

Inspiring and Aiming higher Recommendations to the Post-2015 Political Declaration

The **post-2015 Political Declaration** will be a crucial element of the new development framework. It must set the tone, reaffirm commitments and demonstrate the collective political will of our leaders to realise a freer and fairer world based on human rights, tolerance, environmental sustainability, solidarity, inclusion and universal and shared responsibility.

Beyond 2015 would like to offer some recommendations to the post-2015 Political Declaration:

THE VISION

We expect that our leaders will commit to a **shared vision** of *‘an equitable and sustainable world where every person is safe, resilient, lives well, and enjoys their human rights, and where political and economic systems deliver well-being for all people within the limits of our planet’s resources.’*

VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND KEY MESSAGES:

As was the case in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1) and the outcome document of Rio+20 ‘The Future We Want’ (A/RES/66/288) we expect that the Post-2015 Political Declaration will (re)affirm some important values, principles and key messages:

- A world **free from poverty** – Paragraph 2 of the Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Goals (OWG) brings a good inspiration by recognizing that “poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development”. The **post-2015 declaration should reiterate the commitment to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency** (A/RES/66/288, para 2).

In doing so, it is also important that the Declaration makes it clear that poverty is multi-dimensional encompassing a shortage of resources, capabilities, choices, security and power. Additionally, the text must pledge to meet the needs of the world’s poorest who under-consume and are denied their fair share of the world’s resources, and to tackle overconsumption in many countries.

- **Equality** was defined as a fundamental value in both A/RES/55/2 and A/RES/60/1 and it is **imperative that it remains** as an overarching objective and a specific set of actions so in the post-2015 declaration. **Paragraph 4** of the OWG report is clear on the need for “**sustainable and inclusive economic development growth, social development and environmental protection to benefit all**, in particular the children of the world, youth and future generations of the world without distinction of any kind such as age, sex, disability, culture, race, ethnicity, origin, migratory status, religion, economic or other status”.

The Political Declaration must pledge that the post-2015 development framework will **leave no one behind** and that when agreeing on a new set of sustainable development goals an explicit guarantee is made that **no target will be considered met unless it is met for all social and economic groups, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized**. Member

States should therefore agree that in implementing the post-2015 agenda they will seek to **enable that all people live a good life, within their fair share of the planet's resources.**

When reaffirming equality as a principle of the post-2015 agenda, Member States must also agree to **reduce inequality within and between nations**, reinforcing what was proposed in the OWG. The post-2015 declaration must also recognize and address **the inequities and inequalities in fundamental power structures**. It must decide to measure and tackle economic inequality between the richest and poorest, and to reduce the extreme differences between the top and bottom quintiles of populations, both within and between countries.

- **Universality and Shared Responsibility**: Are transformative principles that must be clearly reflected in the post-2015 declaration. **Universality** as a principle will mean a common agreement by Member States that human kind faces the same global challenges and that today's problems transcend borders. Member States must all **agree to change, each with its own approach, but each with a sense of the global common good**. (SG synthesis report, Para 48). The post-2015 declaration must uphold the responsibility that all countries will have to achieve all goals within their own countries as well as to contributing to progress beyond their borders.

It is also important that the Declaration is clear on country sensitivities and specificities and prioritizes countries with special circumstances, including LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS needs.

The post-2015 declaration must recognize not only the shared global challenges but also the obligations, ownership and accountability of every country to respond to the needs of all the others. This should include, for example, commitments to assess the sustainability of existing consumption patterns and policy coherence in light of the need to promote wellbeing and equity and the agreement to collectively keep consumption within the limits of our planet's resources.

Additionally, the declaration must recognize the "collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at global level and the duty towards the world's people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs" (A/RES/55/2, para 2).

- **Environmental Sustainability** – This should build on the previously agreed principle of "Respect for Nature" and the declaration should underline the need to decouple economic activities from environmental degradation to ensure development remains within the ecological limits of our planet, reinforcing the interlinkages between the environmental, social and economic aspects of development. The post-2015 declaration should reaffirm the commitment to **ensure the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations** (A/RES/66/288, para 1). The Declaration should **also recognize global resource constraints and Member States should agree to a more equitable distribution of resources** as well as to the sustainable use and management of renewable and non-renewable natural resources. Additionally, it should call for a rapid transition to sustainable consumption and production.

- **Human Rights**: The post-2015 declaration must be built on the principles and standards of human rights and boost all efforts to respect, protect and fulfil all human rights and fundamental freedoms (A/RES/55/2, para 4) on a basis of equality and non-discrimination. **The post-2015 political declaration must also reinforce international human rights commitments, laws and standards**; pledge consistency of the post-2015 agenda with existing human rights obligations; as well as reaffirm the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights (A/RES/60/1): economic, social,

cultural, civil and political rights. The Declaration should also resolve to ensure the implementation, by States Parties, of international human rights treaties (A/RES/55/2, para. 9). The guarantee to the right of indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent and overall decision-making over natural resource extraction in their lands and territories must be reflected in the post-2015 declaration. The post-2015 political declaration must ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities throughout the framework in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

It is essential that the post-2015 declaration presents a **definitive commitment to the realization of women's full legal, political, social and economic rights**, including equal influence in all forms of decision making, equal rights to access and own economic resources, finances, property and land, inheritance and credit, as well as full recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Member States should agree to spare no effort **to end violence and abuse in all contexts and particularly gender based violence and violence against children and other vulnerable groups**, including through child labour, child marriage, harmful practices, and by denying children their human right to a legal identity.

- **Peaceful Societies**: The promise of a peaceful and safer world should be once again reinforced. The post-2015 political Declaration should express a clear **pledge for a peaceful and resilient world, where political freedoms, justice and the rule of law are upheld**. The declaration must recognize that violent conflict, insecurity and abuse has consequences for sustainable development outcomes everywhere and agree to address their root drivers. Member States **must resolve to provide an enabling environment to build inclusive and peaceful societies**, promoting social cohesion and access to justice for all, and upholding accountable and responsive political institutions at country level to ensure that the gains from peace are not reversed. The post-2015 Declaration should also call for collective global action to address irresponsible and illicit flows of finance, arms and conflict commodities.

- **Participation and Solidarity**: The post-2015 agenda has established a new paradigm of open, inclusive and constructive engagement with both civil society organisations and people around the world in shaping the framework that will directly affect their lives. The post-2015 Declaration, therefore should **clearly commit to the creation of national development strategies, implementation, monitoring and review of the post-2015 agenda through the meaningful participation of all stakeholders** at all levels (local, national, regional, and global), especially people living in extreme poverty and marginalization, and that an **enabling environment will be secured** for civil society organisations to have the capacity to carry out their crucial, independent roles (SG synthesis report, Para 129). The post-2015 Declaration should also reaffirm solidarity as a principle and acknowledge that “global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most”. (A/RES/55/2, para 6)

- **Tolerance**: This was a fundamental value expressed in the Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2) that must be reiterated in the post-2015 declaration.

- **Climate Change**: We consider that Paragraph 8 of the OWG preamble (well rooted in A/RES/66/288) constitutes a good introduction for the commitments around climate change and **should be included in the post-2015 declaration**. Particularly the following sections “the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all

countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions” and to the aim of “holding the increase in global average temperature below 2° C, or 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels” would be crucial to show the magnitude and importance of the task while referencing the UNFCCC as main forum for negotiating a binding agreement on addressing climate change. Additionally, in the post-2015 declaration, global leaders should agree to promote a human rights-based approach to adaptation measures, in order to avoid the exacerbation of existing inequalities.

- **Sustainable economies:** When adopting the post-2015 declaration, world leaders have a great opportunity **to agree to re-examine the current over-reliance on aggregate economic e growth as a measure of social progress and development.** Member States must therefore **commit to move away from GDP as the main measure of progress and to move towards measures based on wellbeing and environmental sustainability, which would reflect elements from all three pillars of sustainable development.** Member States should also agree on the implementation of comprehensive and adequate financial regulations in all countries. The post-2015 declaration should underline the fact that the economy should be at the service of the people and the planet.

REALISING THE POST-2015

- **Coherent approach:** Member States should also commit to a coherent approach in the implementation of the post-2015 framework and this must be reflected in the Declaration. This means agreeing to achieve coherence in national policies on areas such as climate change, trade, investment and finance, agriculture, energy, food security, health, migration, and conflict, fragility and security.

Additionally, Member States must task the United Nation System to deploy a truly coherent and integrated approach in supporting Member States and other stakeholders in the implementation of the post-2015 agenda. A “silo” approach, where UN entities are tasked to follow up on individual Goals or specific targets does not allow for the transformative implementation of the post-2015 agenda.

- **Means of implementation:** Member States should use the post-2015 declaration to **outline credible and meaningful resource commitments for realising the SDGs.** The Declaration should bring general commitments for the provision of new and additional financing resources, technology transfers, capacity building, pro-development trade policies and effective means of implementation for developing countries. Non-financial MoIs - for instance volunteerism and civil society participation – should be recognized as powerful and cross-cutting means of implementation. The post-2015 declaration should stress the importance of access by all countries to environmentally sound technologies new knowledge, know-how and expertise (A/RES/66/288, para 270).
- **Global Partnership:** A truly Global Partnership will only be possible if it includes the participation of peoples, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable. **Therefore, the post-2015 Declaration must bring a clear commitment to increase people’s ability to effectively and meaningfully participate in and contribute to the policy choices affecting them and to hold governments and other actors accountable for progress.**

Additionally, Member States should commit to ensure **enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions** in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions. (A/RES/66/288, para 92)

The post-2015 declaration must require that the private sector joins the global efforts and do not undermine the commitments of the new development agenda by ensuring their responsibility, accountability and transparency, and respect for human rights, and more regulation of the financial sector and transnational corporations.

- **Accountability, Monitoring, follow up and review**: In the Declaration, **world leaders must commit to a multi-tiered accountability architecture to monitor and review the implementation of the post-2015 agenda at the subnational, national, regional and global levels**. The review should be inclusive and participatory at every level by ensuring adequate arrangements for transparency and broad participation, including of people living in poverty. The declaration should incorporate commitments to monitor, evaluate and report on progress, share learning and knowledge and build capacity and especially to create an enabling environment for people and their organisations to hold their governments, the UN System and other development stakeholders (including the private sector) to account. The role of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) as the overarching forum for such a participatory review mechanism at the global level should be reiterated.

The Declaration should recognize the responsibility of companies to respect human rights and protect the environment, and the need for them to be meaningfully accountable for their actions.” (UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights)

Additionally, in the declaration, Member States should resolve to invest in generating **real time, disaggregated quality data** enabling for the monitoring of the progress achieved under the implementation of the SDGs. While recognizing that national and regional indicators will play a crucial role in monitoring progress towards meeting targets, in the post-2015 declaration Member States must commit to monitor progress through a set of universal and harmonised global indicators. Additionally, they must commit to invest in building capacities to monitor these indicators and to ensure that a range of stakeholders, including National Statistical Officers, UN agencies, regional organisations and civil society are involved in the production and analysis of data.

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 post-2015 declaration must be the stepping stone towards a new paradigm based on democracy and good 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.

About this paper: This paper was prepared considering years of collective thinking of [Beyond 2015](#), a global campaign that mobilizes more than 1,200 organizations from more than 140 countries in all regions of the world and that has been actively engaged in the post-2015 process since the beginning.