

Written Statement submitted by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23, Special Consultative Status), Association Points-Coeur (Special Consultative Status), Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities, General Consultative Status), Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice (IIMA, Special Consultative Status), New Humanity (General Consultative Status), International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education (OIDEI, Special Consultative Status) and International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development (VIDES, Special Consultative Status).

Title: Right to Development and the Post 2015 Development Agenda

Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, Association Points-Coeur, Caritas Internationalis, IIMA, New Humanity, OIDEI and VIDES welcome the report on Right to Development of the intergovernmental Working Group and the Consolidated report of the Secretary General and High Commissioner for Human Rights, both delivered at the 24<sup>th</sup> regular session of the Human Rights Council.

Three years ago, as the Geneva Forum of Catholic Inspired NGOs, the co-signers formed a working group on the Right to Development and International Solidarity. In this manner, our Working Group actively contributes to the debate of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Right to Development and supports the mandate of the Independent Expert on Human Rights and International Solidarity.

Our organizations are present at grass-root level and work with people living in poverty, in both developing and developed countries, as they strive to achieve their integral human development. On daily basis, we observe how crucial and urgent it is for all countries to fully implement the Right to Development in order to overcome structural international and national obstacles that are root causes of increasing inequities and that perpetuate extreme poverty.

In this regard, we regret the slow pace of the Intergovernmental Working Group in discussing the criteria and operational sub-criteria for the implementation of the Right to Development. We believe that the discussion on the issue of indicators should be less politicised and polarised. Indicators are surely necessary to monitor the implementation of the Right to Development but it can be determined at a second stage after the criteria and sub-criteria have been selected properly. Furthermore, experts may be more competent and neutral during the process of identifying appropriate indicators for the criteria and sub-criteria while States should indicate specific national sub-parameters aimed at better responding to the needs of each specific population/country.

We commend the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OHCHR Right to Development Section for their continuous efforts to mainstream Right to Development in all UN events and OHCHR documents. In a special way, we appreciate the letter of Madame Pillay, dated 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013, to all the Permanent Missions in New York and Geneva, entitled “Human Rights in the Post-2015 Agenda”, which clearly invites inclusion of the Right to Development in the agenda of relevant United Nations structures and processes.

In September 2011, the Secretary-General established the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda to coordinate, in consultation with all the stakeholders, system-wide preparations for the agenda. This Task Team should help to create an enabling environment to meet shared objectives, support global solutions to global problems and guide national development efforts, while supporting the empowerment of people to determine their own futures. The preliminary report of the SG “*Realizing the Future We Want for All*” of June 2012, states that new agenda should be reorganised along four key dimensions of more holistic approach: (1) inclusive social development; (2) inclusive economic development; (3) environmental sustainability; and (4) peace and security. These dimensions are consistent with the principles of the Millennium Declaration, which set out a vision of freedom from want and fear for present and future generations and builds on the three pillars of sustainable development<sup>1</sup>.

The recently published Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons<sup>2</sup> on the Post-2015 Development Agenda focuses on the main goal of eradicating extreme poverty and envisions five big, transformative shifts as priorities for a forward-looking, compelling and integrated sustainable development agenda based on the Rio principles. Such shifts are: 1. Leave no one behind. 2. Put sustainable development at the core. 3. Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth. 4. Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all. 5. Forge a new global partnership.

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome Document refers to the "interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars" of sustainable development as economic development, social development, and environmental protection.

<sup>2</sup> A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development, Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, May 2013.

In the wake of these shifts, the panel provides an example of new goals and measurable targets<sup>3</sup>.

Global Partnership (MDG 8) was key to the realisation of all MDGs by focusing on the means to achieve development goals, but it had some shortcomings, as rightly was pointed out by the UN System Task Team in its thematic reflection<sup>4</sup>.

First of all, the lack of explicit links with other related MDGs compromised the relevance of MDG8 as a driving goal. Secondly, targets and indicators lacked precise goals to fulfil or benchmarks, and many indicators were not consistent with the targets. Thirdly, it did not foster a true partnership and did not move away from the traditional “donor-recipient” paradigm. Mostly, it was not based on Right to Development and the Human Rights aspect including the duty to international cooperation was not made explicit.

The co-signatory NGOs firmly believe that the Post-2015 development agenda should avoid the restricted view of the previous MDG agenda and adopt, at every level, a human rights based approach that includes a focus on the Right to Development. In this regard, we welcome the report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons since it explicitly mentions the Right to Development in the paragraph referring to a new global partnership.

In fact, the Right to Development provides an integrated, holistic and cohesive normative framework for achieving just and equitable development for all people. It encompasses both the civil and political and the economic, social and cultural dimensions of human rights and addresses both the national and international dimensions of development.

The debate on the Post-2015 Agenda is still going on at national, regional and international levels. Hence, it is important to put more emphasis on the implementation of the Right to Development as a key factor for realising an enabling international and national environment to eradicate poverty and inequities. For this reason, it also is necessary for the Intergovernmental Working Group on Right to Development to speed up the process of revising the criteria and operational sub-criteria for the implementation of the right.

We live in a globalised era and interdependent world. The recurrent economic and financial crises, climate change, and food crises re-emphasize the relevance of the Right to Development and the need for its implementation. Moreover, increased inequalities within and between countries worldwide show how the Right to Development is relevant for both developed and developing countries. These inequalities also demonstrate that it is not possible to guarantee other Human Rights without the realization of the Right to Development. The need to make progress with consolidating the principles of solidarity, collective and shared responsibility, with due respect for the sovereignty of peoples, and to facilitate effective international cooperation without conditionality, as well to find a balance between the national and international responsibilities, becomes more and more imperative.

The Declaration on Right to Development contains all the principles mentioned to date in the main reports of the Post-2015 Agenda’s debate; these include: Comprehensive, People and Person Centred Development, Participation, Non-discrimination, Social Justice, Peace, Security and Disarmament, Equality of opportunities between men and women, Accountability, Indivisibility of Human Rights, Fairness in the distribution of wealth and benefits, Sovereignty of Peoples over all natural wealth and resources, International Cooperation, Self-determination of Peoples, Responsibility of all and Responsibility of States at national and international level.

Only the concept of sustainable development, fruit of Rio +20, and the principle of International Solidarity are not explicitly mentioned in the Declaration, even if, in fact, they are implicitly contained in this document. In our opinion, these two concepts should also be guiding the Post-2015 Agenda debate.

International Solidarity includes, but is not limited to, international cooperation, and springs out of the notion of a communion of responsibilities and interest among individuals, groups and States, and is connected to the ideal of fraternity and the search for the common good. It also emphasises the concept of collective and extraterritorial obligations of States with respect to international cooperation and assistance, a concept firmly established within international human rights instruments.

We firmly believe that International Solidarity should be recognised as a right and be interlinked with the Right to

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<sup>3</sup> The suggested goals are: 1. End Poverty; 2. Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality; 3. Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning; 4. Ensure Healthy Lives; 5. Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition; 6. Achieve Universal Access to Water and Sanitation; 7. Secure Sustainable Energy; 8. Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Equitable Growth; 9. Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainably; 10. Ensure Good Governance and Effective Institutions; 11. Ensure Stable and Peaceful Societies; 12. Create a Global Enabling Environment and Catalyse Long-Term Finance.

<sup>4</sup> UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda, “Assessment of MDG8 and lessons Learnt”, Thematic Think Piece by UTU, OHCHR, UNDESA, January 2013

Development, since the two are interlinked, mutually reinforcing, and are both keys to the achievement of a true integral development of individuals and peoples.

To build a better world based on International Solidarity is possible in spite of the present worldwide scenario: it is a matter of our personal choices as individuals and the political will of governments, of turning from being imprisoned in fear, intolerance and individualism, to opening ourselves to hope, mutual acceptance and awareness of being a global community. At present, many signs (natural disasters, pacific revolutions seeking democracy, climate change and multiple crises,) tell us that we should go in the direction of building a new world social order.

There is no need to “reinvent the wheel” when, as a human family, we already have at our disposal the right lenses to set our sight on the best post-2015 goals for the common good of humanity. Such lenses are Right to Development and International Solidarity!