

**Civil Society Statement on People-Centered Means of Implementation:  
Focus on economic justice aspects of MOI and connections to the AAAA**

Collaborators:

Blue Planet Project  
Council of Canadians  
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law, and Development  
Sisters of Mercy (NGO), Mercy International Association: Global Action  
NGO Mining Working Group  
Major Group for Children and Youth  
Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)  
Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)  
Temple of Understanding  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council

Other collaborating organizations and endorsements will be posted in the online statement.

Short oral statement delivered by Meera Karunanathan of the Blue Planet Project

**Full statement:**

We have heard many references to a people-centred approach to sustainable development, and to the means of implementation in particular. To ensure we are all on the same page about what it means to be people-centered, this approach calls for:

Sustainable development from the perspective of frontline local communities (this includes women, indigenous peoples, small scale farmers, migrants, socio-economically disadvantaged groups and others who are most directly) impacted by the development agenda; These frontline communities must be empowered decision-makers and supported as rights holders to benefit from the development agenda and to challenge it when it either excludes or impacts them adversely;

Sustainable development that views the economy as a subset of society and the environment.

**As such, barriers to people-centred means of implementation include:**

A corporate rights regime that is rapidly proliferating through trade and investment treaties have enabled corporations to restrict policy space by giving them the tools to sue governments when public policy threatens profits.

Lack of binding mechanisms to hold corporations accountable for human rights abuses

Austerity and debt servicing measures, which starve public coffers and restrict public spending on social services and infrastructure

Skewed spending priorities and failure to allocate public resources to the public services and public goods required for healthy and sustainable communities.

The treatment of people and the environment as subservient to the economy rather than the other way around.

Unfortunately, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) has done very little to address these barriers rooted in an unjust global economic system to people-centred means of implementation. The emphasis on private financing and the role of transnational corporations (TNCs) will further weaken public policy space governments and fails to address the unfinished business of regulating the financial sector despite the extreme and intergenerational poverty created by the global crisis. The AAAA also fails to commit governments to binding timetables to fulfil their longstanding ODA commitments.

We ask that the outcome document address these challenges by:

Recognising the right of developing countries to policy space to pursue national sustainable development strategies and fulfill human rights.

Recognising that the economy must serve society and environment and, not the other way around.

Public funding through progressive taxation and ecological tax reform to ensure the maximum use of available resources for goals and targets connected to the human rights obligations of states including the provision of universal public water and sanitation, healthcare and education.

The ring-fencing of essential public services including water and sanitation, healthcare and education, and public access to information from private financing and private sector participation

Ensuring compliance with the international human rights framework.

**We call for the outcome document to:**

Recognize the role of trade and investment regime in restricting the policy space of governments and in undermining the ability of governments to protect the environment and human rights.

Restore the primacy of the UN as the only democratic multilateral space for the resolution of key development challenges

**Specific textual recommendations:**

Para 32: The new Agenda deals also with the means required for implementation of the goals and targets. We recognize that these will involve the mobilization of financial resources as well as capacity-building, the transfer of technologies as mutually agreed and a wide range of other supportive policies and measures **including mechanisms to ensure compliance with the human rights framework**. Public finance, both domestic and international, ~~will~~

~~play a vital role in~~ **is the only way to ensure equitable and accountable funding for** essential services and public goods **related to the human rights obligations of states** ~~and in catalyzing other sources of finance~~. Business, the private sector and philanthropic organizations ~~will~~ **may** also make important contributions to resource mobilization and implementation of the Agenda, **but must be regulated and held accountable for human rights abuses**.

Para 36. We are committed to an ~~open, well-functioning, equitable and rules-based~~ **accountable, just, people-centred, environmentally sustainable and solidarity-based** multilateral trading system **that does not grant private corporations the power to undermine the policy space of national and subnational governments** for the realization of the new Agenda. We resolve to work together to enhance macro-economic and financial stability through ~~improved policy coordination and coherence~~ **tax justice and equity, significant increases in ODA, and establishing guidelines for sustainable lending and borrowing** ~~We resolve to reach early agreement in the Doha Development Round of trade negotiations~~. We attach great importance to providing ~~trade-related~~ **debt relief, increased ODA and** capacity-building for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states

Para 39. We ~~acknowledge the need for~~ **will ensure that** international financial institutions ~~to~~ respect the domestic policy space of all countries, in particular developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing states. We agree to work to increase the representation of developing countries, and their involvement in decision-making, in these institutions, **as well as strengthening the role of the United Nations in decision-making related to the resolution of key development challenges**.

Para 40. The scale and ambition of the new Agenda calls for a revitalized Global Partnership to implement it. This Partnership will work in a spirit of global solidarity **between developed and developing countries**, in particular solidarity ~~with the poorest and~~ with people **living in poverty and the most marginalized in vulnerable situations**. It will facilitate an intensive global engagement in support of implementation of the goals and targets, bringing together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors and mobilizing all available resources. We commit to pursue policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development **and the realization of human rights** at all levels and with all actors. Finally, we call on the document to recognize the central role of impacted communities and rightsholder as the driving force within this agenda.

Para 41. We emphasize more generally the critical importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in implementation of the new Agenda. **In particular, we recognize the duty of states to ensure the free and meaningful participation of vulnerable and marginalized communities including the obligation to ensure free prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and** ~~In particular, we acknowledge~~ the essential role of national parliaments in sustainable development through their enactment of legislation and adoption of budgets and their role in ensuring accountability for the effective implementation of our commitments.