# GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA: THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

## REPORT OF THE INFORMAL MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS ON 'INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS AND COMMITMENTS'

HELD AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NORWAY, OSLO, 20 APRIL 2018

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UNIVERSAL RIGHTS GROUP

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On 20th April 2018, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, with the support of the Universal Rights Group, convened a meeting of bilateral and multilateral development partners to consider the evolution of 'rights-based approaches' to international development assistance, and how such assistance could be further mobilised in support of the 'joined-up' implementation, by States, of their international human rights obligations and their commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

# Human rights and the SDGs

• Participants repeatedly offered the argument that the 2030 Agenda is, at its heart, a human rights agenda. It was noted that over 90% of the SDG targets are grounded in international human rights law. Even the central premise of the SDGs, i.e. 'leaving no one behind,' is founded upon human rights principles such as equality and non-discrimination.

• It was noted that at the 37th session of the Human Rights Council, Chile, Denmark and over 70 other States tabled a new resolution on 'the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' The resolution, which was adopted by consensus, is centred on a conviction that, from a State perspective, human rights implementation and reporting, and SDG implementation and reporting, are mutually complementary, mutually-interdependent, and mutually-reinforcing. The resolution aims to provide a space for States and development partners to share good practices in terms of how to pursue 'joined up' implementation of the two agendas; and to offer a human rights contribution to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York.


• Because States have agreed that the SDGs must be implemented in accordance with international law, including international human rights law, they provide an 'anchor point' for human rights-based approaches to development.

• That means that ODA should be leveraged to help States implement their international human rights obligations (e.g. by implementing accepted UPR recommendations) as a key contribution to realising the SDGs.

• It also means that human rights obligations and principles should guide States in terms of how they pursue the realisation of the SDGs. Implementation, monitoring and reporting processes should, for example, be participatory, transparent, open to vulnerable segments of the population, and promote accountability. Collected data (i.e. to monitor progress) should also be disaggregated in line with non-discrimination principles and consistent with the objective of 'leaving no one behind.'

• In terms of leveraging ODA to support States' implementation of their international human rights obligations - as a key contribution to driving progress with the realisation of the SDGs - it was noted that the recommendations generated by the main UN (and regional) human rights mechanisms (e.g. the Special Procedures, Treaty Bodies and the Universal Periodic Review – UPR) offer a wealth of useful guidance to help States make progress. Indeed, it was argued that taken together, and clustered by theme, these recommendations offer each and every UN member States – as well as international development partners – 'a detailed national blueprint for human rights and sustainable development reform.'

• One participant shared the results of a study that shows that UN human rights mechanisms are already, by default, monitoring around 90% of all the SDGs and targets.

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• UPR was offered as an example. Because the mechanism enjoys universal participation and addresses all human rights (civil and political, and economic, social and cultural), it by definition covers a large proportion of the SDG targets. Moreover, States tend to be represented during UPR reviews at high political level (ministerial level or above). Where such individuals receive and accept recommendations from their peers, it has significant political value.

• The above point is especially important in the context of a SDG reporting mechanism (i.e. the High-Level Political Forum – HLPF) that a number of speakers suggested is rather weak. Another speaker argued that this situation has created a 'SDG accountability gap' – which the UN human rights system is perfectly placed to help bridge. It is in this spirit that the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) recently developed an algorithm that allows States to cluster UPR recommendations according to relevant SDGs. This will eventually be integrated into OHCHR's 'Universal Human Rights Index' (which contains all UN human rights recommendations provided to every UN member State).

• One speaker offered another potential benefit of such a 'rights-based' approach to the implementation of the SDGs: 'To date, when looking at progress with the implementation of the SDGs, it seems that States have been picking the low-hanging fruit. The challenge then is to move States towards tackling some of the more politically sensitive SDG targets. In that regard, leveraging those States' own international human rights obligations and commitments can be an important way in.'

• It was suggested by a foreign ministry representative of a donor State that a further benefit of linking human rights and SDG implementation is that, typically, human rights are 'dealt with' by a donor country's foreign ministry (which have relatively small budgets), while the SDGs are dealt with by development ministries or development agencies (which have far higher ODA budgets).

• Another speaker argued that acknowledgement of the complementary and interconnected nature of human rights and the SDGs should, in principle, be a key driver of the UN Secretary-General's current reform agenda, especially his proposals for reform of the UN's development system. Those reforms, at heart, are about supporting the implementation of the SDGs by decentralising delivery, and empowering UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams to support national-level implementation of the SDGs (and, potentially, UN human rights recommendations) via UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). However, it was noted that 'human rights' appear to be largely absent from key reform documents.

• A number of participants suggested that a key obstacle to 'joined up' progress with the implementation of, and reporting on, the SDGs and human rights, is the perception among many States (especially developing States) that they are already overwhelmed with their implementation obligations and reporting commitments, and thus do not want to add another layer of complexity. Thus, it is important for international development partners to explain that if done in a smart way (e.g. by constructing single integrated 'national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up' – see below,) it is possible for States to actually reduce/streamline their implementation, monitoring and reporting burden. It was suggested that such an approach has other benefits too, such as 'strengthening impact and enhancing accountability,' 'securing a seat for human rights experts at the national development planning table,' 'showing that respect for human rights helps support (i.e. it does not detract or distract attention from) sustainable development, boosts economic growth and reduces inequalities,' and 'allowing for improved national progress and impact monitoring – by bringing national human rights experts, development planners, and statistics authorities together.' All of this can help redefine national narratives about human rights, 'transforming human rights from a trouble-maker to a trouble-shooter.'

• Linked with this point (i.e. showing the benefits of linking human rights and the SDGs), it was noted that this can also help strengthen and streamline data collection – often impact indicators are similar for human rights and the SDGs, and thus data can be collected for both at the same time (e.g. by national statistical offices). Indeed, OHCHR has worked with other relevant parts of the UN to 'synchronize' human rights and SDG indicators.

• Another obstacle to pursuing 'joined up' or 'integrated' progress with human rights and the SDGs is the fact that many States and development actors do not understand the complementary nature of, and the synergies between, the two agenda. For example, it was noted that the poverty reduction framework used by EU member States in the context of SDG1, does not take into account the implementation and enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. In other instances, developing countries sometimes see the links between human rights and development as being controversial. Are donors trying, for example, to 'conditionalise' ODA based on the human rights records of States? Or is the West trying to suggest that civil and political rights are more important than socio-economic development?

• One speaker highlighted the possible risks involved in linking human rights with the SDGs. Human rights are legal obligations, the SDGs are political commitments, 'and this fact must be continuously borne in mind.' 'Otherwise,' she continued, 'we'll end up talking about sustainable development up front rather than human rights up front.'

• The important role of NHRIs in linking human rights implementation and SDG implementation was raised on a number of occasions. For example, NHRIs may 'map' key clusters of UN human rights recommendations, and link those with relevant SDG targets. The example of Kenya was presented, where OHCHR worked with the NHRI and the national statistical office to improve data collection in order to better identify those at risk of being 'left behind.'

• Likewise, NGOs and domestic civil society must be centrally involved in both the SDG and the human rights implementation process. Regarding the SDGs, civil society has a key role to play in ensuring that implementation occurs in a way that is consistent with States' international human rights obligations.

# Global human rights ‘Implementation Agenda’

• Speakers provided an overview of the emergence, in around 30-40 States, of single ‘national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up’ (NMIRFs). OHCHR and the Universal Rights Group (URG) have led (separately) initial efforts to map these emerging mechanisms, identify good practices, and support their further development (quantitatively and qualitatively).

• NMIRFs are single (often standing/statutory) national mechanisms within government that receive all UN (and regional) human rights recommendations, cluster and prioritise those recommendations, and then coordinate implementation with ‘focal points’ in relevant line ministries, as well as in parliaments, judiciaries, the police and other agencies of the State. NMIRFs also regularly request progress updates from the ‘implementation focal points,’ and generate (in a streamlined manner) periodic reports for submission at the UN. More advanced NMIRFs also consult, on a systematic basis, with NGOs, NHRIs and, in some cases, with international development partners.

• By including and engaging all relevant departments of government, State agencies, parliamentarians, judges and lawyers, the NHRI, and civil society, it was remarked that NMIRFs help turn implementation and reporting from a ‘bureaucratic process into a democratic process.’ This ‘democratisation of implementation,’ it was noted, offers huge benefits for both human rights and for sustainable development.

• Some NMIRFs (e.g. Paraguay, Ecuador, Mexico, Samoa) have developed, with UN support, ‘NMIRF software’ – in effect national databases of clustered human rights recommendations, showing responsible line ministries, progress updates, and – sometimes – impact indicators. This software automatically communicates and coordinates with implementation ‘focal points,’ and is usually linked with a publically accessible website – so that members of the public, NGOs, MPs and NHRIs can track progress and hold governments to account.



• A number of NMIRFs (and their software) are also being used to report on progress towards the SDG targets. Paraguay and Ecuador were offered as examples in this regard – though it was noted that these NMIRFs are still primarily focused on human rights implementation (the link with SDGs is, at the moment, mainly done for informational and in-government advocacy purposes). Indeed, even in countries with relatively sophisticated NMIRFs, there is usually another, completely separate, institution or mechanism responsible for coordinating the implementation of the SDGs. Many speakers noted that: ‘this makes no sense.’

• A number of donor State representatives remarked that the ability of NMIRFs and the implementation software to track progress with implementation and impact (via indicators) in real-time, and to make that information publicly available, is potentially very useful for development partners, which are constantly under political pressure to ‘show results, and show impact.’ Some of the speakers said they either use, or encourage recipient States to use, a ‘traffic light system’ to track implementation. ‘This is very easy and effective, as no one wants to be in the red.’ One development agency said they had used this system to track the implementation of a national action plan on the rights of persons with disabilities.

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• The Universal Rights Group (URG) and partners, with the support of Singapore, will shortly launch new ‘NMIRF software’ called IMPACT OSS. This will be made available for free to all States and NHRIs, and covers both UN human rights recommendations and SDG targets.

• A State representative informed participants that in 2017, a group of around 30 State delegations in Geneva, together with OHCHR and other UN agencies and programmes, and the URG, established a ‘Group of Friends on national implementation, reporting and follow-up/NMIRFs.’ The Group aims to provide a platform for States and others to share evolving good practices vis-


à-vis the establishment and further development of NMIRFs. The Group also coordinates advanced questions and recommendations to States under review in the UPR – encouraging them to establish NMIRFs. The hope is that in 2018 and 2019, the Group of Friends will coordinate a series of regional meetings on NMIRFs, for States, NHRIs and others to exchange good practices on implementation, and identify common principles for NMIRFs.

• According to a State representative, all States that have established NMIRFs (most of the world's most advanced NMIRFs have been established by Small States and other developing countries) have noted very positive results, both in terms of easier, on-time reporting back to the UN (nearly all States with NMIRFs have been able to eliminate their reporting backlog), but also, most importantly, in terms of improved implementation and on-the-ground human rights impact. On this last point, one State noted that before the creation of its NMIRF, whole departments of government spent most of their time preparing and consulting on UN progress reports. This meant they had no time to coordinate the actual implementation of recommendations, and were thus 'reporting on reports.'

• In order to help more States, especially developing States, strengthen national implementation and reporting, and build effective NMIRFs, it will also be important to reform the ways in which the UN Human Rights Council delivers (or facilitates the delivery of) human rights technical assistance and capacity-building support (under item 10 of its agenda).

• Speakers repeatedly drew attention to the importance of linking the 'mutually-interconnected and mutually-reinforcing' agendas of human rights and the SDGs, as a key contribution to the new global 'Implementation Agenda.' As noted above, the basic premise of this approach is the considerable overlap between the SDG targets and international human rights law. Thus it makes sense for States to implement, monitor and report on progress in a 'joined up' manner. On reporting, it was repeatedly noted that by collating and clustering all UN human rights recommendations (from all mechanisms) together with all SDG targets, the same output and outcome indicators may be used time and again to produce multiple different progress reports.

• It was also pointed out that the 'best way of celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is to drive forward the domestic implementation of universal human rights norms,' and in that regard 'both the human rights community and the development community have much to offer, and should work together.'

• From the human rights side, it was argued that the 'human rights community needs to change the narrative – to present rights not as something difficult or controversial, but in a positive light - as a key contribution to sustainable development.' 'Human rights law, and the obligations to which it gives rise, helps define, and provides a roadmap towards, sustainable development.'

• For its part, the international development community has the power to transform the on-the-ground enjoyment of human rights. They often have the budget and reach (in the field) to deliver, but perhaps lack the knowledge or expertise, or see human rights as something that might endanger their 'development focused' relationship with the host/recipient State.

• Thus, to make real progress, 'the two communities should break their silos and work together to drive forward human rights and the SDGs in a joined-up and complementary manner.' By developing partnerships across traditional policy communities, human rights and development actors can pool and combine expertise, and magnify resources and influence.

• Securing progress with the human rights 'Implementation Agenda' and with the realisation of the SDGs would also represent an important contribution to the Secretary-General's UN security pillar reforms – especially in the context of prevention and sustaining peace. Securing sustainable development and building national human rights capacity/resilience, are essential prerequisites for the prevention of human rights violations at root cause level, and thus for the prevention of conflict and the maintenance of peace.

# Bilateral development support for human rights implementation

• Speakers repeatedly noted that bilateral development agencies have been working on, and developing, human rights-based approaches (HRBAs) to their work for many years. Indeed, in the past, both in the context of the OECD and informal groupings of, for example, Nordic development agencies, there have been a number of meetings of bilateral donors on this issue.

• That said, it was acknowledged that some agencies have recently begun to develop new HRBAs. In some cases, in addition to ensuring that development projects are delivered in a manner that is consistent with procedural rights and norms (e.g. in terms of transparency, participation, non-discrimination and accountability), bilateral development agencies have begun to integrate UN human rights considerations more explicitly into country programming. In most cases, this means that the human rights situation in a country and the extent of its international human rights obligations, are taken into account when the development agency undertakes a 'situation analysis' or 'scoping' exercise for a project. In some cases, that situation analysis may also include, for example, which UPR recommendations the country has accepted. Notwithstanding, in at least one case, the use of human rights as a principal basis for development planning has evolved even further: UN human rights recommendations to a State (especially, for the moment, accepted UPR recommendations) are used as a principal basis for the design of development programming in a recipient country. In other words, ODA is explicitly mobilised to help the duty-bearer (the State) implement UN human rights recommendations – and thus implement their international human rights obligations and commitments.

• On this last point, a representative from a developing country NHRI and a senior UN official strongly encouraged bilateral development partners to re-orientate their country programming to focus, to a far greater degree, on helping States implement UN human rights recommendations (from UPR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures) and thereby their international human rights obligations. According to a NHRI representative: 'Each of the three principal UN monitoring mechanisms - UPR, Special Procedures and the Treaty Bodies - has its own characteristics and strengths. For their part, States devote an enormous amount of time and resources to engaging with these mechanisms. As a consequence, taken as a whole, the UN human rights mechanisms undertake an incredibly rich evaluation of the human rights achievements, challenges and priorities for each member State of the UN.' Taken together, according to a civil society representative, 'the recommendations generated by all of these mechanisms,' (which aim to help a State strengthen its compliance with its international human rights obligations and commitments,) 'provide each member State of the UN with a wonderfully detailed, practical and politically relevant (i.e. to the situation of the country) blueprint from human rights, democratic and sustainable development reform.' Unfortunately, according to a number of speakers, for the moment the international community, including the donor community, are hardly using these blueprints.

• Orientating ODA to focus more on supporting the national implementation of UN human rights recommendations would have a range of benefits. For example, for donors, it would mean development programming could be fully aligned with international human rights standards (e.g. procedural rights) and, crucially, with the international human rights obligations of the State concerned. It would also mean that ODA could be directed towards issues that are – objectively speaking - priority challenges for the recipient State. If, for example, Country B has received large numbers of recommendations from the UPR, Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures, about discrimination against women, then that suggests this is a key problem/challenge for the country – and thus helping Country B to implement those recommendations would be extremely worthwhile. Linked to this point, focusing ODA on the implementation of UN human rights recommendations helps ensure that assistance is demonstrably 'country led' – i.e. it is responding to the human rights/sustainable development needs of the recipient - rather than the human rights priorities of the donor. Thus, the human rights obligations that a given developing country has itself voluntarily signed up to and ratified, become 'a common point of reference or a common language, allowing bilateral

> "...take up of the HRBA is very much linked to the training and motivation of the staff concerned..."

donors to directly engage with the primary duty bearers in a country (i.e. the government) and drive systematic change.'

• Moreover, especially where the recipient State has established an NMIRF, it is relatively easy for the donor to track progress with implementation and to monitor the impact of its ODA intervention. Finally, this 'human rights recommendation' approach can be especially useful in 'difficult country situations' – where a government is more likely to accept international assistance to implement UPR recommendations (that it itself has accepted), than would otherwise be the case with 'rights-based ODA.'

• A further benefit of using UN human rights recommendations to States as a key entry point for bilateral development agencies is that the UN processes that generate those recommendations (i.e. UPR, Treaty Body reviews, Special Procedures visits) are open to, and proactively include, the views of domestic civil society and NHRIs. This means, by definition, that the ultimate output of the mechanisms – i.e. recommendations – also reflect the views, concerns and priorities of national NGOs and NHRIs.

• A UN official thus expressed his hope that the meeting in Oslo would lead all development agencies to consider how to better orientate ODA towards helping developing countries implement UN (and regional) human rights recommendations, and thereby strengthen compliance with their international human rights obligations. He called this an 'open door' opportunity. He informed colleagues that as of the start of the 3rd cycle of the UPR, the High Commissioner now systematically writes to States after their review, highlighting key clusters of recommendations, and thus key priorities for implementation. These letters are, potentially, a very useful resource for bilateral development agencies. The hope was also expressed that 'the OECD DAC review would, in the future, include accepted UPR recommendations.'

• It was also noted that donor States are increasingly adopting the best practice of following up on their own UPR recommendations to developing countries with offers of development assistance, to help the latter implement those recommendations.

• For their part, development agencies were open to these suggestions and good practices, and highlighted, in that regard, the central importance of training and learning across donor State administrations. 'It is not the case that development-focused colleagues do not want to do these things, but rather that they are not aware of them or don't know how to do them.' 'We therefore need to move forward slowly, and provide colleagues with the training and the tools they need to adopt effective HRBAs.' One donor country has set up a 'HRBA clinic,' which takes place every week for two hours. 'It is very easy for people to participate in these clinics, and it seems they have had a significant positive impact on the take-up of human rights and the quality of programming.'

• Another speaker agreed, explaining that: 'in our experience, take up of the HRBA is very much linked to the training and motivation of the staff concerned (usually in our embassies).' Other factors that appear to help bilateral development officials 'internalise and use' a HRBA are: the inclusion, amongst HRBA tools, of human rights risk analyses; the development of background notes showing how, for example, human rights relate to agricultural reform or the education sector; the publication of fact sheets highlighting 'HRBA success stories' – and showing the positive impacts of the approach; and the presence, on-the-ground in UN Country Teams, of Human Rights Advisors – as key points of reference and expertise.

• A UN official suggested that a further 'HRBA tool' that could be developed and that may well help, would be a model 'standard operating procedure' (SOP) for development agencies, that would call for the automatic integration, in national development programming, of relevant UPR, Special Procedures and Treaty Body recommendations. A number of bilateral donors expressed interest in this idea, and asked whether OHCHR could help prepare such a model SOP?

• When developing HRBA training modules and tools, two speakers argued that it would be important to 'borrow and learn from similar exercises in the case of gender mainstreaming.'

• Finally, one donor representative explained that a one key priority for their government is to improve accountability and the measurement of impact by better 'following the money.' She explained that 'external-facing budget lines for human rights are in fact much smaller than the total financial resources we do actually mobilise to support human rights implementation in developing countries.' To better track this support, and the results it secures, 'it will be necessary to find better ways of coding aid under different budget lines.' Donor States should share experiences and evolving good practice in this regard, perhaps in the context of the OECD/DAC.

# Multilateral development support for human rights implementation

• It was pointed out that the UN 'has come a long way' in terms of the development and application of human rights based approaches to the delivery of international development assistance. UN Resident Coordinators are now routinely expected to pursue a HRBA in their work, with the result that 'today, 100% of UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) adopt a HRBA.' Others, while not disagreeing with this assertion, pointed out that it does depend somewhat on one's understanding of a 'HRBA.' For example, while UN Country Teams are increasingly taking steps to integrate UN human rights recommendations into UNDAFs, for the moment this is far from systematic.

• It was noted that 'since 2010, there has been a concerted effort to mainstream human rights across the UN development system.' As part of this push, for example, the job descriptions of Resident Coordinators have been revised, so as to include human rights responsibilities, and human rights guidance notes have been developed for UN Country Teams. UNDOCO also sends letters every year to all Resident Coordinators highlighting the various opportunities that exist for them to engage with the UN human rights mechanisms (for example, where heir host State is scheduled to report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child).

• Moreover, importantly, the new UNDAF guidelines for UN Country Teams now include human rights as a programming principle, and seek to encourage Resident Coordinators to systematically integrate UN human rights recommendations into UNDAFs.

• All UN officials present at the meeting agreed that providing UNCTs with additional technical support and expertise in this area, for example by attaching Human Rights Advisors (deployed under the leadership of OHCHR) to Resident Coordinator Offices, offers enormous benefits (including vis-à-vis the integration of human rights recommendations into UNDAFs). It was likewise noted that the emergence and development of NMIRFs in many countries has been driven and/or facilitated by the presence of Human Rights Advisors in UNCTs.

• As a result of these and other steps, UNDOCO has documented a significant increase in the percentage of UNCTs that integrate human rights recommendations into their national development programming. For example, according to UNDOCO statistics, in 2017 85% of UN Country Teams reported that they had supported the government in mainstreaming human rights into national development policies and programmes.

• Other interesting statistics (for 2017) presented to the meeting included:

  - 68% of UN Country Teams report that they facilitated Treaty Body recommendation follow-up by governments;

  - 66% of Country Teams report that they have engaged with one or more human rights Treaty Bodies in the past year. (Interestingly, this is higher than the number who said they had actively engaged with the UPR - 59%);

  - 59% of Country Teams reported that they had engaged with governments to facilitate visits by Special Procedures. 41% said they had then helped the government follow-up on the resulting recommendations;

  - 70% of Country Teams reported that they drew on UPR recommendations to inform UN analysis, programming and/or advocacy strategies, (up from 63% in 2016); and 85% said they had used Treaty Body recommendations for the same purpose, (up from 78% in 2016). In contrast, only 47% said that had used Special Procedures recommendations to inform programming, (up from 39% in 2016).

• For its part, UNDP has endorsed a HRBA to development planning since 2003. However, a key step forward came in 2015 when UNDP developed Mandatory Social and Environmental Standards. 'These became the hook for everything we have done since on human rights.' This year,

> "...taken together, the UPR, Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and regional human rights mechanisms, generate a wealth of useful input for UNDAFs."

> "...in 2017, 85% of UN Country Teams reported that they had supported the government in mainstreaming human rights into national development policies and programmes..."

UNDP will publish new guidelines on HRBA, which will include, crucially, guidance on integrating UN human rights recommendations into national programming, on following-up on the implementation of those recommendations, and on supporting national actors (e.g. NHRIs) to follow-up. An OHCHR official agreed with this assessment, and noted that domestic implementation of UN human rights recommendations is a key priority of the Office's new strategic plan.

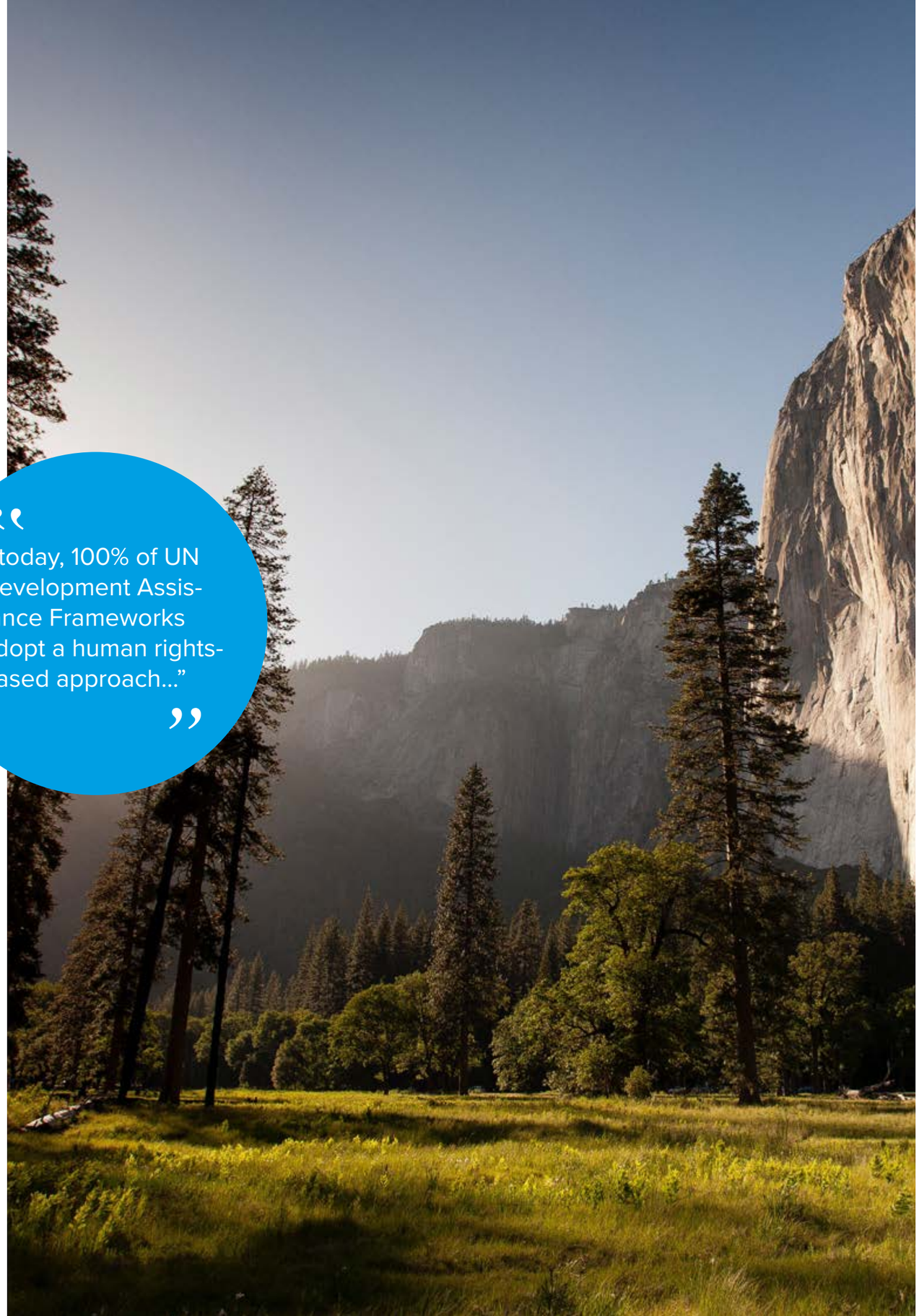
• The Secretary-General's on-going development system reforms offer an important opportunity to better deliver human rights 'on the ground.' The repositioning of the Resident Coordinator system (delinking it from UNDP), the decentralisation and the empowerment of Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams to represent and deliver for all three pillars of the UN, the emphasis on implementing the SDGs (which, as noted above, have considerable cross-over with international human rights standards), and the improved mobilisation of UNDAFs, are all, in principle, positive developments for human rights.

• Regarding UNDAFs, for example, it was remarked that UPR cycles are 4.5 years, and UNDAF cycles are 5 years – meaning there are clear opportunities to synchronise the cycles as a contribution to 'joined up' implementation and reporting. That said, there is, it was noted, still room for improvement in terms of how different UN agencies and programmes use UPR recommendations in their national programming.

• Moreover, it is not only the UPR that generates important and useful recommendations. As noted above, participants repeatedly pointed out that taken together, the UPR, Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and regional human rights mechanisms, generate 'a wealth of useful input for UNDAFs.'

• Many of the current efforts at the UN to better integrate human rights into its country-level work is premised on contributing to the Secretary-General's 'prevention agenda.' It was noted that the Secretary-General has established a 'prevention platform,' designed to allow different parts of the UN to share good practices, early warning information and prevention tools. The 'Human Rights Up Front' initiative, which will is being strengthened and is now led by an Assistant Secretary-General, is very much part of this 'prevention platform.'

> "...today, 100% of UN Development Assistance Frameworks adopt a human rights-based approach..."



# Next steps

• Participants warmly welcomed the initiative to hold the meeting, and to bring bilateral and multilateral development partners together to discuss HRBAs to development assistance, and how ODA can be better leveraged to support human rights implementation and the realisation of the SDGs. Such a meeting provides a unique space for development partners to exchange the latest thinking and strategies, and to drive forward a common agenda.

• There was therefore support for this network of bilateral and multilateral development partners to hold such meetings on a regular basis (perhaps annually to begin with) and to share information between meetings.

• Participants also requested that a report of the meeting be prepared and shared, along with other documents, presentations, and IT tools (e.g. IMPACT OSS) presented at the meeting.

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