

**Ninth Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals  
March 5, 2014**

**Statement made by the Mining Working Group  
the Women's Major Group and the Indigenous Peoples Major Group**

**Focus area 6. Water and sanitation**

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair.

I am speaking on behalf of the NGO Mining Working Group, the Women's Major Group and the Indigenous Peoples Major Group.

First, we must go beyond the natural resource focus and see that:

- Water is life, a right in itself and also a right on which so many others depend.
- Water is not a commodity.

Second, we need more than a water-secure world; we need a water just and sustainable world.

Third, we must look underneath the water challenges named and address the root causes: namely, the unjust appropriation of water resources through privatization and commodification.

Furthermore, in addition to addressing pollution, protection and restoration of water-linked ecosystems, which we commend, the **goal and targets must include:**

**The guarantee and realization of the right to water and sanitation, including for future generations, and the progressive elimination of inequalities; especially for indigenous peoples, women and girls, and the rural poor.**

To do this effectively, the agenda must include:

- Recognition of water as a public good, protected as a public trust in law and practice and publically financed;
- Water resource allocation and use measured in terms of human rights and ecological sustainability criteria;
- A guarantee of effective public and local water governance;
- A moratorium on extractives in vital watershed areas and areas where water sustains Mother Earth, life and livelihoods.

Finally, linkages must also include the impact of extractive industry abuse on gender, climate change, trade, human rights, environmental protection, governance, chemicals and waste.

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair.

Aine O'Connor, Sisters of Mercy, delivered on behalf of:

Mining Working Group  
Women's Major Group  
Indigenous Peoples Group