

**MEETING OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
May 5-9, 2014**

**Statement on behalf of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia
delivered by Mr Jānis Mažeiks, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia**

**on Means of Implementation/Global Partnership for sustainable development
and on Peaceful and non-violent societies, rule of law and capable institutions**

I have the honor to speak on behalf of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. We would like to thank the co-chairs for further elaboration of these two focus areas. Latvia is convinced that a global partnership and good governance at all levels are crucially important for achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia fully align ourselves with the statement of the European Union and would like to make the following remarks in our national capacity:

On the focus area of Means of implementation, we would like to highlight that the concept of 'means of implementation' is inherently different from all other focus areas discussed, though crucial for the whole framework. The work on this issue should take full account of the work of the ICESDF. It should be built on the national responsibility and leadership at the country level and create an enabling environment for the inclusion of all potential partners to ensure sustainable development.

Rule of law is important at both international and national levels and is relevant for the sustainable development of any society. For the reasons explained during the last session of the Group, we strongly believe that, while keeping interlinkages, **peaceful and stable societies**, on the one hand, **and good governance, the rule of law and effective institutions**, on the other hand, **should be addressed as two separate goals in the new agenda.**

At the same time **we see scope for merging substantively related focus areas** to formulate a limited number of goals - **while maintaining all relevant targets**. For example, the current **focus areas 13** (marine resources) **and 14** (ecosystems and biodiversity) **could be merged, as well as the targets under current focus area 9** (industrialization) **could be mainstreamed under focus areas 8** (economic growth, employment and infrastructure) **and 11** (sustainable consumption and infrastructure).

Under focus area "Rule of Law, capable institutions", we particularly support the targets on effective, accountable and transparent institutions and decrease of corruption, as well as on providing public services for all. We would also like to make some additional suggestions.

1. We support target on **inclusive and participatory decision-making**. In addition, we would like to explicitly mention the **engagement of civil society, youth, academia and private sector** in decision-making processes. Youth of today will be the major beneficiaries of a new framework and will be responsible for elaboration of a new sustainable framework after 2030.
2. A separate target should address **strengthening local participatory governance**. Local level actors are closest to the people, therefore properly addressing participatory governance and effectiveness of institutions at local level will facilitate the involvement of civil society and marginalized groups. This target has also interlinkages with sustainable cities and human settlements, climate change and disaster risk reduction.
3. We are convinced that promoting **participation of women in decision-making processes, as well as addressing women's justice and security concerns** is an inseparable part of both building peaceful and inclusive societies and promoting the rule of law. Therefore proper interlinkages should be reflected **with the Focus area 5** on Gender equality.
4. We also highly support **target on reducing crime, violence and exploitation**, particularly of children and women.
5. We consider **accountability and fight against impunity** essential for strengthening good governance and the rule of law at both national and international level, and would like to see those as possible targets.
6. The realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms lies at the core of wellbeing of in every society. However, these rights cannot be realized if **justice system** is not able to adequately address human rights violations and provide remedies. Therefore we suggest that target b) on justice systems should state "independent, **effective** and responsive justice systems" We call for restoring the previous wording of target b) to include not only property and tenure rights, but also human rights and gender equality.
7. We believe that **freedom of speech and association, as well as access to independent information and media, including social media and Internet**, are integral parts of good governance and the rule of law and should be reflected in the targets in a comprehensive manner. **Transparency of public institutions and improved access to the information** and data owned by those institutions is important not only in the financial aspect; therefore we suggest adding these elements in target d). We also suggest to reformulate target f) under focus area "Rule of law, capable institutions" as follows: "**Ensure freedom of speech and association, as well as access to independent information and media, including social media and Internet.**"

We thank the co-chairs for their work and thank you for your attention and the fruitful discussions during this session.