

## **Joint Statement on Item 8**

### **Human rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Thank you Mr President,

Mr President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Chile, Denmark, Ecuador Luxembourg, Portugal, Rwanda, and Uruguay.

One of the main political lessons to draw from 2016 is that too many people have been left behind by globalization and excluded from the benefits of socio-economic development.

The acute and rising inequalities, both within and between countries, that blight the world today; the widening gap between rich and poor, between 'have' and 'have not;' must give us, representatives of world governments, urgent pause for thought and immediate cause for collective action.

Mr President,

Our global response must be to leverage the inter-dependent and mutually reinforcing nature of, on the one hand, the promotion and protection of, and respect for all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, civil and political rights, and the right to development; and, on the other hand, the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

If the 2030 Agenda is to be realised in a way that truly does 'leave no one behind,' then human rights obligations and commitments must be applied, realised and protected by all UN member States. Similarly, the full enjoyment of all human rights will only be possible in the context of worldwide progress with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, including the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

As the UN Secretary-General himself remarked during his recent address to this Council: "human rights, including the right to development, lie at the core of the 2030 Agenda;" while - seen the other way around - the 2030 Agenda provides States with "an ideal platform to demonstrate their commitment to all human rights."

We recall, in that regard, that the 2030 Agenda envisages a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, sex, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential and

contributing to shared prosperity; a just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

Mr President,

With all this in mind, the sponsors of this statement believe that it is imperative for the Council to give careful consideration to the nature of our role: how can the UN's human rights pillar – including this Council, the UN human rights mechanisms, OHCHR, NHRIs and civil society - best support and contribute to the realisation of the SDGs, leaving no one behind.

The objective should not be to have an abstract theoretical debate about the relationship between human rights and development, but rather to begin a practical, action-orientated and inclusive conversation about the optimal role of the human rights pillar in making the best possible contribution to the fulfilment of the SDGs by all States. In particular: how can the UN human rights system support States realise the SDGs at country-level, including by delivering effective human rights capacity-building and technical support, and sharing best practices.

For that reason, the sponsors of this statement are pleased to use this opportunity to announce a new initiative on Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a starting point for the initiative, and in order to begin such a practical and inclusive conversation, we believe there may be merit in convening an informal open-ended meeting later this year, during which States, as well as UN experts, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, can offer their views and perspectives on how the human rights pillar can best contribute to the realisation of, and follow-up to, the SDGs.

To conclude, the aim of this new initiative will not be to generate more reports but rather to take forward a practical programme of work premised on seizing every available opportunity provided to the UN Human Rights system to support States as they work to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, leaving no one behind.