



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

MEETING OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Statement of Finland by Ms Kirsti Aarnio, Ambassador, Post-2015

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The experience with Millennium Development Goals has shown that countries and communities that are vulnerable to violence and armed conflict face the most severe challenges in achieving the MDGs. This demonstrates that peace is indispensable for poverty eradication and sustainable development. Conflict, insecurity and violence hinder all aspects of development: they hamper economic growth, destroy infrastructure, livelihoods and services, increase inequality and cause environmental damage. On the other hand inequality and exclusion as well as persistency of extreme poverty can be drivers of violence and fragility.

The Focus area Nr. 19 states, quite rightly so, that the peaceful societies are the cornerstone for sustainable development. So are governance, rule of law and capable institutions, which bring the four legs steadily down to earth as a steady frame for sustainable development. We see these themes as two separate entities, which both merit a goal of their own, namely 1) Peaceful and non-violent societies, and 2) Democratic Governance and the Rule of Law. These two goals have also several linkages to different other areas like building capacities of governance including, for example taxation, improving possibilities for youth, promoting their access to quality education at all levels, providing decent work, etc.

Regarding the areas under Focus area 19 in the co-chairs' document, we would like to highlight that the following areas are essential and should be preserved in the next version of this document:

For peaceful and non-violent societies

- a) combating organized crime;
- b) reduction of crime, violence, abuse, exploitation, including against children and women;
- c) promoting information and education on a culture of non-violence;
- d) reducing the number of internally displaced persons and refugees;
- e) strengthening the fight against human trafficking;
- f) improving planned and managed migration policies.

For Democratic Governance and Rule of Law we would like to regroup the targets as follows:

- a) effective, accountable and transparent institutions, including in public finances management;
- b) strengthening the rule of law at all levels;
- c) provision of public services for all, including provision of legal identity and access to publicly owned information;
- d) fighting corruption in all its forms;
- e) inclusive, participatory decision-making;
- f) strengthening local governments and civil society,
- g) freedom of media, association and speech;
- h) curbing illicit financial flows;
- i) provision of property, use and access rights, to all persons;
- j) providing access to independent and responsive justice systems

When entering in the next phase on further developing these goals and targets, my delegation is willing to fully cooperate with you in making them relevant for the new Post-2015 development agenda.

I thank you, Mr. Co-Chair