Beyond2015

Key comments from Beyond 2015 on the "Final draft of the outcome document for the UN Summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda"

July 2015

Beyond 2015 welcomes the "final draft" of the post-2015 outcome document proposed by the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations. We consider that this document brings a good level of ambition, a clear commitment towards the universality and integration of the new Agenda as well as positive increments on the level of inclusion, participation and the focus on leaving no one behind.

Below we share some key comments on issues that we expect to be reflected in the final outcome document.

1) An Agenda of the people, by the people and for the people:

We welcome the stronger references to **people's participation** (for example, in the Preamble and in para 47) as well as the recognition of the importance of engaging all relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the new Agenda (Para 41). We also strongly support the acknowledgment of, and pledges towards, the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and marginalized (Preamble "Partnership", para 40). We strongly endorse the position of participation as, in effect, a **6th "P"** in the preamble, stressing the importance of people's engagement at all levels. However, this commitment must be matched, within the declaration, by incorporating participation into the *vision* and the *implementation* of this new agenda – as well as follow up and review. Overall, the declaration must recognize people as agents of their own development and as participants in the drive to achieve the SDGs, and in our detailed response, we suggest wording for paras 6, 17, 23, 40, 41 and 70 in this regard. Language on participation should also be reinforced in paragraphs related to the "data revolution" (para 43, 57 f).

The participation and effective engagement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the **Global Partnership for Sustainable Development** should be included in the text (Preamble, Partnership, proposed 32 ter in full reaction).

Effective **communication of the new agenda** is a pre-condition for the meaningful engagement of people everywhere, and we suggest that more emphasis be placed on the responsibility of states and other actors in this regard (Proposed para 55 bis in our full reaction).

2) An Universal, integrated, indivisible Agenda that leaves no one behind

We strongly welcome the commitments that the post-2015 Agenda will "**leave no one behind**" as well as reach the "**furthest behind first**" (Para 4). This paragraph can be reinforced with a promise "**that no goal or target will be considered met unless met for all economic and social groupings".**

Also critical is the commitment of all Member States towards the **implementation** of this agenda by 2030 (Paras 6, 41, 60) – the ambition must be reflected in participatory national sustainable development plans aligned with the SDGs.

We consider very positive the assurance expressed in the text regarding the delivery of the **full set** of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets and their associated means of implementation without "cherry-picking" (Preamble). Also encouraging are references to the goals and targets as "**indivisible**" (Para 17, para 50) and the recognition of the **universality** of the Agenda (Preamble, paras 2, 5, 17, 50, 56).

The revised draft is generally very good in communicating the interlinkages between the goals and targets. However, when considering the "Ps" proposed for the Preamble, Member States must deliver a clear message of coherence by including references to the **integrated, interlinked and universal** nature of this Agenda (as in Para 5). Strengthening this message in the Preamble will prevent a siloed approach to the implementation.

It was positive to see the improved commitments on **human rights**, fundamental freedoms and non-discrimination, including the open list against discrimination based on any "other status" (Para 18). We consider the universal respect, protection and realization of all human rights for all people a bedrock of the post2015 Agenda and the very core of the commitment to leave no one behind. Accordingly, we call upon Member States to **ensure and strengthen human rights ideas as cross-cutting elements** throughout the text. We also welcome the standalone paragraph and the explicit pledge to 'achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls' as a distinct ambition (Para 19). Our full reaction proposes language that reinforces the commitment towards the protection of women's rights.

A clear proposal towards establishing appropriate accountability measures to ensure the private sector's compliance with human rights, labor rights and standards and environmental standards is still lacking (Para 32).

Also positive was the reference to alternative measures of progress that go "**beyond GDP**" (Para 43) and we expect this to be retained in the final document as the economic aspect alone cannot reflect a holistic vision of sustainable development.

We were concerned, however, to see that, throughout the text, there are regular references to "**sustained economic growth**" (Para 3, 9, 16, 20) which contradicts the ambition to create a people and planet-centred agenda and fails to address systemic change. Instead, we recommend using "sustainable economic development", which better aligns with the new Agenda.

3) Measuring up to the Ambition: the need to strengthen follow up and review proposals

We broadly support the guiding principles for follow-up and review in paragraph 57, including the additions of the three dimensions of sustainable development and the emphasis on **transparency, inclusion and participation**. Currently, however, the proposal for follow up and review does not match the ambition set in the other chapters of the post-2015 agenda. We consider the strength of the commitment to accountability, follow up and review to be the true test of the SDGs as an agenda for action, and we are concerned that this test is not fully satisfied in the current proposal.

Notably, the level of ambition in the review section is, in key respects, currently lower than that of resolution 67/290, which established the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). The **global** and **regional** sections could be strengthened by incorporating further relevant language from resolution 67/290, e.g. the mandate for review of state "commitments", "objectives", and "implementation", and for participatory annual regional meetings, as we highlight in our detailed response (Paras 64, 66 and 70).

Especially at the **national** and **sub-national** levels, we call for stronger language on **inclusive and participatory approaches** to follow-up and review as well as encouragement for governments to actively seek input from, and support the participation of, marginalized groups, including children, youth, people with disabilities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, among others (Paras 60 ad 61). It is at the national level, and even more so, at the local level, that the results of these international decisions will be felt and impact on people's lives and their environment. Therefore, reviews should be inclusive and participatory. **Accountability to citizens** as referred

to in paragraph 56 is key. We were concerned to see that earlier recommendations on proposed **timelines** and participatory processes for national reviews have disappeared from the current text.

Clear guidance from Heads of State about how the UN and its Development System should adapt, coordinate, harmonize and align itself to provide the most effective support to governments in implementing and monitoring this universal agenda is still lacking.

We are optimistic that Member States will reach an ambitious agreement by July 31st. The post-2015 outcome document is the culmination of several years of global, regional, national and sub-national consultations and we expect that, when adopting it at the September Summit, our Heads of State will also bring a strong and clear commitment towards the implementation of the new framework.

See Beyond 2015 Full Reaction to the Revised Zero Draft here: **http://bit.ly/1KbboSV**