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15th session of the working group on the right to development
(12 to 16 May 2014)

EU Statement

Geneva, 12 May 2014

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EU Statement

Madame Chairperson-Rapporteur

Distinguished Delegates

Dear Colleagues

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

At the outset, I would like to reiterate our congratulations to you, Madame Chair, for your ongoing work as Chairperson-Rapporteur of this Working Group. Please be assured of our ongoing support for the work of the Working Group.

We remain strongly committed to achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty; promoting respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms; working towards ensuring security, conflict prevention and resolution; and encouraging good governance and rule of law, gender equality, human development, accountability and equitable globalisation.

We would like to reiterate our support for the Right to Development, as based on the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights, the multidimensional nature of development strategies and the individuals as the central subjects of the development process.

The Right to Development requires the full realisation of civil and political rights, together with Economic, Social and Cultural rights; and requires a mix of policies, which will create an enabling environment for individuals, involving a wide range of actors, at different levels. Indeed, any development policy should make the human being the main participant and beneficiary of development. We would like to emphasize that, while national development efforts should be supported, States, acting individually and collectively, owe the primary responsibility for ensuring that their citizens realize the right to development.
Madame Chair,

As we commence the 15th Session of the Working Group on the Right to Development, we have before us an ambitious Programme of Work. Yet, although ambitious, it is attainable. We are positive that, in making good use of the time which has been allocated to us, we will make significant progress and we will be in a position to look back on this Session favourably. We look forward to hearing from the relevant UN experts throughout the session, whose expertise will surely steer our deliberations in the right direction. For this, we thank them in advance.

We have proved and will continue proving our readiness to engage constructively with the Working Group on the Right to Development on the basis of the report of the High Level Task Force and its set of criteria, sub-criteria and indicators, which in themselves may be used as a tangible tool in the implementation of the Right to Development. We express our willingness to pursue a consensual approach to the coming discussions, deliberations and negotiations, in the firm belief that this Working Group may achieve a positive, consensual outcome for all concerned.

We sincerely hope that, during this 15th Session, we can go beyond and rise above mere polarisation and politics. We remain confident that, through the goodwill of all concerned, we will concentrate on what unites us rather than on what divides us.

Thank you for your kind attention.