

## **CSO Statement on Human Rights, Development and Peace**

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*On behalf of the Asia Pacific Beijing +20 CSO Steering Committee and representatives from other CSOs in the Asia Pacific Region*

Civil society representatives would like to emphasize the significance of the normative standards based on human rights as member states focus on the accelerated implementation of the BPFA and accountability measures to ensure the same. We wish to highlight that while human rights is only one area of critical concern in the BPFA we would like to assert that equality, development, peace and human rights are mutually reinforcing and crosscutting and should not be seen in isolation. Our understanding of the synergy between human rights and development has evolved over the years.

One of the main achievements of the first world conference on human rights held in Tehran in 1968 was the declaration that “the achievement of lasting progress in the implementation of human rights is dependent on sound and effective national and international political, economic and social development.”

In the mid- nineties came the momentum to mainstream human rights more concretely into all development initiatives. This was the advent of the rights based approach to development adopted by many UN Agencies and the World Bank.

In operational terms development must be based on principles of social justice. This means a more just distribution of the benefits of development in terms of opportunities and resources especially for the most deprived and marginalized, as well as the building of capacities for accessing opportunities and resources for all, especially the most deprived and marginalized.

The goal of human rights is also justice and it is essential that the human rights approach therefore underpins development efforts to ensure social justice in development on the basis of equality and non-discrimination. This also requires establishing enforcement and accountability through law and policy measures thereby demanding realization of rights and non-regression of rights. To recognize the important role the media can play in strengthening gender equality and encourage the media to improve public awareness on human rights and instruments that protect those rights. It demands that conditions that allow disparities in the distribution of the benefits of economic growth be eliminated, otherwise development efforts may lead to the abuse of the rights of the most vulnerable.

It is our view that human rights and every aspect of development for women as outlined in The BPFA has to be intrinsically linked, not separated, if the goals of the BPFA are to be achieved.

### *Partnership with Civil Society Organizations*

My second point concerns the participation of CSOs and the importance of a constructive engagement between member states and CSOs as we proceed in our deliberations over the processes of the Beijing plus 20 review. We urge member states and UN secretariat to facilitate such a fruitful and productive engagement.