

## Major Groups

## Beyond 2015

## Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)

H.E. Mr. Macharia Kamau  
Permanent Representative  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. David Donoghue  
Permanent Representative  
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations

### **REF: Ensuring inclusion of Major Groups and other stakeholders in the Post-2015 Development Agenda Summit and associated preparatory process.**

10 December 2014

Your Excellencies:

We have just received a copy of your letter of 8 December 2014 addressed to all Permanent Representatives and Observers. We note with concern that the text of a Draft Decision on modalities states, "(a) the intergovernmental negotiations will be open, transparent and inclusive and guided by the rules of procedure and established practices of the General Assembly."

During this last month we have each addressed letters to you that call upon strong stakeholder participation in the preparatory process of the post-2015 agenda, that invites "*parliamentarians, academia, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, Major Groups and the private sector, to participate in the Summit, including in its interactive dialogues and preparatory process...*" as stated in paragraph 8 of the Summit draft resolution.

Stakeholders played an important and active role in the Open Working Group sessions, and we applaud the co-chairs of the OWG who remained committed to an open, transparent process that ensured the inclusion of Major Groups and other stakeholders. We believe that the procedures adopted by the OWG established an important precedent, as a working group established and guided by the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. As a consequence the OWG proposal enjoys the widespread support of both Member States as well as the other stakeholders who engaged the consultations as "*the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda.*"

Therefore, we would suggest the following language to be considered for the Draft Decision on modalities: *Decides: That the participation of civil society, Major Groups*

*and other stakeholders in the intergovernmental negotiations will follow the practice established in the OWG on SDGs.*

UN Summit Conferences have increasingly allowed for the active participation of stakeholders from diverse sectors of non-state actors. The earlier UN General Assembly Special Sessions (UNGASS), utilized, inter alia, during the Rio+5 (1997)<sup>1</sup> and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, WSSD (2002), are examples of processes allowing non-state actors significant participation at UNGA level in the preparations for the Special Session as well as in the Session itself. These UNGASS processes utilized the modalities that at the time were employed by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and now incorporated in the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). The Rio+20 process is a recent example of how flexibly a procedural system can be structured -- and with more than 100 state leaders having participated -- the Rio+20 Process must be seen as a crowning example of an intergovernmental summit process.

The Post-2015 process offers a unique opportunity to continue to involve stakeholders at all levels as the SDGs will decide major priorities and process work of the UN well into the next two decades. As has been pointed out in other UN General Assembly documents, such as the Millennium Declaration<sup>2</sup> and the 2005 World Summit Outcome<sup>3</sup> - all documents crafted with the active participation of accredited members of major groups and civil society in the official process - members of major groups and civil society are crucial in the implementation of UN decisions in the field. Participation creates ownership and ownership guarantees successful implementation. If the world wants to see a successful implementation of the SDGs in the future with effective eradication of poverty and building of sustainable societies, members of major groups and civil society must be included in the negotiation of the goals at all levels.

We respectfully wish to bring to your prompt attention the rationale and proposals offer in the letter of 8 May 2014 co-signed by the 9 Major Groups, Beyond 2015 and Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) addressed to the President of the General Assembly and co-facilitators of the draft Summit Resolution, as follows:

*"In the spirit of contributing to a successful agreement on the SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, with an ensuing active involvement of Major Groups and other stakeholders in their implementation, we would propose the following:*

---

<sup>1</sup> A/RES/51/181 of 20 January 1997 "Recognizes the important contributions made by major groups, including non-governmental organizations, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the implementation of its recommendations, and the need for their effective participation in preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements, taking into account the practice and experience gained at the Conference, for their substantive contributions to and active involvement in the preparatory meetings and the special session, and in that context invites the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for the effective involvement of major groups in the special session;"

<sup>2</sup> A/RES/55/2 of 18 September 2000

<sup>3</sup> A/RES/60/1 of 24 October 2005

- *That stakeholder engagement for the Post-2015 Summit and the associated preparatory process must obey the principle of non-regression, and therefore should, at a minimum, adopt the procedures for the MDG Review Summits and the Rio+20 Conference, and enriched by best practices elsewhere;*
- *That the specific modalities to be used are based on the privileges and rights agreed and allowed for in UNGA resolution A/67/290, establishing the HLPF.*
- *That the UN should ensure adequate and varied stakeholder representation in the Summit. At a minimum, those organisations that were accredited to the 2013 Special Event and Rio+20 should be allowed to be accredited again. Recognizing the universality of this agenda, accreditation should not be limited to ECOSOC accredited organisations*
- *That stakeholder hearings should be organised in advance of the Summit to encourage Major Groups and other stakeholder participation. Results of these hearings should be offered as an official input to Member States in advance of the Summit. Similar sessions were held at previous MDGs Summits."*

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to consult on ways to ensure the inclusion of Major Groups and other stakeholders in the preparatory process leading up to the Summit. We thank you in advance for your prompt consideration and wish you every success in reaching a consensus on the modalities that will honor the commitment made by Member States at Rio+20 to ensure an open, inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process.

Sincerely yours,

**Major Groups:** Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous Peoples, NGOs, Workers and Trade Unions

**Beyond 2015**

**Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)**

cc: President of the General Assembly