

Joint Statement

by a group of
member states in
support of SDG16+



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

July 2019

This joint statement brings together the collective voice of member states to underline the importance of SDG16+ to the 2030 Agenda and to demonstrate growing national commitment to the implementation of these targets.

The statement provides an overview of the SDG16+ targets, calls for accelerated action to implement these targets, and explores the potential for acceleration in increasing peace, justice, and inclusion, and strengthening partnerships for implementation.

The statement has been prepared under the leadership of the Permanent Mission of Argentina with inputs from PRs at breakfast meetings hosted by Argentina, Switzerland, Norway, and the Republic of Korea.

The SDG16+ Targets

The 2030 Agenda sets out a vision of peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence.

This call for peace, justice, and inclusion is fully integrated into the 2030 Agenda. SDG16+ includes 12 targets from SDG16 and 24 targets from seven other goals that directly measure an aspect of peace, justice, and inclusion.

The SDG16+ targets are an enabler that will allow us to reach other goals, laying the foundation for sustainable development. They are universal, with all countries facing challenges in their implementation, but they are especially important to reaching the people, countries, and communities who risk being left behind.

The first four years of the 2030 Agenda have seen important progress on the achievement of the SDG16+ targets.

At a national level, Voluntary National Reviews have shown that positive change can be achieved. Countries have made concrete commitments on preventing violence, increasing access to justice, strengthening institutions, and promoting greater inclusion.

At a global and regional level, new initiatives have been launched, such as the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children and the Pathfinders' Task Force on Justice. Existing initiatives, such as the Open Government Partnership, provide a platform for countries to work together towards more ambitious implementation.

Accelerating Implementation of SDG16+

The full delivery of the SDG16+ targets requires greater ambition.

More than half a million people die from violence each year. Half of the world's children and at least a third of its women are victims of violence. Child marriage, female genital mutilation, modern slavery, and other abuses remain commonplace. People living in conflict-affected countries are confronted by multiple obstacles that block the path towards a durable peace and sustainable development. Insecurity is also a daily reality for many people who live outside conflict zones.

More than five billion people – two-thirds of the world's population – lack access to justice. At any one time, 1.5 billion people have justice problems that they cannot resolve, while more than a billion people lack legal identity. Corruption and illicit financial and arms flows threaten societies and economies, undermining democracy and the rule of law. No country can build a just society without doing more to protect human rights and to empower women and girls.

Poor governance is a threat to the delivery of all dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. We cannot achieve our goals for people, planet, prosperity, and peace unless we build effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.

Rising inequality and high levels of social, economic, cultural, and political exclusion must also be tackled if we are to sustain the collective action needed to achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

This High-level Political Forum is an opportunity to celebrate progress, but also to identify gaps where a renewed focus on implementation of the SDG16+ targets is needed. We look forward to the first SDG Summit where Heads of State and Government are asked to “mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.”

The Roadmap for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies – launched in 2017 and revised for this High-level Political Forum – sets out the evidence that shows how we can build more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Based on this roadmap, we are convinced that an acceleration in implementation can be achieved.

Peaceful, just and inclusive societies

Building Peaceful Societies

SDG16.1 asks us to “significantly reduce all forms of violence everywhere.” Once prevention has failed, violence takes a dynamic of its own, as violence leads to more violence.

The 2030 Agenda recognizes the special needs of conflict-affected and post-conflict countries. Efforts to sustain peace require a positive vision of prevention that is nationally owned, people-centered, inclusive of marginalized people and groups, and that provides in particular a voice for women, children, young people, and older persons. In this regard, we support the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen the implementation of the relevant resolutions aimed at building and sustaining peace.

We also recognize that more than 80 percent of violent deaths occur outside conflict. The evidence demonstrates that a rapid reduction of these forms of violence are within reach, benefiting the worst-affected communities which face multiple forms of inequality, exclusion, and discrimination.

For women and for children, for example, the RESPECT and INSPIRE frameworks provide guidance for countries to implement violence prevention policies that draw on the best evidence and that are endorsed by the UN and other international organizations.

Building Just Societies

The *Justice for All* report of the Pathfinders' Task Force on Justice sets out a vision that puts people at the center of justice systems and justice at the heart of the sustainable development agenda.

Its agenda for action will inform a shift from justice for the few to justice for all, by helping people resolve their justice problems, preventing injustices from occurring, and creating opportunities for people to participate fully in their societies and economies.

To build more just societies, urgent action is needed to tackle corruption. We are determined to use the opportunity presented by the special session of the United Nations General Assembly against corruption, which will be held in the first half of 2021 (UNGASS 2021).

We also support an acceleration in action to ensure that all births are registered and that all people, without discrimination, have access to legal identity.

Building Inclusive Societies

The 2030 Agenda offers an unprecedented opportunity to build institutions that will meet people's aspirations for a more sustainable future.

Democratic and transparent institutions are the best foundation for peaceful, just and inclusive societies. We commit to strengthening institutions characterized by transparency and accountability. Open government initiatives are commendable as they help strengthen state-citizen relationships and contribute to the legitimacy of public institutions.

We stress the importance of local governance. We call for the inclusion of sub-national stakeholders in all efforts to advance the 2030 Agenda, and we support independent institutions that hold governments accountable and that help societies to manage conflicts peacefully, combat corruption, fight organized crime, and prevent illicit financial flows.

We believe that social, economic, cultural, and political inclusion holds the key to fostering more peaceful societies. We urge all countries to realize the human rights of all, promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development, and protect space for civil society.

We are committed to eliminating legal and de facto discrimination against women, and to including women as decision makers and empowering them economically and as rights-holders.

Global Partnership for SDG16+

Delivery of the SDG16+ targets requires the mobilization of additional finance from multiple sources. We will continue to work to understand the costs and benefits of effective implementation, and to develop effective and sustainable financing strategies.

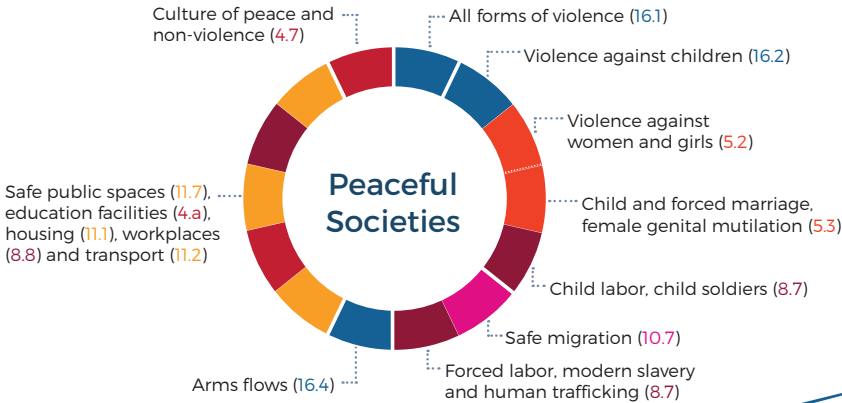
We will also enhance the exchange of good practices and data among countries. Quality data must be produced and shared among all stakeholders if we are to demonstrate measurable progress against the SDG16+ targets.

Training and capacity-building are essential to enhance and strengthen the institutional capabilities of governments to deliver on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

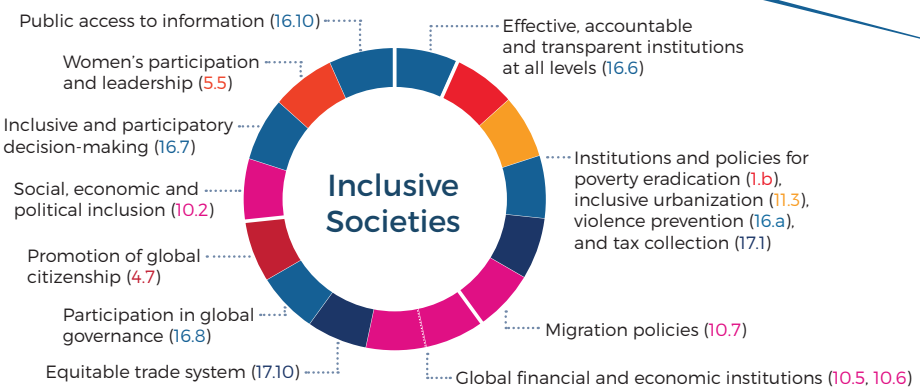
Finally, we need a strengthened partnership for peaceful, just and inclusive societies. We renew our commitment to work together with the UN system, other international and regional organizations, civil society, the private sector, philanthropists, parliamentarians, and local authorities.

As we enter a new decade, the Pathfinders will continue to provide a platform for ambitious action. The Global Alliance will work with countries to report progress, and the 16+ Forum will bring together partners from all sectors to showcase success, including in Timor-Leste in November 2019.

Together, we will use the High-level Political Forum and SDG Summit to accelerate implementation of the SDG16+ targets. We will redouble our efforts to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels while ensuring that no one is left behind.



We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence.



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