



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



PERMANENT MISSION  
OF ICELAND  
to the United Nations

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**STATEMENT AT HIGH-LEVEL EVENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY “CONTRIBUTIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA”**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER**

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

Iceland and my own country Liechtenstein would like to commend you for organizing this timely event. We also appreciate the excellent background note, which highlights numerous internationally agreed outcomes and other sources to convey an important fact:

The 2005 summit significantly advanced our discourse by forging a consensus on the interlinked nature of development, peace and security and human rights. It is now universally recognized, both inter-governmentally and within civil society, that sustainable development can only be realized on the basis of respect for human rights and the rule of law. It is also generally accepted that the Millennium Development Goals severely neglected this dimension, which is partly to blame for their unequal or lacking implementation.

We have for several months now debated, sometimes in rather controversial fashion, how to fix this mistake in shaping the post-2015 development goals. There is reason for optimism, because there is a basic agreement that human rights and the rule of law cannot be ignored in the SDG's. But it is time now to make progress on the question of how to achieve that. We would like to offer four thoughts in this regard:

- 1.) **Mainstreaming human rights and rule of law issues throughout the SDG's is important, but so is a stand-alone goal.** This is due to the fact that some targets in this area simply do not fit into the defined and specific scope of other goals. Take for example the fight against corruption in all its forms and at all levels: this will be a decisive factor for promoting both public and private investment. Corruption has been recognized as a major obstacle to the achievement of the MDG's. This includes so-called "petty" corruption, which disproportionately affects the most disadvantaged individuals and groups of society. But fighting corruption does not fit as a target under any of the other draft SDG's. The same is true, for example, for targets related to effective and capable institutions, access to justice, legal identity, and access to information. We therefore believe that a stand-alone goal on rule of law is the only way to ensure the presence of some of the key targets in the SDG agenda.
  
- 2.) **Reducing inequality is key if we want to the post-2015 agenda to be "inclusive and people-centered",** as we have agreed at the GA's Special Event on the MDG's (September 2013). We are therefore pleased to see a separate draft goal on this issue. Development gains are only sustainable if we tap the potential of all parts of society, including women, migrants, minorities and persons with disabilities. This requires not only the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies and practices, but also active measures to promote empowerment and inclusion.
  
- 3.) **Concrete goals and targets related to human rights and the rule of law will not introduce so-called conditionalities into our efforts aimed at achieving sustainable development.** This follows first of all from the very notion of goals and targets. They are points on the horizon that we try to reach by a certain moment in time – and thus by definition not conditions that must be fulfilled in the present. Instead, they are important enablers of sustainable development. If it is helpful, we would be

open to addressing any concerns regarding conditionality in an explicit manner in the drafting of the post-2015 agenda.

1.) **The rule of law is essential to attract necessary financial resources.** Economic investment can only thrive where it finds transparency, predictability and accountability in business transactions. Investment protection, anti-corruption, labor rights, environmental sustainability are factors that increasingly influence decisions made in corporate board rooms, partly in response to demands by consumers as well as shareholders. Neglecting good governance, rule of law and human rights in the post-2015 agenda therefore risks ignoring key incentives for entrepreneurship.

Mr. President,

We hope that this substantial event will give further impetus for the consolidation of a stand-alone SDG on peaceful societies, the rule of law and capable institutions, as reflected in the zero draft submitted to the OWG. We particularly hope so for business-oriented reasons as the most important source of financing sustainable development are nowadays private investments!

I thank you.