Conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and promotion of durable peace, rule of law and governance

Statement on behalf of France, Germany and Switzerland

Delivered by Ambassador Michael Gerber, Switzerland

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Mr Co-chair,

Honorable delegates,

I am speaking on behalf of France, Germany and my own country, Switzerland.

First of all, we would like to thank the Technical Support Team for the informative issue briefs. These briefs highlight the many interlinkages between peace, safe societies, governance, and respect for the rule of law with all three dimensions of sustainable development. These interlinkages are also recognised in Rio Principle 25. Conflict, violence and fragile situations as well as natural disasters undermine development prospects and lead to impoverishment. In turn, they are often rooted in development deficits: in particular in the lack of social justice, impunity, exclusion, poverty as well as lack of protection and mismanagement of the natural resources base.

By 2015, more than 50 per cent of the global population living in extreme poverty will reside in places affected by conflict and/or chronic violence. Fragile and conflict affected states still seriously lag behind on most MDGs. For every year a country is affected by major violence, poverty reduction lags significantly behind. This affects a total of 1.5 billion of the world's population.

Peace and Governance have repeatedly been identified as top priorities for sustainable development, whether it be by the citizens of the world in the global consultations conducted by the UN Development Group, the High Level Panel of

Eminent Persons, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network or the Rio+20 Outcome Document.

The Post-2015 framework should help channel resources to tackle root causes of poverty and vulnerability, the main obstacles to sustainable development, by furthering social justice and inclusion and thereby strengthening resilience of societies. It should address aspects of peace and safe societies in a way that reflects both the relevant aspects of institution-building as well as issues related to the personal safety and freedom of people, including combating violence, while also recognizing the cross-cutting character of these issues.

What does this concretely mean? It means, for instance, that the new framework should help to create a world in which **children** can grow up in a safe and secure environment, so they can walk to school without fear. A world in which **women** do not fear to go and fetch water even if it is a long distance from their community. A world **in which investment** is not hindered out of fear of violence and volatile situations. A world in which natural resources that ensure people's livelihoods are not being polluted, destroyed or simply not taken care of due to conflict or a lack of appropriate and functional institutions.

Experience has shown that development efforts, are most effective when channeled through **national and local institutions** that act in accordance with the principles of governance, peacebuilding and statebuilding, and promote civil society participation through **inclusive political and negotiation processes**. By doing so, they can address sources of recurring violence, build social cohesion and help address tensions and grievances. Inclusive participation in these processes is essential to ensure the common good is taken into consideration. **Inclusive, accountable and effective institutions** are important aspects of dealing with the past and preventing countries relapsing into conflict or violence.

Public affairs should be well-conducted, inclusive, sustainable and contribute to the reduction of poverty, while based on the principles of participation, accountability and transparency. The rule of law provides a framework that underlies the social contract between people and public authorities, ensuring that the country's resources are channeled toward shared prosperity and thus represents a major contributing factor to the sustainability of development efforts. This was also stated in the declaration of the General Assembly's High-level Meetingon the Rule of Law at the National and

International Levels in 2012. The importance of the rule of law in ensuring commercial relations for economic growth must also be considered.

It is generally recognized that one reason for slow progress in realizing the MDGs by 2015 is that the MDG agenda did not incorporate important central aspects of peace, safe societies, **governance** and **the rule of law**. To redress this, the Post-2015 agenda should prominently reflect these issues, and should, in particular include **targets on:** effective participation in public affairs; freedom of expression and freedom of opinion; freedom of assembly and association; effective, inclusive accountable and transparent public and private institutions and process at all levels; peoples' effective participation and empowerment; rule of law and equal access to effective justice; reduction of violence; restoring trust in public institutions to protect people and resolve conflicts peacefully; increasing disaster risk management capacities.

To complement enabling conditions for sustainable development, we propose also to prominently address **global governance challenges** linked to addressing issues such as organized crime, proliferation of arms, illicit financial flows, tax evasion and tax flight, and governance of natural resources.

Mr Co-chair,

An unwritten rule stipulates that "what can be measured gets done". Over the last decade, there have been major improvements in data availability and methods of measurement in the fields of governance, the rule of law, fragility, violence, conflict and human rights at both national and international level. Recent reports reinforced the message that progress towards building peace and safe societies as well as rule of law and governance should and can be measured. Basic standard methodologies and data collection methods are available and are being used. Various existing initiatives and efforts by international and regional actors prove that finding goals, targets and indicators for measuring progress on building peace and safe societies as well as improvement in good governance is possible and already ongoing at various levels.

Mr Co-Chair, not only is it <u>possible</u> to include peace, safe societies, governance and the rule of law in a goal framework, but it <u>must be done</u> if we are to achieve sustainable development.

Thank you.