



**Statement by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka  
The fifteenth session of the Working Group on the Right to Development  
12-16 May 2014**

Madam Chair,

Sri Lanka, at the outset aligns itself with the statement made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Sri Lanka congratulates you for your re-election as the Chair-Rapporteur of the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the Working Group and commends your stewardship of the discussion with relevant stakeholders.

We reaffirm that the right to development is about mainstreaming and implementing development-oriented policies at all levels, in order to further improve the capacity of states to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights. The Right to Development is both an individual and collective right which requires commitment of both national and international levels to achieve its full realization. In this regard, there needs to be more focus on the special needs of developing countries which are negatively impacted by structural problems, external events and global economic and financial crises.

Madam Chair,

While we continue to take measures to implement the right to development at national level, we also believe that a rights-based approach to the development agenda, must first and foremost, translate into a firm commitment to the Right to Development as the fundamental basis of Sustainable Development Goals. We should not forget that poverty itself is the most urgent human rights concern. The MDGs have focused on several key inequalities in society but we have to consider all three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), with adequate reference to human rights in the context of social and economic development.

Sri Lanka has a firm policy of integrating youth participation and mainstreaming youth perspectives in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We hosted the World Conference on Youth from 6 - 10 May this year which focused on a wide range of themes, including education, employment, entrepreneurship, technology and sustainable development with the support of the UN and other multilateral organizations. One of the objectives of this Conference is to facilitate effective partnerships with youth, youth-led organisations and youth movements to further strengthen inclusive youth participation in the decision-making processes and implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Madam Chair,

As stated in earlier discussions and our written submission to the Working Group, we reiterate that it is imperative that the Declaration on the Right to Development be the basis for further consideration, revision and refinement of the criteria and sub-criteria, in order to achieve real progress. While Sri Lanka is appreciative of the work of this Working Group, we reiterate that effective international cooperation is essential to address the international obstacles and create a conducive international climate to the realization of the right to development. The politicization, polarization and impasse in this intergovernmental debate should end in order to create an enabling environment, greater political consensus and political will.

In conclusion, we note the progress achieved so far in the discussions during the previous sessions of this Working Group and we hope that this Session will be focused on finalizing the first reading of the remaining draft operational sub criteria, in accordance with its mandate.

We reiterate our firm commitment to the realization of the right to development and look forward to engage constructively in the discussions.

Thank you.