

Reaction to the zero draft of the outcome document of the UN Summit to adopt the Post 2015 Development Agenda



H.E. Mr. David Donoghue
Co-facilitator Post-2015 development agenda IGN
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

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Co-facilitator Post-2015 development agenda IGN
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations

Submitted via email and also via the UNNGLS online survey

Re: Reaction to the zero draft of the outcome document by the Communitas Coalition Secretariat

22 June 2015

Excellency Ambassador Donoghue, Excellency Ambassador Kamau,

It is my honour to share below some minor suggestions to amend Paragraph 26 of the Post 2015 zero draft, that have also been adopted by the #UrbanSDG - www.urbansdg.org - and the Beyond 2015 Campaigns. I am also compiling other aspects raised by this secretariat of the *Communitas Coalition*, which I have had the opportunity of sharing directly with UNDESA colleagues, as well as via the survey collected by UNGLS.

Allow me please to commend the extraordinary piece of work you have accomplished with this zero draft and my sincere admiration for the wise and skillful manner in which you keep ensuring that all stakeholders of the process we move on at a steady and rooted pace. From *Communitas* we sincerely hope this zero draft will maintain its substance and format through the upcoming negotiations.

I thank you in advance for your consideration to these points and remain at your service for any help we could provide from *Communitas*.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Maruxa Cardama'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

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A. *Suggested revisions* to Paragraph 26, also adopted by the #UrbanSDG - www.urbansdg.org - and the Beyond 2015 Campaigns

Notions introduced: Multi scalar - Inclusiveness and multi stakeholder - Spatial - Resilience - Air quality

Para 26. We recognize that sustainable urban development and management are crucial to the quality of life of our people *wherever they live*. We will work with local *and regional* authorities, and communities to renew and plan our cities *in an inclusive and integrated manner* so as to foster. . *This will foster* community cohesion and personal security, *safety, access and mobility* and stimulate innovation, employment, *equity and resilience*. We will reduce the negative impacts of urban activities *at all scales from local to global* including through the safe management and use of chemicals on *the climate system, such as by improving air quality*, reducing and recycling of waste, and more efficient [*and equitable*] use of *land*, water and energy. ~~And we will work to minimize the impact of cities on the global climate system.~~

Other suggestions by the *Communitas Secretariat*

B. Title of the Agenda: There is room **to reflect** that the agenda is a **sustainable development** one **and the consensus on the need to work at all levels**. A suggestion would be "Transforming our World by 2030 *for People and Planet: A new sustainable development* agenda for global *and local action*".

C. Preamble: The **wording used to refer to cities and human settlements does not reflect the elements in the heading of title of SDG11**. Though it is understood that the intention is not replicate the SDGs, it is also understood that the adjectives that qualify the wording of SDG11 are the result of delicate political balance and of the integration of all sustainable development dimensions.

D. Linkages between poverty eradication, inequalities reduction and sustainability: There is room to add concise narrative at the end of Paragraph 3 to spell out the inextricable linkages. Such mentions currently come too late on Paragraph 13. Besides, the multidimensional character of poverty so inherent to the SDGs OWG Report should be retrieved.

E. Building on the lessons learnt with the MDGs and the imperative of accomplishing their unfinished business, particularly for LDCs: There is room for further emphasis on this, for instance by adding to Paragraph 8 - (...) The new Agenda builds on the Millennium Development Goals, *taking into account lessons learned on critical gaps and emerging challenges* in order *to complete* what these did not achieve, *particularly in the LDCs*.

F. Reinforcing the crucial role of local and subnational authorities for implementation under the relevant section of declaration. Current Paragraph 37 lists 'local authorities' among a varied list of stakeholders. This neglects the inherent governmental nature of these actors and how essential this nature will be for the implementation and the 'localisation' of the agenda, in virtue of the decision-making and financing competences they commonly have across the world. Besides, Paragraph 37 contains no reference to subnational/regional authorities, which in many countries constitute the intermediate level of government ensuring linkages between the other levels and enjoying substantive law-making, policy-setting and tax-collection competences.

G. Emphasizing the role of national parliaments for national ownership and follow up of the agenda separately.

It is suggested to refer to these actors separately in a paragraph that could reflect **Paragraph 42 of the Rio +20 Outcome Document 'The Future We Want'**: "We reaffirm the key role of all levels of government and legislative

bodies in promoting sustainable development. We further acknowledge efforts and progress made at the local and subnational levels, and recognize the important role that such authorities and communities can play in implementing sustainable development, including by engaging citizens and stakeholders and providing them with relevant information, as appropriate, on the three dimensions of sustainable development. We further acknowledge the importance of involving all relevant decision makers in the planning and implementation of sustainable development policies."

H. Global Partnership - Para 36: (...) It will facilitate an intensive global engagement in support of implementation of the goals and targets, bringing together Governments *at all levels* (...).

I. Introduction of narrative for Member States to commit to enabling an UN system adapted and efficient to the implementation, follow up and review of this new sustainable development agenda. The Millennium Declaration had extensive explicit narrative on this. The paradigm shift enshrined by the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the 70th anniversary of the UN seem to warrant such type of narrative. The very pertinent proposals offered by *Beyond 2015* in their *proposed 43bis, 43ter and 43quar constitute a good basis for developing such narrative.*

Communitas is the Coalition for Sustainable Cities & Regions in the New UN Development Agenda. It is led by its core partners - Tellus Institute, ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability, nrg4SD- Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development and UN-Habitat - with the generous support of the Ford Foundation.

Communitas aims to establish a participatory process:

- To advance sustainable urbanization as a key component of the future UN Post 2015 Development Agenda, its goals, targets, means of implementation and partnerships.
- To contribute to the technical development of a Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) with targets related to the economic, social, environmental, spatial and cultural dimensions of sustainable urbanization and a basket of relevant indicators.
- To link the process for the elaboration and adoption of the UN SDGs with the Habitat III Conference in 2016.

In this context, Communitas is a two-fold platform supporting the UN intergovernmental process for establishing the Post 2015 Development Agenda and SDGs and connecting it to the Habitat III Conference. On the one hand, it provides expert and practitioner-led task technical input into the UN intergovernmental processes. On the other hand, it also facilitates a broad multi-stakeholder coalition of organizations keen on advancing sustainable urbanization as a key component of the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda, particularly in the horizon of Habitat III in 2016.

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