

**Preliminary Summary of Stakeholder Reactions  
to the Elements Paper on the Declaration  
by the February Stakeholder Steering Committee  
17th February 2015**

The February Stakeholder Steering Committee welcomes this opportunity to share a preliminary summary of the views of stakeholders on the [Elements Paper](#) prepared by the co-facilitators of the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations. **This paper is a preliminary version and it is open for feedback until Wednesday 18 February 2015, 3pm (NY time).**

**1. A collective vision of the road to 2030**

The Political Declaration must set the tone for an agenda that is universal, and that integrates the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Long-term poverty eradication is dependent on environmental sustainability and the Declaration must reinforce the need for a legally-binding universal agreement on climate change. It is time to deliver on the commitment “to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency” and to irreversibly end poverty in all its forms and this can only be achieved in a peaceful environment.

The ambition can be nothing less than a peaceful, just, equitable and inclusive world where every person of all ages, abilities, race and gender is safe and enjoys their human rights. The Declaration should promote a world where the political and economic systems deliver well-being for people within planetary boundaries.

Every person is free and equal in dignity and rights and no target will be considered met unless it is met for all social and economic groups, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized. This includes but is not limited to people with disabilities, older people, migrants, displaced, conflict-affected, indigenous peoples, people living with HIV, local communities and ethnic minorities, as well as women, youth and children. The agenda must tackle discriminatory social norms and practices and structural disadvantages. Gender equality should be promoted by tackling the structural barriers that stand in the way of women and girls.

A truly transformative agenda must acknowledge the interdependences and interlinkages between goals and targets and move beyond current paradigms of economic growth. Development justice - that includes redistributive justice, economic justice, gender and social justice, environmental justice and accountability to peoples- addresses poverty and inequalities between and within countries, and within social groups. States must recognize and seek to eliminate the unjust and unequal power relations at the root of inequalities as well as multidimensional poverty.

**2. What we must do to get there**

The success of the Sustainable Development agenda relies on the respect, protection and promotion of all human rights, including the right to sustainable development, for all. This requires the realisation of rights including but not limited to the right to self-determination and to live in freedom; to peace and security; to an adequate standard of living including the right to food, housing, water and sanitation, physical and mental

health, freedom from violence and access to justice. The Declaration must demonstrate respect for national sovereignty and a commitment to just, democratic and inclusive societies for sustainable development.

The transformative and interdependent nature of the Sustainable Development agenda calls for an approach that takes into account diverse realities, and adopts an intersectional approach. It must recognise economic, social, cultural, as well as civil and political rights. In addition to the UN Charter, we call for specific references to the following instruments:

- the UN Declaration on Human Rights
- the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Outcome Document of the 2014 World Conference on Indigenous Peoples;
- the Declaration on the right to development;
- ILO norms and standards;
- the International Conference on Population and Development Program of Action;
- the World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance Declaration and Programme of Action;
- the Political Declaration of HIV;
- the Beijing Platform for Action, and its subsequent review conferences and agreements;
- the World Programme of Action for Youth;
- the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing;
- the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action.

The commitment to the right to education and health, full access to quality and inclusive education and health at all levels is an essential condition for achieving sustainable development. Poverty eradication, gender equality and the empowerment of the most marginalised, as well as human development, must be reaffirmed. In this regard, the need for ensuring equal access to education for people of all ages, with disabilities, women, youth and children, indigenous peoples, LGBTTT, people living with HIV, local communities, ethnic minorities and people living in rural areas, is imperative.

The transformative agenda must address the unequal power relations and structural inequalities that exist within and between countries, and must challenge current neo-liberal, patriarchal and extractivist models of development. Development justice offers a transformative framework that addresses such inequalities by demanding a redistribution of wealth, power and resources between countries, people and social groups.

### **3. How we will do this**

People's participation is crucial for means of implementation. Meaningful and equitable participation of CSOs and other stakeholders is necessary for formal mechanisms for planning, implementation and monitoring. To achieve this, the Sustainable Development agenda must create an enabling environment that ensures the free, active and meaningful engagement of volunteer groups, civil society and the private sector. Inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships must be a key feature of implementation at all levels.

Credible and meaningful resource commitments, including adequate and innovative financing for development are needed to replace the problematic aid and debt system, including through reducing and redirecting military spending, increasing gender equitable social spending and investments in human security and financing for human rights and gender equality.

The Declaration should reflect a holistic approach to gender equality, and tackle discriminatory social norms and practices that impede progress in this area. The realisation of women's rights is an ambition in its own right, and it is also essential to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals.

Financing development must also include meeting the aid commitments of developed countries. Migrants' remittances must not be considered a major source of financing for development, as this would negatively impact the rights of migrants. Member States must develop tangible mechanisms and pathways to explicitly demonstrate how they will deliver on their commitments. They must ensure that the private sector does not replace the state in providing public goods and services by setting up strong accountability mechanisms. Member States must set out clear national action plans for implementation.

The Declaration must commit to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius rather than the proposed 2 degrees Celsius, through drastic emission cuts and fair-sharing of the global carbon budget that takes into account per capita historical emissions and without resorting to carbon trading or offsets. The post-2015 framework must rally action commensurate with moving back within safe planetary thresholds to remain below a further 2 degree Celsius rise in earth surface temperature .

Investment in a data revolution for sustainable development that increases access to information for decision-makers and those who hold them to account must be made. This means integrated data collection, disaggregation, tracking, analysis and research as well as enhancing the capacity of citizens to use data for follow-up and review of progress against the Sustainable Development Goals. Media and social media of all forms need to be employed as learning platforms to improve access to information and exchange of best practice.

#### **4. Follow-Up and Review**

For this accountability framework to be able to deliver the transformational change we seek, it will need to be ambitious. Its ultimate goal must be to enable and empower people and their organizations to hold their governments and other stakeholders to account. It must be innovative, building and putting to use new technologies and methodologies for data gathering and analysis, and it must be comprehensive, setting up robust mechanisms for corporate accountability.

The Declaration should foresee the establishment of a robust, transparent and inclusive set of formal accountability mechanisms with the most marginalized people at its centre. This should strengthen and build on existing and innovative accountability mechanisms, including human rights mechanisms.

The implementation of the agenda should be supported by a clearly visible accountability framework linking Member State Governments directly to their commitments in all aspects of the framework. A clear road map, for example a national action plan, will be required at Member State level. Multi-tiered accountability

architecture needs to be implemented at all levels: local, national, regional and global, and must recognize the importance of broad, effective and meaningful multi-stakeholder participation including strong mechanisms for private sector accountability. Monitoring, reporting, evaluation and accountability must include a commitment to transparency, knowledge sharing and capacity-building.

## 5. Our commitment

The Declaration should guarantee that no target will be considered met unless met for all, including the most marginalised population (e.g., people with disabilities, older people, migrant, displaced, conflict-affected, indigenous peoples, local communities and ethnic minorities, women, youth and children). This reflects the need for quality, disaggregated data by age, gender, disability and ethnicity and a pledge to fill in gaps by developing new data to ensure that the sustainable development agenda ends poverty and promotes equality, dignity and inclusion for all.

The full achievement of inclusive growth, social development, and environmental protection are the overarching objectives of the sustainable development agenda. Success depends on a range of factors including the full and progressive realisation of human rights and human dignity, solidarity, a commitment of maximum available resources and no retrogression; no discrimination and violence; equality; respect to diversity including the right to development; effective, participatory and inclusive governance and shared - common but differentiated - responsibilities at the national, regional and international levels; and on a fair and transparent financial, monetary and trading systems.

## 6. Final call to action

The Sustainable Development declaration must be the stepping stone towards a new paradigm based on democracy and participatory and inclusive governance, empowerment of the poorest and most marginalised, and strong citizen voices on social, environmental and economic justice, solidarity, common but differentiated responsibilities, and accountability of all development actors. Therefore, the Declaration should call for people to be central to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It should also call for the recognition and inclusion of all international human right instruments in the Declaration to truly respect, protect and promote the rights of the most marginalised. The creation of a new global framework represents a historic opportunity to catalyse the urgent and targeted action needed to help us achieve our vision of an equitable, peaceful and sustainable world, in which all people live with dignity. The Declaration has to be bold and ambitious!

### About this paper

This summary was drafted by the [February Stakeholder Steering Committee](#), based on 59 reactions submitted during the [online consultation](#) convened by DESA DSD and UN NGLS. It identifies the main trends or recurring messages present in the reactions submitted, presented following the structure suggested by the Co-Facilitators in their Elements Paper. However, this document cannot possibly reflect the full range of opinions of the individual organisations which took part in the survey.