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## **VOLUNTEERS STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

### **2020 Lead Discussant Intervention**

Your Excellencies,

From my own experience as an active citizen in Zimbabwe, I have seen first-hand how the one billion volunteers globally, and support for their efforts, are essential for prosperous communities and successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Africa and around the world.

COVID-19 has given us the opportunity to relook at our understanding of the roles of individuals, society, institutions and the environment in development processes in view of addressing the wheel of fundamental human needs, taking into account the reality of our communities.

Through my volunteer work in Zimbabwe, I see daily the challenges faced by micro-entrepreneurs who are largely marginalized and excluded by the current financing models. We have worked together to develop community savings and credit, which has benefited the many members of the community, especially women and young people.

Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda can be a transformative catalyst to accelerate the delivery of the SDGs. Volunteering highlights our shared values and can help to re-design and strengthen the relationships between power holders and their citizens. But volunteering should be carried out responsibly.

In 2013, a group of grassroots volunteers in our country gathered and came up with a national volunteering standards guide. The launch of Global Volunteering Standards has been a great step in the right direction. More importantly, the Global Technical Meeting on Volunteering next week comes at an opportune time during this year's HLPF.

We ask member states:

- To integrate evidence on volunteering at all stages in the 2030 Agenda processes,
- To create new spaces to hear the voices of people taking action for the SDGs, and
- To work together to enable partnerships to ensure robust cross-sector volunteering practices.

Volunteering is the backbone of all meaningful sustainable development. It has the potential to unite us all and ensure that security, peace, and development is attained.

Thank you.

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