



**Intervention on behalf of Denmark, Norway and Ireland on the occasion of the
Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals meeting on**

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

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Check against delivery

Thank you Mr. Chair

I am speaking on behalf of Ireland, Norway and my own country Denmark.

Conflict, violence and instability are among the most powerful impediments to global development, including tangible progress on the MDGs. Their drivers and impacts are universal and immensely severe. The post-2015 framework offers a new opportunity to put sustainable peace at the heart of the global development agenda. If the international community is serious about eliminating extreme poverty in our time, this opportunity must be seized. This is essential to ensure that all people, and especially the most vulnerable, have peace, security and justice, that they are supported by inclusive politics and accountable institutions and are protected and free from conflict, inequality and violence and the consequences of weak governance.

There is momentum in these efforts. The report of the Secretary General's High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda recognizes that *"building peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all"* is one of the necessary transformative shifts that must be embedded in a new global framework. Moreover, the declaration of the high level meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law, adopted by consensus in September 2012, recognised that the rule of law and development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

We know that conflict-affected states face unique and immense challenges in overcoming poverty and as a result are struggling to meet the targets of the MDGs. This is especially true for many African countries, something that is highlighted in the just released report from the African Development Bank's High Level Panel on Fragile States led by President Johnson-Sirleaf. If this bleak state of affairs does not change dramatically, it is estimated that by 2025 about 80 % of the world's poorest people will live in conflict affected areas.

At the global level, we know that conflict, instability and violence undermine development, just as inadequate or insufficiently conflict-sensitive development can help spur instability and violent conflict. Even stable countries may see their development gains eroded by their conflict-affected neighbours due to spill-over effects. Similarly, post-conflict development must consciously rebuild damaged relationships between groups or between the state and its people as it also rebuilds institutions and infrastructure. This has been achieved in many countries, including our own.

No single country can take effective action by itself against, for example, the illicit arms trade, transnational organized crime, human trafficking or money laundering, let alone the impact of global financial shocks or climate change. Collective action is needed at the global level to address these dynamics and to help countries overcome their negative impact.

We know that exit from violent conflict is hard, but possible. Strengthening the "social contract" between the state and its people can

contribute greatly to promoting stability. A crucial part of this agenda is ensuring that there are inclusive and effective political settlements and institutions that deliver security, justice, respect for human rights, social services and jobs.

We know that violence is preventable, not inevitable, and that investing in conflict prevention can accelerate overall economic development.

The rule of law, justice for all and an independent judiciary are a powerful means to address inequality and affect the redistribution of economic, social and political influence and opportunities. Good governance through effective, transparent accountable and representative institutions is essential for sustainable development.

Women remain the single greatest under-utilised resource in more effective peacemaking and peace building. Experience shows that empowering women and supporting their full and active participation in peace-related, political and economic decision making can lead to more inclusive and sustainable peace.

In order to give these important factors the attention they need in the new post 2015 framework we need to have clear goals, targets and indicators which will assist each country track its own progress. These issues are measurable as many national examples have already shown. Core elements in effective measurement are access to data with continual effort to improve data quality

Many member states have recognised the horrific impact of armed violence on human development. The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence is a declaration signed by over 100 member states and contains a commitment to address armed violence as a critical element of overall development. The g7+ Group of Conflict-affected and Fragile States, the Pacific Island Countries and the group of Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP) last year highlighted these critical issues in the outcome document of the Dili Conference on Post 2015. And in September last year Somalia adopted a “The Somali New Deal Compact” – which uses 5 peace and state-building goals as a framework for bringing this conflict and violence torn country on a path towards sustainable peace, resilience and prosperity.

Mr. Chair,

This agenda is universally relevant as violence, crime and conflict has and continues to affect countries at all levels of economic development in all regions. The absence of violence and instability is important for every society.

To address drivers of conflict, violence and instability effectively, the post-2015 framework also needs to mainstream emphasis on non-discrimination and equality, transparency and participation and the inclusion of all groups in the community.

In conclusion therefore, we strongly believe that the SDG Framework needs to effectively seek peaceful and stable societies and to integrate the rule of law and governance within the structure of goals and targets.

I thank you Chair