor people themselves in the development programs designed to help them. The future development agenda must be fully aligned with the existing human rights framework, reflecting its fundamental principles of universality, equality and non-discrimination. Human rights, as we all know, are internationally agreed legal obligations.

As agreed upon 20 years ago, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, “*democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing*”. This is more relevant today, as we are here to craft a meaningful development agenda. The Millennium Development Goals fell short in including the core values of human rights and good governance. As a result, there has been no incentive or accountability for national governments, bilateral donors, or international financial institutions to address inequality or discrimination in the current development agenda.

Human rights have emerged as a major theme from the UN-led process and debate to set a post-2015 development agenda. At the General Assembly special event and over the next year, it will be important to reinforce commitments to human rights where they exist and to further strengthen commitments to rights across the whole of the sustainable development agenda that would also strengthen accountability and transparency. The perspective of peace and security, good governance, rule of law and gender equality are of a particular importance in setting the future targets and goals.

“Leave no one behind”, a concept clearly drawn by the High Level Panel report, recognizes the need to address all human beings, without discrimination. It must prioritize the vulnerable / marginalized / disadvantaged groups and promote equality of opportunity between different groups. We would like to emphasize several elements linked to closing the gender gaps.

It is essential to include in the post-2015 development agenda a requirement for national governments and international donors to frame their approach to economic and social development with clear commitments to progressively realize human rights for all and with strengthened systems of participation, transparency and accountability. The human rights commitments should include plans for improving health, education, nutrition, water and sanitation, land and housing.

Mr. Chair,

2. (Gender equality and women empowerment)

Gender equality cuts across all social issues. Women's empowerment and gender equality, including elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, as well as a cross-cutting theme throughout the new agenda, with targets on a range of social, cultural, civil, economic and political rights.

Gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of global sustainable development is also about unleashing the enormous potential that women represent for the well-being of societies, but which, to a large extent, remains untapped because discrimination and unequal opportunities continue to be widespread. It is a process that needs women's expertise in designing it, in responding to challenges related to women, as well as, at a latter stage, in implementing it.

Women should be central players in the development of the post-2015 framework, but also central actors in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, decision-making participation at all levels must be ensured.

The most important aspects related with gender perspective are the following: the violence against women and children's rights; the fight against poverty; access for all of a health systems; education for vulnerable groups. On all these aspects, targets and indicators are already available and they should be adequately integrated in the post 2015 agenda.

Mr. Chair,

3. (Good governance and anti-corruption)

The 10th goal of the HLP report focuses on good governance. There is no single definition of "good governance", but there is a high degree of consensus that good governance relates to political and institutional processes and outcomes serving the purposes of development.

The resolution 2000/64 of the former Commission on Human Rights explicitly linked good governance to an enabling environment, conducive to the enjoyment of human rights and "prompting growth and sustainable human development". The links between good governance, human rights and development can be organized around four areas: democratic institutions, service delivery, rule of law and anti-corruption. We continue to see the relevance of these connections, today, during our debates on the post 2015 development agenda.

Referring to the relationship between good governance and anticorruption, it is important to remind that no developed or developing country is free from corruption. Corruption's pervasive effect transcends the political, economic and social spheres of the communities and spreads like a virus in the global world of today.

Corruption undermines development, prosperity, democracy, justice, rule of law, environment, health, education. There is no doubt that no development goals can be achieved without fighting corrupt practices and setting the conditions for a healthy governance and society. We cannot envisage a post-2015 agenda without anti-corruption measures and good governance.

We would like to see reflected in the post-2015 Development agenda targets of eliminating corruption worldwide, in an inclusive manner with coordinated efforts by all stakeholders, including the civil society.

The agenda should also include measurable targets and indicators, building upon the policies adopted at national/regional level, their implementation, as well as collection and disaggregation of data.

We all recognize the interdependence between democratic governance, respect for human rights as essential elements conducive to sustainable development, in a peaceful environment. It is an equation governments have to solve. From this perspective, post 2015 development agenda debate provides an opportunity to discuss and decide upon goals, targets and indicators aiming to the well-being of the Citizen.

I thank you, Mr. Chair!