

Thank you chairs,

I am Nelya Rakhimova from the civil society Coalition for Sustainable Development of Russia speaking on behalf of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism.

In times of the COVID pandemic it is even more crucial than ever to uphold and defend **human rights**. We are concerned to see how some populist leaders are trying to exploit the crisis for short term electoral goals. Suddenly we have seen the erosion of laws to protect women's rights (for example, Istanbul Convention), rights of civil society, including front-line workers. We look to you co-chairs and Member States to stand strong on this point.

In **Section III**, which addresses the SDGs of this year's HLPF, we call on you to identify much more clearly **the actions and the steps that governments are committing to take**.

For example, in SDG1, we look for the commitment to **significantly increase social protection as 40% of the world is still without it**. We call for proper financing for social protection floors and consideration given to the establishment of a 'global Fund for 'social protection. It is the most effective way to mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic on all low income and vulnerable groups, including single-parent households, immigrants, indigenous and youth populations, as well as older persons and children.

Social protection will also help to eliminate hunger, SDG2, but this also needs different agricultural and development models to stop destruction of biodiversity, deforestation and abuse of chemicals. We also must protect land rights defenders.

For SDG8, on decent work, we call for commitment to social protection for all workers both in the formal and informal sectors as well as to the ILO Conventions including C100 and C190.

On SDG12, we call on a reference to the multilateral commitments already made to reduce pollution from waste and chemicals and ongoing efforts to end the suffocation of our oceans and waterways with plastic pollution.

On SDG13 on climate, we believe it is essential to refer not only to the commitment to end fossil fuel subsidies, but overall to ending the investments by public and pension funds into deforestation and other climate-destructive economic activities. Recent WWF study showed that China and the EU top the list of investors in deforestation.

On SDG 17, we need to reaffirm that, beyond the outcome of the FfD Forum, more urgent action is needed to strengthen the fiscal and policy space of developing countries, which continues to shrink due to illicit financial flows, unsustainable and illegitimate debt burdens, and policy conditionalities. It is also quite worrying that the need to address debt distress is understood to be at the same level of urgency and priority as developing capacity in promoting e-commerce. We propose to eliminate the reference on debt distress here and add another sentence in the lines of “It is of the utmost urgency that the international community agrees on more ambitious actions to tackle the debt distress in developing countries, particularly in SIDS and other countries dependent on commodities, remittances and tourism, through the establishment of a fair , transparent and comprehensive sovereign debt resolution multilateral framework.”

We welcome the section IV which addresses key cross-cutting dimensions, including the need to stop the decline of quality education, safe water and sanitation and affordable health services. Here there is need to specify the need for sexual and reproductive health services including safe abortion as last report from UNWOMEN shows that these services have much suffered from the pandemic.

In paragraph 49 we call for a reference to social enterprises, cooperatives and Civil Society organisations. These organisations are proven to be much better able to address crisis situations. We also call for a strong reference to the UN treaty on business and human rights.

In relation to paragraph 50, the role of the private sector in infrastructure is highly overrated. We point to the harmful impact on the environment, on the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, and on countries burdened by debt of infrastructure investments. We need a whole new approach to sustainable infrastructure that guarantees indigenous people's and local community's Free and Prior Informed Consent.

Finally, we are highly concerned about the apparent lack of recognition of the role of civil society in the document and most particularly in the closing paragraph 53. The 2030 Agenda and the Covid Recovery plan has particularly emphasized the positive contributions of all of society. We call for strong commitments to ensure the meaningful participation of civil society in all parts of the 2030 Agenda, from planning, implementation, monitoring and holding governments to account.

Thank you chair