

## AP RCEM Inputs to the Post-2015 Political Declaration

*Asia-Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM) is a civil society platform aimed to enable stronger cross constituency coordination and ensure that voices of all sub-regions of Asia Pacific are heard in intergovernmental processes in regional and global level. The platform is initiated, owned and driven by the CSOs, and has been set up under the auspices of UN-ESCAP and seeks to engage with UN agencies and Member States on the Post-2015 as well as other development related issues/processes. As an open, inclusive, and flexible mechanism, RCEM is designed to reach the broadest number of CSOs in the region, harness the voice of grassroots and peoples' movements to advance a more just, equitable and sustainable model development.*

The **Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP RCEM)** welcomes the Elements Paper for the discussion of the Post-2015 Political Declaration. We agree that the Declaration should be **concise, visionary, ambitious, actionable, communicable, and simple** and that it should be **accepted as a call to action by all**. We also welcome the identification of poverty, climate change, environmental degradation, inequality within and between countries vulnerability and exclusion, institutional failures, economic/social/environmental shocks and the undermining of peaceful and just societies as the current and key challenges to attaining sustainable development for all.

AP-RCEM makes the following recommendation, that post-2015 Political Declaration must:

### **In the Collective Vision to 2030:**

**Recognise** that globalisation and neoliberal development agenda has caused deep and entrenched inequalities of wealth, power and resources between countries, between rich and poor, and between men and women and other social groups. The majority of world's population is still held hostage by systemic injustices and long-standing problem of poverty, landlessness, unemployment, precarious employment conditions, environmental degradation, indebtedness, discrimination and violence.

**Recognise** that patriarchy, gender inequality, sexual and gender based violence and violations of women's human rights remains a persistent and entrenched problem. Women - particularly grassroots women from the global south - have historically benefited the least from development, and carry the largest burden of global inequality, climate change, globalisation, militarization and growing fundamentalism.

**Recognise** that we are rapidly exceeding the Earth's planetary boundaries and heading toward catastrophic climate change as a result of existing economic and political architecture; Recognize that ecological crisis is a historic crisis of the relationship between humanity and its environment and its primary cause is over-production, which leads to overconsumption on the one hand, and growing poverty and under-consumption on the other.

**Recognise** that historical inequalities of power between states has led to inequitable finance, trade and investment architecture that has diminished the capacity of States to meet their economic, social and cultural human rights obligations

*The Tomorrow we want* should be a just, equitable, inclusive and sustainable world to be achieved through gender equality, and addressing diversity between and within countries, based on the genuine partnership of solidarity and responsibility.

### **Key Principles**

- **Highlight** that the sustainable development goals should be **global in nature** and **universally**

**applicable to all countries**, while taking into account different **national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities**. They should integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognize their inter-linkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions.

- **Uphold** the principle of **Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)**. While we agree that action for the success of the Post 2015 Agenda should be incumbent on “all”, we believe greater attention should be paid to power differentials and varying degrees of responsibility for actors between and within countries.
- **Reaffirm** the importance of **freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights**. It should have **human rights-based approach** that commit governments to respecting, protecting and fulfilling all human rights commitments – including **right to development, right to an adequate standard of living, right to food, gender equality and women’s rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, right to self-determination**, .
- Reaffirm the **universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness** of human rights. It should cover all wide range of rights for all, including and it should recognises specific human rights covenants, resolve to implement all obligations and promote ratification of all treaties.
- **Recognise** the importance of fulfilment of **Women’s Human Rights**, as both a **pre-requisite and an outcome** of sustainable development. It should indicate that the goals and targets must be implemented on the basis of **substantive equality, justice and non-discrimination**. Ensuring a standalone goal on gender and also throughout the other goals and targets. **Intersectionality** must be incorporated, recognising the diversity of women and the intersecting causes of marginalization and human rights violations.
- **Uphold** the right of the indigenous peoples to **self-determination** and to **free, prior and informed consent** and **decision-making over development decisions** and any natural resources extraction in their land and territories. The goals and targets make little mention of the rights of Indigenous Peoples, this should be remedied through the political declaration,
- **Reaffirm** the rights to be free from discrimination, coercion and violence, and the principles of bodily integrity, dignity, equality and respect for diversity.
- **Recognise** that adequate and timely Means of Implementation and a global partnership is crucial for achieving the Post 2015 development agenda.
- **Reaffirm** the Means of Implementation identified in Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development and in fact aim to secure new and additional commitments on MOI including on financing and structural global issues.
- **Underscore** the importance of a **global partnership with shared responsibility between governments** which cannot be abrogated under any circumstances to the private sector. The global partnership must also ensure that all actors pursue genuine development and is not after profiteering from the planning and implementation of this agenda.
- **Recognise** that **people are at the center of sustainable development** and, in this regard, all actors should strive for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive, and commit to promote sustained and inclusive economies, social development and environmental protection and thereby to benefit all, specially the marginalized sectors of society. It should specifically state that beneficiaries of sustainable development are people, rather than corporations or profits.

- **Highlight** the role and place of major social sectors and constituencies including farmers, trade union and workers, fisherfolks, urban poor, people with disabilities, women, youth, rural communities, people living and affected by HIV and AIDS, LGBTIQ, small medium enterprise people affected by disasters and climate change, migrants and indigenous peoples in the planning, monitoring, and implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.
- **Recognise** the role of civil society which has proved its commitment, experience and dynamism in development activism. Civil society is key partner in the Post-2015 Agenda and must be involved in planning, implementation and monitoring of the Agenda at all levels..

## What We Must Do to Get There

We broadly agree with the elements provided under the section *What We Must Do to Get There*. We concur that in order to attain genuine sustainable development we need an **ambitious and transformative** development agenda, which has **national ownership**, is **universally applicable** while **considering differing responsibilities and particular contexts**, build on the MDGs, and integrates the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of development.

We must define **what is meant by transformative, what exactly should be transformed and how**.

A truly ambitious and **transformative development agenda** must **do away with the neoliberal framework of development** of which the imperative of economic growth for private gain has systematically impoverished communities, worsened the inequalities within and between countries, and led to environmental destruction, climate change, and the erosion of social justice.

We need a transformative development framework that will deliver sustainable, just and equitable development, a model of **Development Justice**. Development Justice requires **Redistributive Justice, Economic Justice, Gender and Social Justice, Environmental Justice and Accountability to the Peoples**.

- **Redistributive justice**
    - In addressing poverty and inequalities between and within countries, states must recognize and seek to **eliminate the unjust and unequal power relations as the root of multidimensional poverty and inequalities** and show commitment to addressing inequalities with measures such as implementing a **redistributive agrarian and urban land reform; elimination of monopolies and oligopolies**; implementing **progressive taxation** including steep taxes on capital gains and net wealth; and **expanding public and community ownership** and management of productive assets and key sectors of the economy, **countering the trend toward privatization of public services and goods**.
    - Highlight the need to revitalize the **global partnership for sustainable development** based on the **Millennium Declaration and Monterrey and Johannesburg commitments**.
    - Highlight the need to anchor a **global partnership on the principle of international solidarity**<sup>1</sup> that recognizes that governments are the principal duty-bearers of human rights obligations and that development assistance is essentially a fulfillment of the duty of States to assist other States to fulfill global human rights obligations and address structural, globalized causes of poverty and structural inequality
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- Recognize that the flaws of actually existing partnerships is proof of the need to ensure that all actors are treated on an even playing field, and that all development actors – governments, the private sector, and civil society – are held genuinely **accountable** to people and planet.
  - Recognize the need to **create a fairer international trade system** alongside stronger regulations for **international finance, respect for democratic country ownership, and space for south-south cooperation.**
  - Highlight **the need for developed countries to meet their ODA commitments and reform the aid system**, including **eliminating tied aid and harmful conditionalities**
  - Highlight the need for **transformative and deep changes in international financial and global governance institutions** and a pro-active reversal of inequalities between global north and south rooted in unfair trade regimes and the imbalanced international division of labor
- **Economic Justice**
    - **Reverse neo-liberal policies** that have worsened the state of poorer nations : nationalize strategic and heavy industries; bring back stronger regulations to support and protect local economies; encourage job creation at the homefront;
    - Provide commitment to translate economic growth to shared prosperity and to coming up with **alternative measures of progress from GDP** to one that adequately accounts for **human wellbeing, justice, social progress, sustainability, and equity.** *(provide annotation: SG synthesis report)*
    - Recognize the **protection of migrants' rights** *(provide annotation: SG synthesis report)* and commit to recommendation for **moving away from remittance-driven development** that only increases the vulnerability of migrants to violations of their rights and systematizes labor exports.
    - **Commit to internationally-recognized framework of ILO's Decent Work and Living Wage** agenda that not only aims at creating jobs, but also securing workers' rights and welfare, promoting universal social protection, and guaranteeing the freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men. Ensure that living wage is systematically formalized and implemented in the new development agenda.
    - Highlight **better regulation in the international financial and monetary system**, and **sustainable debt solutions** and **commit to addressing policy incoherence** between trade, finance, and investment on the one hand, and norms and standards for labor, the environment, human rights, equality, and sustainability on the other. This is especially important for developing countries where most trade agreements and investments treaties have been found to curtail their capacity to handle crises, protect their economies, deliver services to their people, and ensure sustainable development.
  - **Gender and social justice**
    - Commit to the **elimination of all forms of discrimination, marginalization and exclusion** that pervade our communities. It recognizes the need to **eliminate patriarchal systems** and

**fundamentalisms**, challenge existing social structures, deliver gender justice, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and guarantee the human rights of all peoples.

- Continue the commitment on the accommodation of the **voices of women, youth and minorities, and the indigenous peoples** with regard to combatting poverty and inequality. Likewise, it stresses the importance of the free, active and meaningful engagement of civil society and advocates reflecting the voices of women. Recognize the demands for women's **right to land, and equal opportunities for leadership and effective participation of women at all levels of governance** as recommended in the OWG Outcome Document.
  - Commit to ensuring **healthy Lives for all people**, as emphasized in the A/69/700 SG Synthesis Report para 70 and OWG report. This must include a strong commitment to protect the rights of women, men and youth to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including access to sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence (see: Rio+20 (2012) para. 146; UNGASS (2011) para 53; Beijing PFA (1994) para 96). Eliminating gender inequalities and GBV will increase the capacity of women and girls to protect themselves from HIV (A/RES/65/277 para 21; UNGASS +5 on HIV/AIDS (2006) para 30) and other STIs.
  - Commit to addressing **address religious fundamentalism and politicization of religion** how this undermine the quest for peace, gender equality, and equitable development. This needs to be addressed, especially because it plays a big role in the continuing violence against women and girls, LGBT, people living with and affected by HIV, indigenous peoples, etc., and limiting and even denying women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.
  - Recognize the impact of human rights violations due to **militarism** and accountability of military-industrial complexes in the developed countries, **reducing weapons globally and to tax the arms trade, which can provide both revenue and promote peace.**
- **Environmental Justice**
    - Highlight the importance of the issue of **climate change as one of the biggest risks to sustainability and points to human activities as its primary cause.**
    - **Address the ecological crisis at its roots** which is over-production of goods for profit, that leads to overconsumption, pollution and wastage by those who have, and growing poverty, under-consumption and greater vulnerability of those who have not.
    - Highlight the importance of **shifting away from unsustainable production and consumption patterns** to halt the impending environmental catastrophe and **commit to building a new system** based on the **rational, collective, and democratic** management and use of resources in the **interest of the people and the wellbeing of the planet.**
    - Must commit to **limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius** rather than the proposed 2 degrees Celsius, through **drastic emission cuts and fair-sharing of the global carbon budget** that takes into account **per capita historical emissions** and **without resorting to carbon trading or offsets.**
    - Correct the role that **transnational corporations** play in food insecurity and ecological imbalance through their monopolistic control of genetic resources, promotion of genetically modified crops, monocrop plantation, and seed patenting and other

development aggression projects that espouses landgrabbing, deforestation and environmental pollution.

- Empower civil society to **engage in decision-making and management** that supports sustainable management of coastal all environmental ecosystems. Programs, policies and structures opening the way for destruction of already compromised terrestrial and coastal ecosystems, such as land reclamation, offshore drilling and mining must be withdrawn. Social empowerment processes for **women to include leadership and co-management of natural resources**. More grant funded projects that respond to gender needs of both men and women and benefit both men and women are needed.
  - Provide clear measures to stem the aggravation on Asians' vulnerability to disasters, by destructive and extractive policies and programs (e.g., liberalization of mining industries, land reclamation, and US military pivot in the region), including promotion of pollutive industries and projects (coal fired power plants) are urgently demanded
  - **Institutionalization of scientific-based mechanisms** that would create **community science in the perspectives of the marginalized communities** to use it as as tool to empower the women and the communities in providing critical analysis and scientific thinking in confronting the impacts of development aggression projects.
- **Accountability to peoples**
    - Reaffirm current political commitments and existing obligations under **international law**.
    - Highlight the need to predicate private sector involvement on social and environmental accountability, and ensure **investment policies are in line with international standards on UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, core labour standards of the ILO, and United Nations environmental standards**
    - Place a **stronger focus on public sector implementation and private sector accountability** in the P2015 architecture – for instance, through **mandatory corporate reporting** on major financial transactions and social and environmental impacts
    - Recognise that **resource mobilization for the P2015 agenda must be premised on a departure from conventional economic practices**, in the context of a new international development framework rooted in the principles of HRBA, gender equity, environmental sustainability, and aid and development effectiveness.
    - Emphasize the need to ensure an **enabling environment for civil society** in accordance with internationally agreed rights, including the **rights to freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, and association**.
    - Emphasize that national development strategies should be arrived at in **the spirit of civil society engagement** and debate, and should be made with a view toward benefiting vulnerable sectors of society.

We hope the Declaration will lay the framework for a truly just, equitable and transformative development agenda and will take us to a new world over the 15 years where our people are truly free and empowered.