Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 21/32, endorsed the recommendations adopted by the Working Group on the Right to Development at its 13th session (A/HRC/21/19) which, inter alia, requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to make available on its website and to the 14th session of the Working Group, in the format of two conference room papers, all further submissions by Governments, group of Governments and regional groups, as well as inputs by other stakeholders.

In response to its note verbale dated 16 July 2012, OHCHR received submissions from Georgia, Mauritius and Switzerland. The submission from Trinidad and Tobago, which was received too late for inclusion in the compilation of submissions to the 13th session of the
Working Group, is also included in this compilation. In response to its correspondence dated 21 September 2012, OHCHR received a joint submission from Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities), Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers), International Institute of Mary Our Help of the Salesians of Don Bosco, International Volunteerism Organization for Women Education and Development, International Organization for the Right to Education and Freedom of Education, as well as New Humanity.

All submissions are posted in their original versions on OHCHR’s website and are also compiled in conference room papers 4 and 5.

Allow me to recall that this is the third year that comments on the draft right to development criteria and operational sub-criteria have been submitted for consideration by the Working Group. In total, OHCHR has received 4 submissions from groups of States, 30 submissions from Member States and 27 submissions from UN System organisations and institutions and other international organisations and NGOs. These are in addition to the several oral comments made at the last two sessions of the Working Group.

In order to focus on the task before the Working Group at its current session, and bearing in mind also the time constraints, I will highlight some of the general comments made in the submissions that are of particular relevance to the Group’s work at this session and also highlight certain specific proposals. Although this is only a very brief overview, rest assured that the many comments received have been duly noted and will certainly be useful for the Working Group in its
review of the draft criteria and operational sub-criteria.

As with past submissions, those received since our last session vary to a significant degree in their approach, ranging from detailed proposals to a more general assessment of the quality of the criteria and sub-criteria, or comments on the realization of the right to development.

One submission, for instance, noted that the draft right to development criteria and operational sub-criteria provided a well-constructed and comprehensive framework to measure the essential features of the right to development. Whereas, another, while generally supportive of the methodology and approach adopted by the high-level task force, commented that there was inconsistency in the manner in which the criteria and sub-criteria were drafted and suggested their reformulation, including by providing more concrete and practicable details for each sub-criterion.

Among general suggestions made, one contribution underlined the link between international solidarity and the right to development and its mutually reinforcing nature, and proposed reorganizing the criteria and operational sub-criteria according to a suggested list of right to development principles and related articles of the Declaration on the Right to Development. Another expressed the view that the criteria and sub-criteria lacked explicit reference to gender equality, and that civil and political rights were as important for development processes as economic, social and cultural rights, and should be better reflected. It also expressed doubt on the wisdom of separating attribute 1 on comprehensive and human-centred development policy from attribute 3
on social justice in development. Yet another proposal was to use more explicit human rights language and to expand the sub-criteria to include other important human rights issues.

Among concrete proposals made with regard to the right to development criteria and sub-criteria was a suggestion to pay more attention to the development rights of indigenous peoples and minorities. Another submission proposed several additional criteria and sub-criteria and extensive re-formulations. New criteria proposed included the recognition of international solidarity as a right, the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive and legally binding international instrument on the right to development, and recognition of the right to peace of persons and peoples.

The submissions received so far have been extremely valuable in terms of content and the overall direction they seek to provide, and I am confident that they will greatly assist the Working Group in the implementation of its mandate.

In conclusion, allow me to express my gratitude, once again, to all delegations and stakeholders for their useful contributions.

Thank you for your attention.