

Dear Co-Chair, Distinguished Delegates, thank you for the floor.

I am Nebila Abdulmelik, with FEMNET speaking on behalf of the Women's Major Group, made up of over 500 organizations in 100 countries working to achieve gender equality and the realization of women's rights and women's empowerment.

We thank you for the opportunity and space to speak to the 19 focus areas which you have articulated. We appreciate the difficult task of summarizing the year long discussions and deliberations into these areas and commend your efforts thus far.

The Women's Major Group is pleased to see an integrated approach, with inter-linkages identified between the focus areas, in particular we are happy to see both a stand-alone focus area for Gender Equality and Women's empowerment, as well as 7 areas where linkages to gender equality are indicated.

However, we are deeply disappointed that 1) women's rights are completely absent from this document. Equality and empowerment are necessary, but they alone are not sufficient and cannot be achieved without firm commitment to and fulfillment of women's human rights. And 2) gender equality and women's rights have not been made a cross-cutting priority across the entire framework and are omitted in key areas such as climate change, ecosystems and oceans

We appreciate that within the priority areas, you've addressed inequalities, the multidimensional nature of poverty, eliminating harmful agricultural subsidies, SRH, universal access to quality education among others.

Having noted this, we feel there are many areas where the document uses languages which falls back on existing agreements and lacks adequate recognition and use of the agreed upon language in the Rio+20 outcome document nor does credit to our collective aspiration of developing an ambitious, human rights-based, people-centered and planet-sensitive agenda that will remain relevant in 2030 and beyond. In this regard, we call for universal social protection which includes non-contributory schemes that acknowledge the burden of women's unpaid care work and promote access to quality health, care, education, housing, services for all.

Respect and accountability for existing human rights commitments does not feature in this document. It is essential, as has been called on by major groups, member states, UN agencies and civil society that the Sustainable Development Goals be firmly rooted in human rights – taking a rights approach to development, to education, to health, to resources and to the environment – ensuring the outcome will be transformative and result in social, economic and environmental justice.

Feminist and other social movements have repeatedly stressed that the development agenda must be re-imagined. It must foster transformative, structural changes in the way global economies are managed and must position human rights enjoyment as the central and primary purpose. This can only happen if we unequivocally call for radical and transformative shifts in the systems and structures that have caused and perpetuated inequalities and injustices. The document must call for fundamental reforms that meaningfully transform the imbalanced structures of the international finance, tax, debt and trade architectures.

While 'rights' are mentioned only four times in the document, 'growth' is mentioned 21 times and is afforded its own focus area despite the evidence that the growth agenda often undermines equitable and sustainable development as well as the future of the planet. We must never repeat the mistakes of the past and prioritize short term economic development at the expense of sustained and equitable social development, environmental protection and peace.

We further recommend that the focus areas are complemented by a strong narrative that clearly articulates the need to redistribute wealth, power and resources; where human rights are enjoyed and where all humans can prosper and live dignified lives. I thank you.