

Dhaka Declaration by Parliamentarians and Civil Society on the MDG Acceleration and the Post 2015 Development Agenda, 10-11 December 2012

57 members of parliament and 38 civil society leaders from 12 countries from South, Southwest, North and Central Asia hereby adopt this Declaration, in presence of 40 representatives of development partner organizations and 3 parliamentarians from Africa and the United Kingdom as solidarity delegations.

1. We recognise that parliaments, parliamentarians and civil society organizations (CSOs) have been instrumental in promoting human development, democratic governance and sustainability by working closely with the executive branch of the governments, and thus have contributed to the progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the region. With only three years left before the target year of the MDGs, parliamentarians and CSOs continue to play vital roles in accelerating progress towards the achievement of the MDGs in the region, by particularly pushing for the provision of quality public services as well as social protection.
2. We recognise, as one of the three pillars of the state, parliaments through their legislative, oversight, budget approval and representation duties are key stakeholders in accelerating progress in achieving the MDGs and ensuring that the poorest and the most marginalised and vulnerable in society will be at the centre of the post-2015 development agenda.
3. We further recognise that CSOs have an important responsibility for accelerated achievement of the MDGs and promoting an inclusive post-2015 development agenda, as key groups for accountability monitoring and by facilitating interface between the people and decision makers.
4. While reaffirming that we uphold the core principles outlined in the Millennium Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action, namely equality, human rights, democratic governance, sustainability, peace and security, and right to development, we recognise that the MDGs have not maximised their potential as a unique framework for clarifying accountability and measuring commitments to ensure that every individual enjoys the right to live his or her life with dignity and with full enjoyment of human rights.
5. We draw attention to the fact that urgent action has to be taken on unsustainable patterns of production and consumption to promote sustained, inclusive and equitable growth, and emphasise the importance and utility of developing a set of sustainable development goals which fully respect all the Rio principles.
6. We therefore emphasise that our MDG acceleration efforts in the remaining three years as well as formulation of a global development agenda beyond 2015 must be firmly based on critical lessons learned from the experience of the MDGs and other international development agendas including the ICPD+20 and CEDAW review, and must include the fundamental principles of gender equality as central not just to equality but also to human rights, democratic governance and sustainability.
7. **Human rights and democratic governance:** We urge that the post-2015 agenda, its implementation mechanisms, targets and indicators will be fully aligned with international human rights standards and principles. We will continue to promote inclusive and participatory governance and accountability mechanisms at all levels and pledge to increase human rights protection, including through adequate investments for the enjoyment of all rights. Key issues include:
 - 7.1 Addressing corruption and promoting respect for the rule of law and democracy, including strengthening access to justice and judicial accountability for human rights;
 - 7.2 Ensuring political commitment for investments of maximum available resources for the enjoyment of rights, through evidence-based, and participatory budget and expenditure tracking;
 - 7.3 A human rights-based approach in both the content and process of accelerating the MDGs and in the post 2015 framework, including goals and indicators which are both qualitative and quantitative;
 - 7.4 The need to recognize that peace and security are critical concerns for the poor and socially excluded groups which influence their socio-economic security.

- 7.5 A clear commitment to universal access to health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights;
 - 7.6 A renewed commitment to promoting children's rights, building on the clear child focus of the MDGs and ensuring that the elimination of extreme forms of child deprivations is a central concern;
 - 7.7 Strengthening the mechanisms through which citizens hold their government accountable and efforts to support their political empowerment; and
 - 7.8 Establishment of a clear time-bound, measurable and rights-based indicators and mechanisms at all levels for monitoring and accountability for post 2015 development agenda, building inter alia on the experience of international human rights mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review.
8. **Equality:** We will strive to ensure that appropriate measures to protect and promote equality, equity, and social inclusion are incorporated into laws, policies and programmes. In particular, future development targets and indicators should be designed to highlight rather than mask inequities. Key issues include:
- 8.1 The importance to be given to countries with special needs such as LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, as well as countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, targeting the most vulnerable people and countries;
 - 8.2 Addressing discrimination at all levels based on age, gender, caste, religion, ethnicity, tribe, disability, language, and geographical locations, and ensuring that marginalised and minority groups are able to effectively participate in development and implementation of policies, plans and programmes;
 - 8.3 Inclusion of measures for the facilitation and protection of migrant workers who have been an important driver of development in the region as well as attention to statelessness;
 - 8.4 The emphasis on tackling income inequality as a matter of priority, including the need to ensure that bottom 20% of the population is improving their economic status faster than the top 20% through inclusive growth;
 - 8.5 Inclusion of a goal for gender equality *and* gender-disaggregation for each target and indicator as well as incorporation of gender dimension in all the other goals, targets and indicators in the post-2015 development agenda as applicable; and
 - 8.6 The need to recognise and generate disaggregated data for socially excluded and marginalised groups based on age, gender, caste, religion, ethnicity, tribe and geographical locations among others as a critical basis for accountability for progress for all.
9. **Sustainability:** We will strive to ensure that economic, social and environmental sustainability including disaster risk reduction, peace and security, and climate change impact and vulnerability will be more holistically and effectively integrated into our respective government's MDG acceleration efforts as well as in the post-2015 development framework. We also recognise that population dynamics and trends are key determinants of sustainable human development. Key issues include:
- 9.1 Sustainable management of natural resources including protection of biodiversity and wetlands;
 - 9.2 Focus on global and regional public goods and trans-boundary cooperation in the post-2015 development framework;
 - 9.3 Ensuring deep emission cuts of Green House Gases to adequately address the root cause of anthropogenic climate change, and climate resilient livelihoods options including international migration and green job creation by focusing on win-wins of climate mitigation and private sector cooperation;
 - 9.4 Commitment to accelerated implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) 2005-2015 and achievement of its goals. We call for promoting a culture of resilience to disasters and mainstreaming and integration of disaster resilience into policies, plans, programmes and budgets at all levels;
 - 9.5 Mainstreaming gender in the Sustainable Development Goals discourse;
 - 9.6 Ensuring access to affordable energy under Sustainability Energy for All Initiative;
 - 9.7 The need to recognise that conflict and insecurity affects sustainability;
 - 9.8 Enhancing international cooperation in support of additional, predictable and sustainable financing and transfer of appropriate technologies, and capacity building for climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as disaster risk reduction;
 - 9.9 Recognizing the importance of convergence between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction for improved risk management; and
 - 9.10 Preventing preventable deaths such as due to tobacco use, through appropriate interventions.
10. Moving forward, we emphasise that the early engagement of parliaments and CSOs as well as synergies between them are vital to the success of an integrated post-2015 development agenda that includes

CEDAW and ICPD Programme of Action commitments among others, while also noting that parliaments must have sufficient capacity to engage in the post-2015 development agenda implementation in terms of their constitutional responsibilities, and that CSOs also must have sufficient capacity and enabling environment to advocate for the effective implementation of the development agenda.

11. We, members of parliament and CSOs, take note of and appreciate the proposal of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, presented at the 66th UN General Assembly, on integrating the interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements of people's empowerment and development, expressed as eradicating poverty and hunger, reducing inequality, mitigating deprivation, creating jobs for all, including excluded people, accelerating human development and fighting terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and underline the need for further discussions on and dissemination of this model.
12. The post-2015 development agenda will need to be accompanied by a clear commitment for effective and equitable financing. We recognise the need for mobilisation of domestic resources and effective ODA in terms of its quantity and quality. We emphasise that delivering fully on all ODA commitments by OECD/DAC is critical, including the target of 0.7% of GNI for ODA. We recognise that the mechanisms for accountable and transparent public expenditures need to be put in place, including redirecting military related resources such as nuclear weapons to development purposes. The role of parliaments in the oversight of development processes must be strengthened, including by supporting capacity development as mentioned in the Busan Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation.
13. We call for developing an enhanced and effective mechanism for global partnership in areas of trade, investment, migration, technology and debt while recognizing the roles of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation with clear and enforceable targets and milestones. Debt management instruments such as debt swap should be actively promoted, while ensuring greater democratization and overall accountability of multilateral financial institutions. We further underscore the importance of promoting a rules-based multilateral trading system and urge for an expeditious conclusion of Doha Development Agenda to enable developing countries, particularly LDCs, to leverage trade as a tool for development.
14. We, members of parliament, agree that parliaments need to consider the most effective institutional mechanisms for MDG acceleration and our engagement in the post-2015 development framework. We commit to initiating discussions on appropriate forums to ensure the legislature takes a leading role in formulation and implementation of the post 2015 development agenda, in collaboration with other key stakeholders including empowered local governments who play a critical role in MDG service delivery. We also strive to create enabling framework and policy space for all stakeholders to contribute to inclusive, equitable and sustainable development.
15. CSO representatives commit to continuing and enhancing efforts to hold duty bearers to account for full achievement of development goals, to advocating for a people-centred development agenda, to enhancing our own accountability and to working collaboratively with both legislatures and executives.
16. We parliamentarians and CSOs call on the UN to ensure clear and integrated post-2015 and SDG processes through inclusive and transparent consultations. We call for development goals which are performance and delivery focused, limited in number, easy to relate to, global in nature and universally applicable to all, while adaptable to each country context and priorities. We also call on the UN to facilitate engagement of parliamentarians and CSOs with the UN High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on Post-2015 Development Agenda to ensure our meaningful participation.
17. Finally, we members of parliaments and representatives of CSOs resolve to ensure that acceleration of achievement of MDGs as well as the process of formulation of post 2015 development agenda is participatory and inclusive, promoting realisation of human rights and reflecting the aspirations of people we represent – especially the poorest and the most marginalised.

Adopted on 11 December, 2012, Dhaka, Bangladesh