

## Statement Interactive Hearing Post-2015 - 26 May 2015

Your Excellencies,

It is an honour to participate in this interactive hearing, and we appreciate the opportunity provided to Amnesty International to share some thoughts.

The world is experiencing troubling times. Every day, we hear news about large numbers of people leaving their homes in search of better futures – they are seeking to escape poverty, conflict, discrimination or loss of livelihoods due to man-made or natural disasters. We know of unsound business practices, of labour exploitation and unsafe working conditions, and are shaken by tragic events such as factories collapsing and killing the workers within. Irreversible damage is caused by large-scale development projects and extractive industries, which often prioritise profit over people and the environment. Significant resources - both natural and financial - are being syphoned off, instead of benefitting the people living in the area. We hear of land grabbing, forced evictions and of indigenous peoples being pushed off their traditional lands. Our climate is rapidly changing, putting large numbers of people, communities and entire countries in peril. Women in all parts of the world continue to struggle for full equality. And in every country, there are specific minorities or groups of individuals who continue to face exclusion and systemic barriers to having their rights respected.

Ladies and gentlemen - all of the above are issues of human rights and dignity, and deserve your immediate attention as you are finalizing the post-2015 agenda and proceeding to its implementation.

Let us be clear: We are all in the same boat, and our futures are inextricably linked like never before. Actions – or lack thereof - in one part of the world generate positive and negative consequences on the lives and livelihoods in other parts of the world. Through the important discussions here in New York, you have an historic opportunity to rise above your national interests, to break free from silos, and to approach our common future from a universal and integrated perspective. As Member States united under the UN Charter, I encourage you to honour your commitment “to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.” (Article 1.3 UN Charter)

As we steer this boat we are all in towards a sustainable future, human rights must be our guiding star. Human rights instruments and mechanisms – including the treaty bodies and special procedures – have developed a wealth of wisdom on how States can improve the implementation of their obligations flowing from the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and human rights instruments. Please make use of this advice as you implement the SDGs!

Your Excellencies,

I appeal to you to ensure that the following key elements are included as cornerstones in the future development framework and implementation thereof:

- **Participation:** CSOs and social movements are key to the success of this agenda. We call on States to respect the rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association, and to ensure an enabling environment, including for community representatives, human rights defenders and journalists.

- **Address inequalities, including by collecting disaggregated data:** This is key to understand whether progress is made with respect to all individuals and communities, especially for the most marginalized in our societies.
- **Urgency:** Commit to make progress against agreed time frames, whilst also recognising that States have a number of immediate obligations under international law that must be complied with.
- **Accountability at national level:** Deliver on your promises to the people under your jurisdiction, take their views into account, and work with them to ensure that you deliver results to those who need it the most. Ensure that institutions at the national level - such as parliamentary bodies, national human rights commissions, quasi-judicial bodies and audit institutions - are involved in assessing strategies, policies and programmes as part of the national reporting cycle.
- **Review beyond borders:** Acknowledge the need to examine the transnational consequences of state policies and practices, which directly or indirectly impact the delivery of the SDGs and means of implementation. This includes areas of tax justice, development aid and assistance, trade and the environment.
- **Accountability and follow-up at regional and global level:** This is not a matter of finger-pointing, but entails a discussion about areas that require further attention, where more assistance and cooperation are required, and where renewed efforts are needed to address challenges faced by States in collectively meeting the global aspirations.

Your Excellencies,

It is in your hands to connect the dots, and to take effective action to make sure that we together can truly deliver on the promise of leaving no one individual and no country behind - a future in which every human being can live in dignity and full respect of all human rights, in freedom from fear, and freedom from want.

As Member States under the United Nations umbrella, you are accountable to your people, to each other, to the planet and to future generations. We look forward to working with you in making our global aspirations a reality.

I thank you for your attention.