



Key messages and comments on Elements Paper of the Political Declaration

We appreciate the co-facilitators' work on the Elements Paper and the opportunity for us to share inputs. As the element paper acknowledges, *The world has drastically changed since 2019, it is more behind on SDG targets than it was four years ago*, it will be inadequate for the Declaration to build on the 2019 Declaration that was a consensus-oriented document devoid of outcome-oriented recommendations and the political will necessary to achieve them. Besides, we do not appreciate the intent of *consensual declaration* that compromises the political will necessary to prioritize critical considerations over consensus. Moreover, considering the drastic changes since, coupled with COVID 19 induced multidimensional crises, and continued regressions, it is important to, go beyond the framework of 2019 Declaration, to avoid business as usual, aiming for a action-oriented, concrete, and responsive political declaration capable of mobilizing the leadership and will critical to walk the talk on reaching farthest first in the decade of action and delivery.

Our specific recommendations are as follows:

[Our Shared Resolve]

1. We appreciate that the Elements Paper's emphasis on the urgency of action and commitment to focus on the reversal of negative trends untowards systemic change for transformative outcomes. We note that this requires concrete action, backed by stronger political will in addressing inequalities within and among countries, unequal economic, financial and trade governance, debt distress and illicit financial flows, corporate capture of resources, fundamentalisms, militarism & conflict, patriarchy, authoritarianism, institutionalized discrimination based on gender, class, caste, religion, ability, etc.
2. The thought-leadership across multilateral processes should ensure that the rhetoric of action-oriented and transformative is reconciled with the reality to deliver on transformation, leaving no one behind, human dignity and rights and redress of asymmetrical power relations by ensuring strong political will to resolve the crisis engulfing us all.
3. The decade of action and delivery should aim to urgently reinstate the demising public trust, redress surging social and politico-economic inequalities, and democratize shrinking spaces for deliberation and accountability.

[Our Changed World]

1. The Elements Paper should clearly recognize that the Global South has historically suffered colonialism, plunder and injustices at the hands of the North and the pattern continues to be manifested through neo imperial and neoliberal designs causing the decay of socio-economic and ecological systems, policy and fiscal space constraints, unfair trade and investment regimes, illicit financial flows, Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) and other instruments, unscrupulous debt distress, and the insatiable IFI conditionalities, restricting national capacities to adopt people-centered, rights-based, transformative strategies for the Agenda 2030 or COVID 19 recovery.
2. It should recognize that in the face of clear failures, with the entire regions falling behind on all the SDGs, it is high time that we prioritized urgent action on fundamental reforms to ensure adequate, efficient and timely redress of systemic barriers.
3. In relation to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, we would like to add the increase of violence against women, widening un/der/paid care work, job losses and reversal of hard-earned progress towards gender equality and labour rights.
4. We agree on highlighting the interlinkages between poverty and the threats from climate change, biodiversity loss, conflict - but would also like to add specific reference to climate-induced migration, and refugees as well as multidimensional vulnerabilities of people, especially women and children, in such situations.
5. The Political Declaration should not be quiet on foreign occupation, colonialism, militarism and conflict to ensure that fundamental freedoms of the millions in such situations are not left behind. We believe that building a peace based on social justice and accountable institutions requires ambition and decisive action to curtail the militarism of global powers that stir up conflict, to hold accountable the military-industrial complex that profits from it, and to address the country-specific and socio-cultural and politico-economic roots of national armed conflicts.
6. The Political Declaration should reiterate the need to shift massive military expenditures towards funding human wellbeing, and investing in social development and public services for just, equitable, & inclusive governance to address several other human security considerations. It is also imperative to ensure policy coherence by addressing the splits in our critical consciousness; where global military expenditure exceeded the \$2 trillion mark in 2021 compared to mere \$185 billions for development.
7. IFI conditionalities and other instruments, instead of recommending cuts to public spending on health, education, social protection, need to focus on military and debt nexus to avoid policy incoherence with the Agenda 2030 so the state policy and fiscal space for equitable financing across social development, human rights, gender equality and climate mitigation and adaptation can be ensured to avoid going one step forward, two steps back.
8. The Declaration should assert a more forward looking vision for HLPF governance and VNR, including ensuring a more systemic comprehensive review of all the SDGs to not leave behind those not under review in the annual cycle, also including goals where countries are regressing, designing VNR follow up mechanism as well as report back on previous cycle recommendations.

9. The declaration should strengthen the linkages between national, regional and global processes, as well as ensuring policy coherence with human rights and sustainable development imperatives. We note that the lack of intersectional ties across processes also compromises the scope of Voluntary National Review (VNR) that only focus on development obligations within national borders. Despite a regular contention over foreign occupation at the Ministerial Declaration every year, the VNRs do not feature extraterritorial obligations to advance development around the globe or accountability over aggressive designs beyond borders.

[Turning Our World toward 2030]

1. The Political Declaration should clearly commit to alter the business as usual approach, demonstrating clear commitment to ensure equitable financing, technical and technological support for regions, peoples and priorities left behind, so that MOI are no more MIA.
2. The political declaration should also clearly recommend a comprehensive Debt Resolution Mechanism, a Global Tax Body, and a Global entity on Trade, and a Technology Facilitation Mechanism, all under the auspices of the UN, with regional structures, to review policy incoherent debt distress, IFI conditionalities, Trade & Investment Agreements, track Illicit Financial Flows, meaningful implementation of ODA commitments, and inclusive digital governance in line with SDGs Compatibility Impact Assessment as well as Human Rights and normative frameworks to walk the talk on the Agenda 2030.
3. In relation to addressing inequalities and exclusion, the Political Declaration needs to recognise the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination as well as the intersectional risk of discrimination, harassment and violence against women when gender discrimination is combined with ethnic or racial discrimination, socio-economic status, migration status, work and descent, and in case of women with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, among others.
4. The declaration should clearly acknowledge historical damage caused by the private sector to ensure that they are not warranted Messiah status across negotiation tables to democratize the discourse around development.
5. Civil society's role as a catalyst of development requires active recognition as well as meaningful participation to ensure that the decisions of our future have legitimacy from people on the ground.
6. Our multilateralism requires bold, critical and outcome oriented political leadership to make difficult choices that have a key bearing on our collective future to ensure development justice for all.