



**Intervention on behalf of Denmark, Norway and Ireland on the occasion of the
Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals meeting on**

Human rights, the right to development, global governance

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**United Nations Headquarters
December 13, 2013**

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Mr. Chairman,

- As we approach the 2015 watershed, a resounding call is being heard for a social, political and economic order that delivers on the promises of freedom from fear and freedom from want.
- The international Human Rights Framework constitutes a set of common obligations to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the human rights and fundamental freedoms embedded in this framework. It is important to underline that this framework consists of both the economic, social and cultural rights as well as the civil and political rights and that the full set of rights are “universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated” to quote the Vienna Declaration from 1993.
- There are strong linkages between promoting human rights and fighting poverty as confirmed perhaps most prominently in the UN Charter, in the Declaration on the Right to Development and most recently in the Millennium Declaration from 2000. The Millennium Declaration called for action to advance on three fronts simultaneously: Development, peace and security, and human rights. It also highlighted gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease as well as to stimulate development, which is truly sustainable.
- The MDGs have helped combat poverty, promote gender equality and support the access to education and health. But it is also recognised that the MDGs clouded the challenges of growing inequalities within countries and between countries. A stronger focus on human rights will make these challenges more visible. Human rights are crucial in identifying and addressing inequalities and thus ensure that we leave no one behind. This includes the rights of those hardest to reach – the most vulnerable and marginalized, including indigenous peoples. It also includes gender equality, women’s and girl’s rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Equality must underpin the post 2015 development framework and it must be based on the empowerment of people, hereby ensuring that all members of society can exercise their rights and hold their governments to account.
- The Rio+20 outcome document stressed that the sustainable development goals must be consistent with international law, which includes the international human rights treaties. The same message came loud and clear from the post-2015 global consultations with the demand that “the new agenda be built on human rights and universal values of equality, justice and security”.
- So the question before us is not whether human rights should be included in the post 2015 development agenda, but rather how? Given the strong inter linkages between development and human rights, we should draw on the human rights framework, when we identify priorities and set standards for the next generation of goals as well as targets, indicators and monitoring frameworks. A full integration of human rights

into the post-2015 development agenda, by way of a human rights based approach, would seem to be the best approach.

- To these ends, the post-2015 agenda should be explicitly aligned with international human rights and mechanisms, developed in a participatory process, measure both means and outcome, allow for disaggregation to reveal exclusion and inequalities, and be attached to meaningful accountability mechanisms.
- The process ahead should seek to elaborate a limited number of global goals, targets and indicators within a post-2015 agreement, and these should be aligned to human rights treaty obligations.
- Human Rights principles such as equality and non- discrimination (particularly as they relate to gender), participation, transparency and accountability should be mainstreamed across all goals in a post-2015 framework.
- Civil society plays an important role in supporting people's empowerment, especially the poorest and most marginalised, and in holding governments to account. Hence, the space for civil society must be protected to allow the most vulnerable and marginalised to empower themselves to exercise their rights and hold their governments accountable.
- A human rights based approach also means addressing the duty of States to protect, respect and promote the rights of citizens including the right to seek and receive information, the right to participate in decision making and the rights of citizens to demand the fulfilment their human rights. It also requires the fulfilment of civil and political rights such as personal security and freedom from violence.
- Finally, it is important to keep in mind the inherent link between human rights, development and the rule of law. As a principle of governance the rule of law enables humans to claim their rights through access to legal frameworks and democratic and accountable institutions. It also creates a level playing field for rights holders and duty bearers. All elements that will be crucial for how we establish new goals and measure progress in their implementation.
- Let me mention just one of many examples of how stronger a stronger focus on rights and the improvement of the quality of services may look. Any focus on **Health** should be linked to the international human rights standards and frameworks. This means achieving the right for everyone to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including enjoying access to health services and treatment, especially for women and children.

Global governance

- Global governance must work in support of the integration of all dimensions of sustainable development. This will require increased cooperation between relevant actors and better integration of all three dimensions of sustainable development in all efforts.

- The UN is at the core of these challenges and has a central role in the post-2015 agenda. We must continue to support efforts to reform the UN system so that it is well equipped to support our collective efforts to tackle global challenges. We must focus our efforts on making the existing institutions work better and work better together – and not jump to creating new institutions, when we experience that the present system is challenged in certain areas.
- The UN should also build on its cooperation with other stakeholders, including the World Bank, the regional development banks, and other organisations.
- As underlined by several in the discussions during this week genuine multi-stakeholder partnerships aimed at poverty eradication and sustainable development need to be developed.
- In this regard, it is encouraging to witness that the norms of the private sector have changed tremendously over the last decade. With new technologies and more dynamic roles and relations, partnerships between the governments, industries, civil society and international organizations have are emerging. Partnerships that were unheard of a decade ago are now embraced, as they push us to take an innovative approach to sustainable development.
- We welcome the engagement of the UN Secretary General in this agenda. The proposal of the UN Secretary-General's to create a Partnership Facility that can foster new partnerships whilst safeguarding integrity, transparency and accountability can make a real difference in this regard. It will “help the UN deliver at scale — globally and at country level — across the range of UN mandates, goals and values”, as the Secretary-General said when he introduced the Partnership Facility in April.
- The actions and initiatives to implement a future agenda must be followed by effective and strong monitoring.
- The High Level Political Forum should play a key role in this regard. The forum has an important mandate to provide political leadership for sustainable development, and to follow-up and review the implementation of a future agenda for poverty eradication and sustainable development.
- In this respect, we suggest working towards a strong, and yet simple and manageable accountability framework. We must encourage use of disaggregated data to provide evidence of the situation of different population segments, including women, children and marginalized people. Furthermore, aligning the framework to national policies, plans, statistics, targets, indicators and budgets will contribute to a ‘light’ and effective monitoring mechanism.
- It is of paramount importance that we provide the Forum with the necessary punch to deliver on its mandate. We must build a Forum, which gathers influential decision makers with power and will to act. Future generations will judge us on our fulfilment of our promises. Holding us accountable as nations and political leaders to our commitments is crucial.