Warsaw, 26 February 2021

With reference to the invitation to present views on the consultancy study by OHCHR on the role of development to the enjoyment of human rights, Poland would like to present its answers to the presented Questionnaire.

**1. Please share your views on the contribution of development in promoting and protecting human rights, including its context, concept, specific aspects and means of implementation.**

Poland follows a human rights-based approach to sustainable and inclusive development encompassing all human rights and all persons. That means that sustainable and inclusive development cannot be achieved without respect for and protection and fulfilment of all human rights. Human rights principles and standards are both a means for and a goal of sustainable and inclusive development.

Human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance on one hand and inclusive and sustainable development on the other are therefore two basic and mutually reinforcing pillars of development policy.

In this approach Poland aligns itself with the EU’s general approach expressed on many occasions. In this context Poland believes that development poses no precondition to enjoyment and fulfilment of human rights, meaning that lack of development is not a reason to deviate from efforts to protect and promote human rights. This equally applies to civil and political as well as economic, social, cultural and other rights – no hierarchy can be assigned to those as human rights are universal, inalienable, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. Development, on the other hand, if achieved, can empower individuals as rights holders and thus make them more resilient and less vulnerable to human rights violations.

**2. How to ensure that development contributes to promoting and protecting human rights?**

At the international level universal adherence to the milestone universal human rights documents, such as Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and all the core international human rights treaties is the key to ensure promotion and protection of human rights. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development continues to pave the way to achieving development goals. Following those instruments will ensure desired outcomes, namely realization of human rights in pursuit of sustainable development.

By means of its recently adopted Multi-Annual Plan for Development Cooperation for 2021-2030 Solidarity for Development Poland’s development agenda is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Inalienable and indivisible human rights and fundamental freedoms constitute one of the foundational principles of Polish development cooperation. Poland believes in pursuing sustainable development because “it means a greater chance for lasting peace and prosperity, based on respect for fundamental values, including human rights and dignity” (as stated in its Multi-Annual Plan).

Poland wants to pursue the development goals which correspond directly with a whole range of SDGs, in particular with SDGs 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, and 16. In the case of SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) the interconnection between development and human rights is probably the most explicit. Polish development cooperation is engaged in helping partner countries strengthen their institutions and in acting so hopes to contribute to their better performance in the area of promoting and protecting human rights. However, other goals have also important ramifications as far as human rights are concerned. One possible example is cooperation in the area of education which can be regarded both as a precondition for the enjoyment of this particular human right, and as a means of promoting human rights in general, for instance by supporting civic education.

The role of civil society and human rights defenders is key in achieving human rights and sustainable development. Although states have primary responsibility to promote and protect human rights, civil society as well as human rights defenders can help states make informed decisions, propose initiatives, collect data as well as help implement designed by states programs and actions.

However it is worth noting that reaching higher level of development does not necessarily translate into higher level of protection of human rights. Ensuring that the economic growth and development enhance human right protection requires strong institutions, rule of law and continuous strengthening of civil society involvement in state management.

**3. Please share any concrete examples of best practices of contribution of development to the enjoyment of human rights.**

Poland actively participates in global efforts to achieve sustainable development through Polish Aid.

Polish Aid within SDG 16 finances projects aiming at protecting human rights and civil society enhancement in many countries in the world and in particular in Eastern Europe. The most vulnerable groups, including the poorest are among those to which a large portion of our aid funding is destined.

At the international level Poland regularly proposes the Human Rights Council resolution *The role of good governance in the promotion and protection of human rights*, which is closely connected to SDG 16 peace, justice and strong institutions. The resolutions stresses “that good governance at the national and international levels is essential for sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger” and in this context reaffirms i. a. the importance of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Development cooperation can also have a considerable impact on the enjoyment of human rights, even if only at a local level. One example is requiring companies and enterprises to follow certain rules and standards with respect to the conditions of labour and employment (vide SDG 8 decent work).

**4. Are there any other aspects relating to the contribution of development to the enjoyment of human rights for all that you would recommend for the study to focus on?**

It would be timely to study the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the human rights – development nexus and how its negative impact could be mitigated through human rights-based response to the pandemic.

**5. If you have differing views on the contribution of development to the enjoyment of human rights for all, please explain and provide examples if possible.**

Not applicable, no differing views.