

2<sup>nd</sup> High Level Political Forum On Sustainable Development  
July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014  
United Nations, New York

## **Toward a Future Agenda for the HLPF On Sustainable Development**

Your Honor, Excellencies, Respected Members of the Forum,

My name is Ashwani Vasishth, and I am here today to represent a grassroots collaborative effort called the People's Sustainability Treaties.

The People's Sustainability Treaties process is based on the proposition that Nation-States are necessary but insufficient to the enterprise of establishing a system of global governance, one that is capable of guiding us, collectively, toward a more sustainable future. More details on the Treaties can be found at <http://sustainabilitytreaties.org>.

The purpose of this session is to set an agenda for the HLPF, going forward. In that light, and to establish some anchors for this agenda setting.

There are three contextual points I would like to make:

The HLPF needs to take account of capital, and thus of capitalism, in more complex ways than we currently do. It is imperative that we keep in mind the fact that Natural Capital is becoming increasingly scarce; Social and Human Capital is increasingly at risk; while Man-made Capital is certainly abundant, if unevenly distributed.

The HLPF needs to take account of both intergenerational equity AND intragenerational equity—we need to care about fairness, both in the future and in the present. We need to make sure that whatever decision structures are put in place to promote a more sustainable form of development, these structures must make room for indigenous peoples and for the very poor.

The HLPF needs to take account of the growing realization that global society today requires a system of governance that is far more participatory and a protocol for making societal choices that is firmly grounded in the principle of subsidiarity—all decisions MUST devolve to the most local level at which they can effectively be made.

The reason we are in this room today, and the reason we have been working together for the past twenty seven years—at least since the Brundtland Commission Report was issued in 1987—is because we have recognized that the way societal decisions are currently made is strictly unsustainable.

Then there is in fact one simple test for the success of the HLPF process—either the ways in which societal decisions get made will actually be changed, away from the power-brokers and the lobbyists, and toward the disempowered people of the world, showing that the HLPF process has succeeded. Or it will not.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you.