

Good morning. I am speaking on behalf of the Women's Major Group, behalf of RESURJ, an alliance working to realize of sexual and reproductive justice. As a diverse group of women, feminists and activists, we will not rest until we walk out of the halls of the UN with a transformative and inclusive agenda that is grounded in respect for all human rights and for the planet.

It would be a disservice to billions of women and girls, if we allow rhetoric to blindside the vision of a world where all can live free from poverty, violence and discrimination.

The WMG will submit specific language recommendations on the zero draft. I take this opportunity to highlight some:

Our first concern is on par with what has been shared by some member states over the last few days – that gender equality and the human rights of women and girls must be recognized as cross-cutting throughout the political declaration, and not only as reference to the goals and targets. The way in which gender equality is approached in the zero draft, does not recognize the fact that women and girls make up the majority of those living in poverty, experience persistent, multidimensional and intersecting inequalities, and bear a disproportionate burden of economic and environmental crises. The draft ignores the structural inequalities women and girls face in enjoying gender equality and human rights. We must pay more than lip service to these and duly recognize that human rights are not only an inherit entitlement, they are also essential conditions for the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development beyond economic growth.

The second concern is related to the need to reaffirm existing human rights obligations and international conferences pertaining to gender equality and women's human rights. This include, the Convention on the Elimination of All form of Discrimination against Women and other agreements from UN conferences such as Beijing Declaration and ICPD Programme of Action to name just a few.

A human-rights based approach has at its core the principle of non-discrimination without any distinction. What this means is that we cannot list a few groups and exclude others. The current list under paragraph 17 must be broadened and explicitly state that there will be no discrimination of any kind in the implementation of the Agenda, including for people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities. This is necessary if the catchy phrase of 'leave no one behind' is to be more than rhetoric and ensure that all goals and targets is met for ALL people.

Lastly, the zero draft needs more work to ensure that all three dimensions of development are given adequate attention. We will not achieve sustainable development if we continue to ignore the environmental damage created by unsustainable patters of consumption and production that lead to rapid climate change. The zero draft needs to clearly state the root causes of current environment

crisis in order to transform the current economic growth model that fuels inequalities and destroys the environment.

What women want is political will and finance to ensure gender equality is reflected as a cross-cutting theme throughout this agenda; strong commitment to ensure a human-rights based approach to sustainable development so that this agenda is indeed transformative and inclusive; and an agenda that puts people and the planet over profit.