



Statement by Sri Lanka
The Eighteenth Session of the Working Group on the Right to Development
03 - 07 April 2017

Mr. Chairman,

We congratulate you on your re-election as the Chair-Rapporteur of the 18th Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Right to Development (R2D) and express our appreciation for your stewardship in moving forward the Agenda of this Working Group towards realizing the Right to Development.

Last year marked the 30th Anniversary of the Declaration of the Right to Development, and the adoption of Resolution 33/14 at the 33rd Session of the Human Rights Council, creating the post of Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development. We hope that this new mandate¹ envisaged under the Resolution, will complement and revitalize the work of the Working Group on Right to Development, avoiding duplication².

In this context, Sri Lanka highlights the need to maintain this momentum and to fully utilize the strong and holistic normative framework that the Right to Development provides, including the centrality of the human person in the development efforts, in our work to realize the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and internationally agreed outcomes of 2015. SDGs must be regarded as being complimentary to realizing the Right to Development.

Sri Lanka reaffirms its continued support to the Working Group and recommends that it should focus on achieving its full mandate while working towards the finalisation of the draft criteria and corresponding sub-criteria on the Right to Development as expeditiously as possible. Once adopted by the Working Group, it should form a comprehensive and coherent set of standards regarding the implementation of the Right to Development.

Despite many achievements of humankind in the last century, and in particular the collective international efforts to forge common development policies and programmes over the last several decades, it is the unfortunate reality that millions of people- mainly from the developing countries still live in extreme poverty with one

¹ A/HRC/33/14, OP 14. The resolution was adopted by a vote of Y-34, N- 2, 11-Abs. during the 33rd Session of the HRC held in September 2016.

<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G16/225/38/PDF/G1622538.pdf?OpenElement>

² To contribute to the work of the Working Group with a view to supporting the accomplishment of its overall mandate, taking into account, inter alia, the deliberations and recommendations of the Working Group while avoiding any duplication. (OP 14 c) of HRC res. 33/14)

in five people living on less than US Dollars 1.25 per day³. While States have the primary responsibility for national development, international cooperation among States in collectively responding to global challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters, global economic and financial instabilities, maintaining international peace and security is essential for the creation of an environment conducive for national efforts in addressing existing inequalities, and the root causes of poverty.

While we strive for greater acceptance, operationalization and realization of the Right to Development at the international level, we could use the platform of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, which provides a comprehensive and universally applicable set of 17 goals, to also pay due attention to the human rights aspect of development. We hope the constructive discussions during the interactive dialogue with the experts on the implementation and realization of the Right to Development including the implications of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, under Agenda Item 4 (e) of this Working Group Session, will yield suggestions for pragmatic action on these issues. International cooperation on providing necessary technical assistance and transfer of technology to developing countries is a necessary catalyst to ensure everyone, including the vulnerable and socially excluded segments, in the national action plans and programmes to ensure that “no one is left behind”.

Mr. Chairman,

Realizing the SDGs remains a high priority for Sri Lanka in its endeavour to achieve inclusive and equitable economic progress and social advancement. Year 2017 as the year of poverty alleviation in Sri Lanka, and a ‘National Policy on a Sustainable Vision’, for Sri Lanka, prepared by 17 experts has been adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers, with the objective of achieving sustained economic growth that is socially equitable and ecologically sound, with peace and stability”.

Sri Lanka is fully seized of economic, social and climate change related challenges and, will continue to take policy measures and concrete action that will enable the country to address these challenges nationally, while working in partnership with the relevant regional and international processes in furthering solutions for sustainable development.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we wish the Working Group success in its deliberations and assure you of our support and constructive engagement throughout the Session.

Thank you.

³ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>