



Major Groups

Beyond 2015

Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)

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REF: Ensuring inclusion of Major Groups and other stakeholders in the Post-2015 Development Agenda Summit and associated preparatory process.

8 May 2014

Dear Excellences,

As the Open Working Group (OWG) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) completes its work, scheduled to conclude in July 2014, attention must now focus on the modalities for the Post-2015 Summit and the associated preparatory process.

Stakeholders played an important and active role in the OWG stocktaking sessions, and the commitment of the co-chairs of the OWG to an open and inclusive process has been most welcome. As civil society networks of Beyond 2015, the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), and the nine Major Groups –facilitating engagement and outreach to tens of thousands of non-state organisations worldwide – we are prepared to continue to take an active participation role in the next phases of the intergovernmental processes, which will result in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Rio+20 Outcome Document, the “Future We Want”, calls for an integration of civil society, Major Groups and relevant stakeholders¹ in all future United Nations processes relating to sustainable development. These principles of inclusion have been upheld in the

¹ Paragraph 43 from A/RES/66/288, The future we want

ongoing process surrounding the OWG on the SDGs. Furthermore, the Outcome Document of the MDG Special Event on 25th September 2013 reiterates these principles and practices in calling for a “transparent intergovernmental process that will include inputs from all stakeholders, including civil society, scientific and knowledge institutions, parliaments, local authorities and the private sector.”²

Given the global importance of these new global goals, stakeholders, having been involved at all levels during the process to date, feel it is imperative that this level and extent of engagement continues into and including the Summit. Their many contributions have been valued and appreciated, and received due attention in the reports from OWG meetings. The engagement of Major Groups and other stakeholders has also greatly contributed to raising attention and building momentum among decision-makers across sectors on the importance of the SDGs and the role of these sectors in a successful implementation of sustainable development.

On an important related note, the United Nations General Assembly recently decided on modalities for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in a UN General Assembly resolution agreed to in July 2013³, and on strengthening the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in a UNGA resolution⁴ in September 2013. These two recent resolutions both emphasised the necessity of involving Major Groups and other stakeholders, while recognising and respecting the intergovernmental nature of UN processes.

The Post-2015 process offers a unique opportunity to continue to involve stakeholders at all levels as the SDGs will decide major priorities and process work of the UN well into the next two decades.

We believe that clear modalities are necessary to support an effective engagement of stakeholders in any intergovernmental process. Hence we propose that the process, co-facilitated by the Missions of Papua New Guinea and Denmark, should employ modalities for the Post-2015 Summit which allow for a meaningful and structured involvement of all stakeholders, inline with the Rio+20 and MDG Special Event Outcome Documents and thus as a General Assembly Special Session.

In the spirit of contributing to a successful agreement on the SDGs and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, with an ensuing active involvement of Major Groups and other stakeholders in their implementation, we would propose the following:

- That stakeholder engagement for the Post-2015 Summit and the associated preparatory process must obey the principle of non-regression, and therefore should, at a minimum, adopt the procedures for the MDG Review Summits and the Rio+20 Conference, and enriched by best practices elsewhere;⁵
- That the specific modalities to be used are based on the privileges and rights agreed and allowed for in UNGA resolution A/67/290, establishing the HLPF.

² Paragraph 24, Outcome Document of the Special Event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, 25th Sept 2013 - http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/L.4

³ A/67/290 Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development

⁴ A/68/1 Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council

⁵ UN Summit Conferences have increasingly allowed for the active participation of stakeholders from diverse sectors of non-state actors. The earlier UN General Assembly Special Sessions (UNGASS), utilized, inter alia, during the Rio+5 (1997) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, WSSD (2002), are examples of processes allowing non-state actors significant participation at UNGA level. These UNGASS processes utilised the modalities that at the time were employed by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The Rio+20 Process is a recent example of how flexibly a procedural system can be structured -- and with more than 100 state leaders having participated -- the Rio+20 Process must be seen as a crowning example of an intergovernmental summit process.

- That the UN should ensure adequate and varied stakeholder representation in the Summit. At a minimum, those organisations that were accredited to the 2013 Special Event and Rio+20 should be allowed to be accredited again. Recognizing the universality of this agenda, accreditation should not be limited to ECOSOC accredited organisations.
- That stakeholder hearings should be organised in advance of the Summit to encourage Major Groups and other stakeholder participation. Results of these hearings should be offered as an official input to Member States in advance of the Summit. Similar sessions were held at previous MDGs Summits.

We would welcome to opportunity to help define the modalities for the Post-2015 Summit and preparatory process. To that end, we look forward to working with the co-facilitators from Papua New Guinea and Denmark.

Above all, we stand ready to contribute to and facilitate an active engagement of all stakeholders throughout the Post-2015 process to ensure an ambitious outcome.

Sincerely,

Major Groups

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**Global Call to Action Against
Poverty (GCAP)**

Women
Children and Youth
Indigenous Peoples
NGOs
Local Authorities
Workers and Trade Unions
Business and Industry
Scientific and Technological
Community
Farmers

cc: Secretary-General of the United Nations, Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, and All Permanent Missions to the UN