

To
H.E. Ambassador Frederick Makamure Shava
President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council

CC:
Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, UN-DESA
Mr. Juwang Zhu Director, Division for Sustainable Development, UN-DESA
Ms. Lotta Tähtinen, Chief of Outreach and Communications Branch, UN-DESA

27 June 2017.

Your Excellency,

We, constituencies of the High Level Political Forum Major Groups and other Stakeholders Coordination Mechanism ([HLPF MGoS CM](#)), want to call to your attention to the management and coordination processes for MGoS participation and representation at the HLPF 2017. We are aware and supportive to [other engagements](#) from civil society groups in this same topic.

Across the years, our Groups and constituencies have been involved very actively, as is our mandate, in promoting the highest standards of participation at the global level and in bringing a diversity range of perspectives and contributions to the intergovernmental deliberations. At the same time, the HLPF MGoS CM, as a self-organized space, has directly engaged and continuously worked and dedicated time and resources to support the organization of the HLPF and of spaces for the participation of major groups and other stakeholders.

Side events are critical moments for major groups and stakeholders, where we share our contributions, highlight concerns and promote solutions for the challenges Member States are addressing at the official proceedings. We are concerned about the lack of transparency, inclusivity and openness on the process for allocating side-events to major groups and other stakeholders at the HLPF 2017. Moreover, we are frustrated and alarmed by the fact that side-event proposals from active MGoS have been rejected, while others were forced to merge collective proposals with those from individual organizations and some have not still heard from UNDESA regarding the approval or rejection of their side-events proposals.

While A/RES/67/290 allows major groups and other stakeholders to organize side events and roundtables (Para 15, f), we call the UN to provide adequate and timely support to facilitate the organisation of side-events and roundtables, including by informing in advance of the criteria for selection and ensuring decisions are communicated well in advance of the HLPF.

To address this issue, we highlight a series of considerations for the short and long term

- a) For the list of side-events for the HLPF 2017 to be publicly published and accessible as soon as possible, including the constituencies/groups organizing each session.
- b) For at least one side-event to be allocated to each of the constituencies that conform the HLPF MGoS CM and are active in its Steering Group. Members of the Steering Group

and of the Coordination Mechanism, who work throughout the year promoting an inclusive sustainable development process, are responsible for coordinating voices from different levels and sectors and should be properly considered for side-events allocation.

- c) Merging of side event proposals should be more carefully handled in order to allow for the diversity to be showcased at the HLPF without jeopardizing the role of collective voices and the specific perspectives brought by individual organizations. We would recommend a review of the practices undertaken at the UNFCCC, where side event requests are made publicly available and stakeholders invited to autonomously coordinate whenever there are limited space available to attend all requests.
- d) For the President of ECOSOC to establish a multi-stakeholder working group to review and provide recommendations on how to improve the process for side event allocation and organization during the HLPF, including representatives from the MGoS CM.

The impact of the contributions of MGoS to the HLPF is determined by the amount of meaningful space allocated to us, through a transparent, timely and inclusive process. Together, we advocate for meaningful spaces for participation that allow for our diverse – and even divergent – substantive voices to be heard. Member States committed to this when they established the HLPF and when they committed to the 2030 Agenda. The main global space for follow up and review of this Agenda must also align to those commitments, according to its agreed modalities.

We are at your disposal to provide concrete recommendations to improve this process.

The Steering Group of the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS) Coordination Mechanism