

ULAANBAATAR DECLARATION ON PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES IN ASIA AND BEYOND (SDG 16+)

ULAANBAATAR,
MONGOLIA /
FEBRUARY 26-28, 2019



"We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development."

-Preamble of UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 25 September 2015

Ulaanbaatar Declaration on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies

in Asia and Beyond (SDG 16+)

We, the Civil Society participants of the Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum (UBDF) 2019, having met in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 26-28 February 2019 under the theme “Promoting Peace, Human Rights and Democracy through the SDG 16+: Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies in Asia and beyond”;

1. Expressing our deep appreciation to the organizers of the UBDF, including Asia Development Alliance (ADA), Asia Democracy Network (ADN), the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Mongolia and Republic of Korea, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia (NHRCM) and Open Society Forum (OSF) in Mongolia;
2. Expressing our gratitude to the Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD), the local host of the UBDF 2019;
3. Acknowledging Mongolia’s Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 9 on “Strengthening Human Rights and Fostering Democratic Governance”, which was the predecessor of Goal 16 of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and expressing our appreciation to the Government of Mongolia for its leadership role in the promotion of democracy, human rights and anti-corruption in line with the Goal 16;
4. Reaffirming the Call to Action contained in the Busan Declaration on “Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies in Asia and Beyond (SDG 16+)” adopted at the Busan Democracy Forum (BuDF) on January 24, 2018;
5. Welcoming the important global initiatives on the SDGs by various inter-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, multi-stakeholder partnerships such as the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), Open Government Partnership (OGP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies including assessing the state of the implementation of SDG16+ in Asia, Pathfinders on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies; KOICA’s Global SDG 16 Monitoring Project, the CIVICUS Monitor; World Values Survey, International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL); Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem); Transparency International; Transparency, Accountability and Participation (TAP) Network; and Forus International;
6. Welcoming the progress made regarding the implementation of the SDGs, especially Goal 16 as illustrated by the governments of Indonesia, Mongolia and Nepal;
7. Recognizing the role of sub-national and local governments in achieving the SDGs through Goal 16 by ensuring the availability of, and access to, high-quality disaggregated data and meaningful participation of diverse stakeholders such as women, children, youth and other disadvantaged communities, in accordance with the fundamental principle of leaving no one behind;
8. Recognizing the link between human rights and the SDGs, and welcoming the initiative of the UN Human Rights Council and the submission of the report by the UN Office of High-Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) “*Draft guidelines for States on the effective implementation of the right to participate in public affairs*” (2018) as important and useful tools for the promotion of civic participation and engagement in SDGs;
9. Recognizing the intrinsic linkages between the goals related to inequality such as Goal 5 (Gender inequality), Goal 10 (Economic inequality) and Goal 16 (Political inequality); and emphasizing the importance of tackling

the increasing inequalities within and among the countries as a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of the SDGs;

10. Recognizing the importance of gender equality (Goal 5) as an essential enabler of all other SDGs, and stressing the importance of women's meaningful participation in the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other international frameworks and mechanisms such as the UN Security Council's Resolution (1325) on Women, Peace and Security;
11. Concerned with the shrinking civic space in Asia and globally, in particular the increasing legal and financial restrictions imposed on civil society, and the criminalization and suppression of human rights defenders and democracy advocates, despite the internationally agreed commitments in the UN 2030 Agenda such as the Target 16.7 (on responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making) and Target 16.10 (on protecting fundamental freedoms) and, among others;
12. Recognizing the importance of a holistic whole-of-government approach to the SDGs, including sub-national and local governments, parliament, judiciary and other public institutions;
13. Recognizing the important role and responsibilities that public institutions such as: election bodies, national human rights institutions (NHRI), anti-corruption agencies, fair trade commission, political parties, the press and media, have in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
14. Recognizing the importance of an inclusive whole-of-society approach to the SDGs, involving all stakeholders, especially civil society, as outlined in SDG 17.17 "*encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships*";
15. Welcoming the UN Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament "Securing our Common Future" which put an emphasis on the linkage among disarmament, arms control and the SDGs on May 2018;
16. Welcoming the outcome of the PyeongChang Global Peace Forum (PGPF) which was a civil society-led initiative to integrate peace and disarmament agenda into the SDGs, including the PyeongChang Declaration for Peace 2019: *Sustainable Future for All – Ending War, Guaranteeing Peace*, the Resolution for Sustaining Peace Process in the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia, and the Framework of the PyeongChang Agenda for Peace (PCAP) 2030 adopted in PyeongChang, Republic of Korea, on February 11, 2019;
17. Welcoming the voluntary initiatives by some governments to create national SDG 18 to address issues related to security and disarmament such as unexploded ordinance (UXO) in Laos and landmines in Cambodia;
18. Welcoming the initiative of the Tokyo Democracy Forum (TDF) to be held on the 21 April, 2019 in Tokyo, Japan, as part of the Civil 20 (C20) meeting in preparation for the G20 Summit (Osaka, 28-29 June 2019);
19. Deeply concerned about the tensions and current conflicts throughout the world, especially the escalating armed conflict between India and Pakistan, the two neighboring states with nuclear weapons in South Asia, impacting more than 1.5 billion population in the region, and demanding for immediate end to any military actions and calling for engagement of parliamentarians, civil society and all the key stakeholders for conflict transformation and peace-building in the troubled region;

We, the Civil Society Participants, Call Upon:

The UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)

- 1) To regard SDG 16 as a permanent global cross-cutting priority to be reviewed on an annual basis together with the SDG 17 from 2020 onwards;
- 2) To ensure that the SDG 16 is implemented not in isolation but in strong links other related goals and targets in line with the integrated and indivisible nature of the SDGs;
- 3) To develop ways to introduce the existing UN human rights monitoring mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and special procedures of the UN Human Rights Council and UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies into the Follow-up and Review (FuR) of the 2030 Agenda;
- 4) To institutionalize the participation of sub-national and local governments by creating a mechanism 'Voluntary Local Review (VLR)' along with the current Voluntary National Review (VNR) designed mainly for national governments;
- 5) To provide more official space for robust participation of civil society and other non-government stakeholders in VNRs, including official submission of reports beforehand and more time for interventions during VNRs;

The Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)

- 6) To regard Goal 16 as a permanent goal together with the Goal 17, to integrate the recommendations from the UPR and human rights treaty bodies and to institutionalize the participation of sub-national governments for peer review at the regional level;

The UN Economic Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and its member states

- 7) To make SDG 16 and other cross-cutting goals related to inequalities such as Goal 5 (Gender Inequality) and 10 (Economic Inequality) an integral component of the Regional Roadmap for Implementing the UN 2030 Agenda and others policies on the SDGs;
- 8) To strengthen mechanisms for civil society participation by creating a formal CSO advisory group, to provide recommendations and advice on the effective and efficient implementation of the Regional Roadmap 2030 as well as the right to participate in public affairs in the region;

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- 9) To continue to prioritize Goal 16 in their work, in terms of providing technical support, capacity-building, monitoring, and advocacy in the spirit of partnership as outlined in the targets of SDG 17, with a focus on policy and institutional coherence, multi-stakeholder partnerships, disaggregated data for monitoring;

National and Sub-national Governments

- 10) To establish robust governance mechanisms for SDGs relying on meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including civil society, in planning, budgeting, implementing, monitoring and reporting processes at national and sub-national levels, as well as on strong systems for effective development cooperation with democratic ownership and mutual accountability essential for policy and institutional coherence (Target 17.13) and inclusive multi-stakeholder partnerships (Target 17.17);
- 11) To meaningfully localize the SDGs through a human rights-based, conflict and gender-sensitive approach in their development planning, implementation and evaluation;

- 12) To safeguard civic space and to create enabling environment for CSOs to play a proactive role as independent development actors and human rights defender to contribute to the realization of the SDGs in accordance with the principles of development effectiveness and UN declaration on human rights defenders (1998);

National and Sub-national Parliaments / Council and Parliamentarians

- 13) To deepen their understanding of the intrinsic linkages between peace, human rights, democracy and the SDGs, and invite parliamentarians and their organizations such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), and ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) to play a greater role for advancing participatory democracy and human rights through Goal 16 in partnership with the civil society organizations;

Election Management Bodies

- 14) To deepen their understanding of the intrinsic linkages between peace, human rights, democracy and the SDGs to ensure 'responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels' (Target 16.7) by conducting free, fair and inclusive elections, and guaranteeing election monitoring and verification by the independent civil society organizations;

Judiciary and Law Enforcement Bodies

- 15) To deepen their understanding of the intrinsic linkages between peace, human rights, democracy and the SDGs, and invite them to play a greater role to 'promote the rule of law and to ensure equal access to justice for all' (Target 16.3) in accordance with international human rights law and principles;

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)

- 16) To contribute to the full realization of the SDGs by providing a source of accurate data about human rights issues and situation and developing human rights-based indicators for effective monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs at the national and sub-national level, and invite the Asian governments to create NHRIs or strengthen the NHRI's independence and effectiveness in accordance with the Paris Principles;

The Open Government Partnership (OGP)

- 17) To continue supporting civil society stakeholders to ensure genuine co-creation with governments, of commitments for transparent governance, ensuring the integration of Goal 16 and other cross-cutting targets related to the right to public information; and invite other Asian governments to join the OGP to demonstrate their commitment to transparent, accountable and participatory governance;

Anti-Corruption Agencies

- 18) To strengthen the independence and their institutional capacities for efficient investigation and prosecution of political corruption cases, and support active participation of citizens and CSOs in mitigating, preventing and fighting corruption at all levels, including in the ratification and effective implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC);

The Private Sector

- 19) Especially from the extractive industries, to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), as outlined in the para. 67 of the UN 2030 Agenda and the Child Rights and Business Principles (CRBP), to ensure the inclusive decision-making of citizens, local and indigenous communities towards peace and sustainable development;

20)

Mongolia

- 21) The State Great Hural (Parliament), the Government of Mongolia, as well as the capital city municipality of Ulaanbaatar, to support the organization of the UBDF in 2020 aimed at promoting democracy, human rights and anti-corruption and other cross-cutting SDGs through Goal 16, among the countries that are facing similar challenges in the political transition process;

The Republic of Korea

- 22) To continue to promote democracy worldwide, leading by example, including by supporting multi-stakeholder forums on democracy in Asia as initiated by ADA, ADN and the PSCD, with the Busan Democracy Forum (BuDF) 2018 and Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum (UBDF) 2019;

Finally, we commit ourselves to the transformative vision of 'peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence' through effective implementation of the SDG 16+ in constructive partnership with governments, international organizations, multi-stakeholders and other CSOs.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

- **16.1** Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- **16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- **16.3** Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- **16.4** By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime
- **16.5** Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms
- **16.6** Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- **16.7** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- **16.8** Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance
- **16.9** By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration
- **16.10** Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements
- **16.a** Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime
- **16.b** Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

Co-organizers of UBDF

- Asia Development Alliance (ADA) ada.secretariat@gmail.com / <http://ada2030.org/>
- Asia Democracy Network (ADN) asiademocracynetwork@gmail.com / <http://adnasia.org>
- Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD), Mongolia
chrd@mongolnet.mn / <https://chrdmongolia.wordpress.com/>
- Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD)
info@community-democracies.org / www.community-democracies.org