

Statement at First Informal consultation on the Ministerial Declaration 2024

Part 1 (K. N. Gunalan - Guna)

Excellencies, co-facilitators, my name is K. N. Gunalan (Guna) Co-Chair STC MG. On behalf of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS), I thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts with you on the initial priorities for the Ministerial Declaration.

We strongly support the practice of the Ministerial Declaration of the HLPF and appreciate the opportunity for participation of two representatives from the Major Groups and other Stakeholders to join your discussions at these Informal sessions and contribute to the document.

1) What are the main current trends, challenges, and their impacts on accelerating the implementation of the SDGs?

The world is facing multiple and interlocking crises, from the devastating impacts of climate change such as the hottest year ever recorded, fires and flooding around the world, to shocking impacts of wars and human rights abuses, to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the rising cost of basic food. Humanity and life on this planet are under threat.

Many governments are simply not committed to moving fast to address the challenges and seem unwilling to take the bold steps to deliver a just transition.

So, we welcome the Co-Facilitators' commitment to delivering a Ministerial Declaration which must be an ambitious, transformative, and action-oriented, document. As well your commitment to consult with the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, as mandated and integral to the achievement of the SDGs.

On our part, we urge you to move beyond re-affirmations. We encourage you in your dialogues to set out bold steps for a comprehensive / realistic review of the current status of the various SDGs; a practical & integrated approach to acceleration that demonstrates leadership at this critical time. Rapidly advancing technologies especially AI have the potential to accelerate achievement of all the SDGs.

The Ministerial Declaration for this year's HLPF must be realistic and achievable. It should layout accountable and timelines for the full realization of the 2030 Agenda. The Ministerial Declaration should include actions to ensure that advanced technologies including AI accelerate not impede implementation of the SDGs.

MGoS stand ready to champion multilateralism and to work in partnership for the benefit of all. We can and will collectively mobilize many millions of local partners and we call for a strong emphasis on a 'whole of society' approach.

2) What are the priority actions and investment pathways needed to support the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions for reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and accelerating poverty eradication?

The delivery of the SDGs is closely tied with other key frameworks including human rights, climate, environment, and financing agreements. This year's goals under review bring into sharp focus the need to provide an integrated approach to implementation. Access to affordable healthcare (physical and mental health), nutrition, housing, clean water/ sanitation, education & skills development to meet the demands of the marketplace will all need to be achieving the SDGs under review this year. Many of them are human rights issues and hence the responsibility of governments to make them available.

These must be accomplished while addressing the asymmetry in global power relations, inequalities within and among countries, unsustainable debt patterns, and preventing illicit finance flows, asset stealth, profit shifting and tax evasions to secure state fiscal space.

The funding gap has been highlighted many times over recent years. However, inequalities have grown at unprecedented rates, so we recommend that you consider new ways to make available the funds necessary, including reforms of global tax, debt and financial systems, to reduce the debt burden on less developed countries and establish clear steps to deliver the commitment to 0.7% ODA from donor countries.

Furthermore, pledges for new sources must be guaranteed in such a way that truly reaches communities and individuals so that no one is left behind.