

Statement of Iceland for the discussion on the Declaration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Wednesday 18 February 2015

Ms. Anna Pála Sverrisdóttir, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Co-facilitators, as this is the first time I take the floor during these negotiations, allow me to express my admiration for your tireless efforts. All of us must now work together to shape the future we want, leaving no one behind.

I would like to indicate our alignment with the statement delivered by Suriname on gender equality and of Austria on the rule of law.

Co-facilitators.

Getting the Declaration right is hugely important - it will be the poster for the Post-2015 Agenda – the document which the world's public will look to in order to understand what we are trying to achieve. Iceland believes that the elements paper distributed by the co-facilitators is a good basis for discussing the declaration. We would like to see a revised version at later stages of this session, not a zero draft.

The Declaration should be a concise and communicable document that inspires action. It should lift our heads from our feet to the horizon. As a number of colleagues have suggested, we should have the courage to go beyond agreed language where necessary.

“The tomorrow we want” part, as it is referred to in the elements paper, must set out in crystal clear, strong language our common vision. We must make clear we are committed to **freeing humanity from poverty and hunger**. Respect for **all human rights, including gender equality**, should not just be referred to as the means to an end at the end of the declaration, but as an essential part of the vision itself.

Moving on to the “What we must do to get there” section, we believe it is necessary to identify some key elements which will achieve the headline goal of eradicating poverty and hunger. **Sustainable management of natural resources** must figure under this heading. As the world's population can only be fed from the land or the oceans, the necessity of sustainable management of both should be clearly stated.

[We ask delegates to keep in mind that all too often **sustainable fisheries** are overlooked as a vital component of food security, complementing in that regard sustainable agriculture. Fisheries are a vital source of food security and nutrition for many, not least vulnerable coastal communities, as well as small island developing states.

Sustainable land management and restoration of ecosystems are urgent to secure food and water security, as well as mitigating global change.]

Co-facilitators, the elements paper mentions the need to address structural drivers of unsustainable development. Given all the knowledge mankind now has on the destructive effects of the fossil fuel economy, the declaration must not fail to mention the obvious need for a [shift from fossil fuels](#) to **renewable energy** as well as energy efficiency. Let us remember that without environmental sustainability there will be no end to poverty and hunger. In the Declaration there should be a conceptual link to COP21 in Paris.

Last but not least, co-facilitators, a few comments on human dignity and wellbeing. On our road to dignity, we must commit to respect all human rights, everywhere. Women and girls are still disproportionately and systematically deprived of their rights. They must therefore be at the center of our declaration. The declaration must integrate a gender perspective and clearly state that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential to achieving our common goals.

Inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities is also a matter of human dignity, as is addressing nervous system injuries.

We look forward to seeing a strong, political declaration that helps us realize the potential of universal Sustainable Development Goals.