

His Excellency, Mr Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations
Executive Office of the Secretary General of the UN
UN Headquarters
New York, NY, 10017

03 December 2015

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

With the recent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we are at an historic global moment. We come to you in this spirit to deepen and consolidate the positive dialogue and engagement built over the past three years between all stakeholders, including civil society, and millions of people around the world.

As a group of international civil society organizations, working in over 100 countries on economic, social and environmental issues, we welcome the opportunity to support you in your role as Secretary-General to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. We pledge that we will be part of these efforts to ensure accountability, sustainable development, respect for human rights, space for civil society's voice, and that no one is left behind.

As you finalise your upcoming report "for consideration at the seventieth session of the General Assembly in preparation for the 2016 meeting of the HLPF" we would like to highlight in advance of the planned consultation the following key points with a view to furthering inclusiveness, accessibility and efficiency:

Accountability: Achieving the effective implementation of the SDGs will depend on the creation of a strong universal accountability framework. It will be essential for citizens to monitor progress and hold their governments to account for the implementation of the SDGs in a transparent and participatory way. The accountability architecture must be people-centred and must enable the effective engagement of citizens, with a special focus on vulnerable and marginalised groups, at local, national, regional and international levels. The SDGs accountability framework should also operate in synergy with and integrate existing international and regional human rights reporting mechanisms.

Integration: Throughout the discussions and decisions on the 2030 Agenda, the principle of integration was a key priority for member states and civil society. We believe it is essential that the principle of integration is a driving factor in the development and design of programmatic and policy approaches and funding for the implementation of the agenda at the local, national, regional, global and thematic levels.

Indicators: In order to give effect to the human rights content and promise of the SDGs, it will be necessary to ensure the indicators chosen for monitoring (at the global and national

levels) reflect human rights principles and priorities. Indicators should draw upon and reinforce existing human rights treaty obligations. Structural indicators such as ratification of human rights treaties, the existence or adoption of certain laws and policy frameworks will also be relevant for many targets and should be included. As such, it is essential that indicators measure not only the most accessible elements of each target, but also monitor progress on the more difficult aspects, such as equality of access and outcomes. It is also important that indicators demonstrate all three dimensions of sustainable development – social, environmental and economic and that civil society are deeply engaged in the process of designing them and tracking progress.

Data: There is a need to collect data that represents the lived experiences of those whom the Agenda aims to benefit. In particular, appropriate disaggregation will be necessary to ensure the most vulnerable are not left behind in addition to targeted policies and programs to meet the ambition set out in the agenda. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group (IAEG), tasked to select indicators, must ensure disaggregation is made priority. The UN family of agencies must work to ensure that the resources are available to make disaggregated data a reality.

Participation: Civil society has played an active role in the design and development of the SDGs and should continue to be involved in the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. There are many organizations, particularly within civil society, which are already gathering reliable and globally used data on issues relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals ('SDGs') Agenda. These organizations must be included in processes to develop and gather data, both with and alongside governments, if the global community wishes to meet the data requirements set out by the SDGs Agenda.

Civil society space: The significant contribution of civil society has been recognised on several occasions in UN Human Rights Council Resolutions, including Resolution A/HRC/27/L.24 which noted the *"crucial importance of the active involvement of civil society, at all levels, in processes of governance and in promoting good governance, including through transparency and accountability, at all levels, which is indispensable for building peaceful, prosperous and democratic societies"*. As such, States should create and maintain, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment in which civil society can operate free from hindrance and insecurity, as set out in Goal 16. Without the protection of civil society's right and the space to exercise it, Goal 16 and all the SDGs will be compromised.

Representation: One very concrete challenge that civil society encounters in multilateral discussions is the presumption that we speak with one voice – when, in reality, we represent different aspects of the 2030 Agenda and this diversity of views needs to be heard. This could be achieved through a more transparent process of selecting representatives from a broad range of different actors, ensuring gender equality, including boys, girls, and youth. We aim to bring to the fore the voices of the most excluded (including those of people with disabilities, older people, children, young people and other vulnerable and marginalised groups), as well as those from the grass-roots communities, and welcome the UN's commitment to realising this. However, we note that there are some procedural obstacles which could hinder the full realisation of this vision. As such, we call for these procedural barriers (e.g. language, age-related, meeting locations, accessibility, travel funding, engagement channels) to be removed so that the UN is truly a people-friendly space in this new era of inclusion and accessibility.

Coordination: It is important that the implementation actions taken under the 2030 agenda do not become fragmented and competitive. We call for a collaborative and cohesive UN response with an umbrella overview coordinated with strategic oversight by the Secretary General's office.

We look forward to your leadership during this important period and in using the current momentum. We are here, as organizations and through the post-2015 CSO platforms, to support you and all the countries that have joined the "call to action" to actively implement the 2030 Agenda over the coming months and years.

We look forward to your response and to further exchanges on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Let us work together to ensure the principles of the SDGs are delivered: accountability, respect for human rights, integration, space for civil society's voice and that no-one is left behind.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Duffy, President



Colm O Cuanachain, for Salil Shetty, Secretary General



Muhammad Musa, Executive Director



Wolfgang Jamann, Secretary General and CEO



Michel Roy, Secretary General



Dave McComiskey, President



Meg Gardinier, Secretary General



Danny Sriskandarajah, Secretary General

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Kumi Naidoo, Executive Director



Jonathan Reckford, CEO



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Tewodros Melesse, Director-General



Mohamed Ashmawey, CEO



Anne-Birgitte Albrectsen, CEO



Caroline Harper, CEO

Terre des Hommes
International Federation

Ignacio Packer, Secretary General



Cobus de Swardt, Managing Director



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Philip' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish.

Philip Goodwin, Chief Executive



World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Anita' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish.

Anita Tiessen, CEO



World YWCA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish.

Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, General Secretary



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Marco Lambertini' followed by a stylized, cursive flourish.

Marco Lambertini, Director General