

**Open-Working Group on
Sustainable Development Goals
10th Meeting**

**Peaceful and non-violent societies
Rule of Law and
capable institutions**

I have the honor to intervene on behalf of **Croatia and Bulgaria**

As we have agreed in Rio+20, sustainable development must be inclusive and people-centred, the post 2015 development agenda should involve all people, including youth and children. This requires a rights-based approach in developing the post-2015 framework. **Human rights** are not explicitly mentioned in the program of work for today but we find them relevant to this discussion and I would ask for your indulgence to say few words in this regard.

One of the major challenges we meet today is the issue of inequalities. In most cases they were born as a result of denied civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. They are among the reasons for reduced and unbalanced economic growth, social unrest as well as conflict. By ensuring human rights for all, including right to quality education, social protection, health care, as well as productive and remunerative employment opportunities etc., the post-2015 development agenda would provide equal opportunities for all – men, women, girls and boys. Thus, achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is essential.

Another aspect that Bulgaria and Croatia would like to underline is the importance of inclusion of the social rights and social equity in the post-2015 development agenda. It requires that vulnerable groups obtain equitable access to opportunities, basic services and participation in social, economic and political life. In this regard, persons with disabilities, as well as children, merit particular attention.

Having said that I would like to underline that our two countries consider the **human rights-based approach** across focus areas essential for the elaboration of post-2015 development agenda, in particular of the Sustainable Development Goals. That is why we already proposed number of targets under all areas we think could be standalone goals. We see targets in following action areas as:

- Ensuring access to public services, justice and participation in political and economic life, and ending discrimination and inequalities in public service delivery on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, national origin, and social or other status.

- Prevention and elimination of all violence against individuals, especially women and children.

Good governance.

Participation, transparency, accountability, respect for human rights and the rule of law are fundamental elements of democratic governance. They allow the full involvement of people in decision-making process, lead the fight against corruption, discrimination and inequality, and ensure the proper management and equal access to basic services and goods. The accountable and transparent institutions, guided by human rights and the rule of law are the ones that will make the peaceful, equitable and sustainable development possible.

Bulgaria and Croatia believe that those issues can be considered together as a standalone goal and also as targets of other relevant goals. We see as possible targets the following areas of action:

- need to strengthen effective oversight mechanisms;
- transparent institutions, in order to achieve higher level of institutions' accountability and efficiency, as well as to strengthen the fight against corruption;
- ensure that people enjoy freedom of speech, association, and peaceful protest and access to independent media and information;
- ensure inclusive, participatory political decision-making

Peaceful societies.

Mr. Co-chair, we had a broad discussion on the issue of the importance and the impact that the peace has with regard to development. It is not my intension to repeat what was already said but just would like to underline the following.

It is beyond doubt that in societies suffering from violence, even more in those in conflict or emerging from it, the development is not possible. Moreover, the lack of development itself can lead to new and lingering conflicts and instabilities, which as we already said are indeed among major impediments to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

In violence stricken societies it is certainly much harder to manage the natural resources and to build resilience to natural disasters. Violence stricken societies are more likely to have undernourished people, people without access to basic public services, people that are not able or allowed to participate in the economic and political life of their countries. In violence stricken societies there is no personal

security, there are women and girls sexually abused, there are children undernourished, not attending school, physically abused or forced to become working force or even soldiers. That is why if we are serious when we say “leave no one behind” Bulgaria and Croatia believe we need to have a standalone goal on peaceful societies with targets in following action areas:

- reducing violent deaths;
- strengthening the rule of law at all levels, including building accessible justice institutions;
- reducing violence, abuse, exploitation against women, girls and children;
- reducing organized crime and illicit trafficking in human beings, arms, drugs and other nationally and internationally prohibited goods
- promoting information and education on a culture of non-violence