

**Statement of the major groups and other stakeholders on ensuring inclusive and integrated implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063**

**Second session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development**

**Cairo, 18 May 2016**

We, representatives of the major groups and other stakeholders, met in Cairo on 17 May 2016 for a preparatory meeting for the second session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the theme of which was “Ensuring inclusive and integrated implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063”.

We highly appreciate and are encouraged by the support of the United Nations and the African Union to engage with the major groups and other stakeholders, and their recognition of the role of the major groups and other stakeholders in realizing sustainable development in Africa.

Regarding the role that the High-level Political Forum, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the Governments and Africa’s partners could play to support and achieve effective inclusive and integrated implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, we recommend the following:

- African Governments should provide leadership in ensuring the inclusion of all actors, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups, and in linking the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals to the realities and aspirations of citizens, as well as creating an enabling environment (including policy coherence for sustainable development, resource allocation and institutional frameworks) for the major groups and other stakeholders to play a meaningful role. They should raise awareness of the principles and benefits of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 among African citizens, as well as open more collaboration opportunities at the national, regional and global levels by creating ownership.
- The Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development should be a platform for State and non-State actors to share experiences on implementation and follow-up and monitoring;

coordinate regional efforts and jointly develop consolidated regional positions for the High-level Political Forum; and track progress on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the national and regional levels, to ensure that no countries or stakeholders are left behind. The Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development should also embrace the modalities of the High-level Political Forum for the major groups and other stakeholders' participation and engagement in the Forum.

- Noting resolution 66/288 of the United Nations General Assembly entitled “The future we want”, which established the High-level Political Forum and recognized the importance of integrating the social, economic and environmental aspects of development, and resolution 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the High-level Political Forum, the major groups and other stakeholders believe that the High-level Political Forum should be an inclusive platform for tracking the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, sharing lessons learned and experiences among member States and stakeholders, reviewing and consolidating means of implementation based on shared opportunities and challenges in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and addressing the capacity needs of member States.

- Africa's partners should provide capacity, appropriate technology, technical and financial support to member States, the major groups and other stakeholders to complement progress made and bridge possible risks to the effective and efficient implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the role of the major groups and other stakeholders in supporting and achieving effective inclusive and integrated implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, most of our current work already confirms our strong catalytic role in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 through the following:

- Strong mobilization of capacity to increase awareness of both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 among African citizens, thereby enhancing traction and ownership;

- Facilitating the sharing of innovation, knowledge and good practices among different stakeholders regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, including civil society organizations, member States, the private sector and development partners, on what

works and what does not, thereby reducing the tension between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and maximizing scarce resources for the implementation of both agendas;

- Availing and promoting the use of citizen-driven data that are locally relevant and disaggregated to measure progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through effective participation in national statistics systems and collection of administrative data;
- Generating local-level solutions and opportunities for scaling up initiatives with Governments and development partners, thereby reducing the learning curve;
- Strengthening opportunities for vertical review and follow-up (across all key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including Governments, the private sector and civil society) as opposed to horizontal review only (Government to Government);
- Giving meaning to the pledge to “leave no one behind” by reaching out to and creating platforms for marginalized and vulnerable groups (including indigenous groups, persons with disabilities, women, young people and children) so that they can participate actively and have their voices heard;
- Coordinating non-State actors’ efforts regarding implementation, follow-up and monitoring at the national and regional levels through civil society engagement mechanisms and platforms, and reporting at the national, regional and global levels on the role of the major groups and other stakeholders in the implementation, follow-up and review processes.

The major groups and other stakeholders require the following organizational arrangements and support in order to fulfil their role in achieving the effective inclusive and integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063:

At the national level, we call upon:

- Member states to provide strong political will and participatory systems that encourage the major groups and other stakeholders to be part of the priority setting and implementation process of both agendas;

- The Economic Commission for Africa to facilitate strong connections and continuous engagement between the major groups, the United Nations Development Programme and policymakers;
- Member States to integrate the major groups and other stakeholders into national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, committees and commissions for the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;
- Member States to strengthen existing national development coordination platforms and mainstream the sustainable development agenda into such existing platforms;

At the regional level, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development should be reformed to allow the major groups and other stakeholders to actively and continuously engage throughout the duration of the meeting, as opposed to simply participating in side events, delivering a statement and being mere observers of these processes. We also call for the institutionalization of the major groups and other stakeholders in regional structures for sustainable and meaningful engagement.

At the regional and United Nations levels, the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs should facilitate the access of the major groups and other stakeholders to technical, capacity-building and financing opportunities to enhance their work on the ground. They should also strengthen coordinated platforms and opportunities to consolidate efforts and exchange good practices among major groups across themes, including by creating communities of practice.

At all levels, Governments, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs should establish an ongoing engagement mechanism open to all civil society actors so they can actively participate and contribute to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, and their outcomes at various levels.

In conclusion, we call upon the conveners of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development to ensure that the above issues are not only heard but also included in the final outcome documents and that they contribute to the road map for our continued engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 beyond Cairo. Drawing on the

abovementioned strengths, we look forward to playing our part in strengthening the integration and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 for the betterment of African citizens.

Thank you.