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**INTER-REGIONAL DIALOGUE ON DEMOCRACY (IRDD)**

THE ROLE OF GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16

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| **GLOBAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GOAL 16: *PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES*** |

The SDGs were developed under the premise that sustainable development, peace and democracy are intertwined, and that we cannot achieve sustainable development without peace and democracy.

Goal 16, which brings together key elements of democracy such as good governance, rule of law, accountability, human rights, peace, and security, calls for the promotion of “peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and the building of effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”. Having such a commitment to securing a more peaceful environment is unprecedented on a global scale, and Goal 16 will encourage actions to guarantee respect for sustainable democratic living. However, whilst Goal 16 is the main goal for fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies, it should not be seen in isolation. Meeting any of the SDGs rests on the shoulders of Goal 16, and, as initiatives such as Pathfinders have found, there is direct overlap at the target level between Goal 16 and the other goals, with many other targets directly measuring an aspect of peace, inclusion or access to justice.

International and regional organizations, have an instrumental role in supporting their Member States achieve Goal 16, and, in compliance with the global demands, to bolster the highest standards in terms of effectiveness at the institutional level and the sustainability of peace at the local, national, regional and global levels. The need to collaborate with traditional and non-traditional partners to develop strong initiatives that would enable the conditions to achieve the expected results is emphasized throughout the Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly by Goal 17.

At this stage, the landscape of specific regional and global action plans developed and to be implemented by the global and regional organizations looks promising. Some examples of this commitment can be appreciated in the following:

* The African Union has recognized that there is a very strong link between Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 for Africa. This connection is clear from the first aspiration: “We want a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.” The African Union is already working on the definition of specific needs regarding SDG 16, and in defining how existing mechanisms, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), can provide in-depth analysis of country-specific targets under Goal 16. They have also highlighted an effective local approach to addressing challenges; in collaboration with UNECA and the African Development Bank, they made relevant assessments on the specific priorities in the region, in order to make an efficient use of available resources to secure concrete advances towards SDG 16.
* The ASEAN Vision 2025 emphasizes strengthening democracy, good governance, and the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as combating corruption to raise the standard of living in the ASEAN region, all elements of SDG 16. ASEAN has already started to incorporate the relevant SDG anti-corruption and good governance targets as key indicators in constructing the ASEAN Integrity Dialogue, the mechanism to promote anti-corruption proposed in the ASEAN 2016-2025 work plan. This specifically includes targets related to tackling corruption and bribery, stopping illegal financial flows both within and outside of the region, the enactment and implementation of right to information laws realizing people’s right to search for, receive and impart information, and building strong institutions, including a network of strong anti-corruption commissions in the ASEAN region embracing the Jakarta principles.
* The European Union is committed to implementing the SDGs within the EU and abroad, through development cooperation with partner countries. The SDGs, including Goal 16, reflect many of the EU's priorities for sustainable development. The European answer to the 2030 Agenda includes two work streams: The first track seeks to link the SDGs to the European policy framework and current priorities, assessing where the EU stands and identifying the most relevant sustainability concerns. The second track will launch reflection work on further developing a longer-term vision and the focus of sectoral policies after 2020, and reorient the EU budget's contributions towards the achievement of the EU's long-term objectives through the new Multiannual Financial Framework beyond 2020. By adopting such a comprehensive approach, the EU seeks to mainstream the SDGs into the Commission's everyday work and to engage all stakeholders, member states and the European Parliament in their implementation in order to work towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
* The Organization of American States (OAS) is advancing inter-agency initiatives that seek the support of Member States in the achievement of the SDGs, including SDG 16. The focus of the OAS, based on their institutional vision and mission of “More Rights for More People”, is on equality and social inclusion in the region, which has a direct connection to the promotion of democracy and good governance.
* In South Asia, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has a mandate to coordinate and cooperate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Among some considerations regarding the regional capacity to advance the SDGs, the SAARC Development Fund could be transformed into a South Asian Development Bank to catalyze regional infrastructure development. SAARC is also actively working on strengthening data collection and analysis, monitoring and accountability strategies.
* Given the centrality of Goal 16, under the Democracy and Development priority, the Community of Democracies (CoD) led the effort to define additional supplemental indicators for Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Agenda. Through a consultative process with experts and international organizations including the UNDP and International IDEA, a set of Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16 were developed and are now available as a non-prescriptive tool to assist states in adapting the official UN global indicators to their respective national level contexts.

It is pertinent to highlight that global and regional organizations should closely follow states in their national-level processes and development of work plans for the implementation of the SDGs, and seek to assist them in this regard. Relevant insight for this is to be drawn from the Voluntary National Reviews. As part of the follow-up and review mechanism, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven."

These national-level reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC. Regular reviews by the HLPF are to be voluntary, state-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders. The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They also seek to strengthen policies and government institutions and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this sense, international and regional organizations, as well as multi-stakeholder groups, in addition to working amongst themselves and with governments, have understood the importance of collaborating with civil society and grassroots organizations to have deeper and substantive impact both during and after the implementation of Agenda 2030.

Almost 3 years after the adoption of the Agenda 2030, global actors are undertaking the task of unpacking the terms, goals and indicators to identify the best routes to its successful implementation. Action plans are being developed worldwide; the SDGs and the spirit of Agenda 2030 are being incorporated into national-level work plans; and the search for resources, partnerships and channels of cooperation is becoming a priority and a challenge for all stakeholders.

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| **OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS** |

The Inter-Regional workshop on “International and Regional Organizations working towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16” will seek to:

1. **Share good practices and lessons learned, as well as challenges faced by international and regional organizations in support to Member States for the achievement of Agenda 2030 and more specifically on Goal 16.**

*This will look specifically into the instruments and mechanisms set up by regional organizations to advance Goal 16 in their particular regions. Lessons learned and good practices adopted to meet challenges and limitations will be identified. Specific case-studies will be presented.*

1. **Formulate concrete guidelines/measures/policy recommendations based on regional and global experiences to achieve Goal 16.**

*The Workshop and High-Level Meeting will reflect on what the regional and international organizations are doing to advance Goal 16, and the SDGs more broadly, and based on their experiences develop guidelines and policy recommendations. The objective of these meetings is to identify and categorize a range of actions that regional organizations are implementing to successfully achieve this task.*

*These guidelines or recommendations will serve to inform peers and other stakeholders, and learn from challenges and opportunities that regional organizations are facing, and mechanisms to overcome those challenges. These guideline and policy recommendations will form the basis for the development and production of a knowledge product led by International IDEA with the contributions of the partners of the IRDD, including the Community of Democracies.*

1. **Explore and discuss how regional organizations could further collaborate with the UN and civil society on achieving Goal 16**

*Regional organizations have contributed to the achievements related to the MDGs, and to the establishment of the Agenda 2030, as well as to the finalization of the SDG framework. Regional organizations are among the key actors in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Civil society is a key actor for the achievement of the SDGs, together with national governments, regional and international organizations. For this reason, strategic frameworks and initiatives of collaboration between regional organizations, the UN and civil society will be discussed and highlighted in the knowledge product that would result from these meetings.*

1. **In achieving aims a – c, provide a concrete example of progress towards Goal 17**

*Goal 17.16 explicitly calls for the enhancement of “the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries” while Goal 17.7 aims to “encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships”.*

The expected outputs of the workshop/consultation are:

1. The Workshop’s Outcome Synthesis Document.
2. Publication with contributions from the international and regional organizations working on Goal 16 (Knowledge Product).
3. Presentation of the publication and the results of the IRDD meeting at the 2019 High Level Forum on “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.
4. Development/contribution to a section for the second edition of the International IDEA Signature Publication (Global State of Democracy-GSoD).

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| **PROGRAMME** |

**9:30-9:00 REGISTRATION**

**10:00-10:30** **OPENING**

Yves Leterme, Secretary-General, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)

Michael Møller, Director-General, Office of the United Nations in Geneva (UNOG)

Thomas Garrett, Secretary-General, Community of Democracies

**10:30-13:00** **SESSION 1: Global and Regional perspectives on the advancement of Goal 16**

(Discussion with experts from the regional organizations that are partners of the IRDD, including the African Union, ASEAN, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the League of Arab States, SAARC, the Organization of American States, and the Pacific Island Forum.

***Guiding questions*:**

* What specific actions are the global and regional organizations undertaking for the advancement of Goal 16?
* How do global and regional organizations respond to the needs and expectations of their Member States to address issues associated to peace, justice and accountable/inclusive institutions?
* How does organizations coordinate and capitalize the efforts made at the international, regional, national and local levels, and what are some of the main challenges in consolidating a unified strategy towards the achievement of Goal 16?
* From the regional perspective, what are some of the main successes and opportunities that can be highlighted since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDG framework, and what are the main challenges foreseen for the way forward regarding the achievement of Goal 16?
* Taking into account each regional context, what are some practical policy recommendations that we can highlight to advance Goal 16 more effectively?

**13:00-14:00** **LUNCH**

**14:00-15:45** **SESSION 2: Connecting the global perspectives with regional and local efforts towards the achievement of Goal 16**

(Discussion with Member States and Civil Society Organizations on their expectations from global and regional organizations, and how key stakeholders enable the implementation at all levels of global frameworks to consolidate peace, justice and strong institutions)

***Guiding questions*:**

* What are the main efforts and actions that governments are implementing at the national and local levels for the advancement of Goal 16?
* What are some of the main challenges, opportunities and successes that national and local authorities are facing to secure peaceful, just and accountable societies?
* How does civil society and grassroot organizations contribute to advancing Goal 16? How is the work of these key stakeholders integrated and coordinated with governmental agendas?
* Taking into account each national/local context, what are some practical policy recommendations that we can highlight to advance Goal 16 more effectively from the governmental and citizens point of view?

**15:45-16:00 COFFEE BREAK**

**16:00-17:30** **SESSION 3: Goal 16 as an enabler for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

(Discussion to reflect on the main actions and policy recommendations that would allow, based on a multi-stakeholder approach, to optimize the process of achieving Goal 16, and connect those actions to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

***Guiding questions:***

* How do we understand Goal 16 as an enabler for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and how can we break the understanding that each SDG can be achieved individually?
* How do we break the silos and better connect/coordinate the work that all stakeholders are doing independently, and better complement our efforts to advance Goal 16?
* From this conversation, what can we identify as the best practices and policy recommendations that can be implemented across the board to successfully achieve Goal 16?

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| **METHODOLOGY** |

The Inter-Regional Workshop is open to Regional Organizations, UN agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations, as well as permanent representations of Member States to global and regional organizations. The workshop will take place in English only, under Chatham House Rules, and each session will have a series of presentations from diverse stakeholders, followed by interventions from participants interested in contributing to the discussion. The results of the meeting will be consolidated in a report that will become available in the following weeks after the Workshop. The report will be distributed to all participants, and will also be uploaded to the main virtual platforms, including International IDEA’s Website (www.idea.int)

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| **TARGET PARTICIPANTS** |

The target participants for the **IRDD Workshop** are senior officials of international and regional organizations and the United Nations member states, civil society representatives, as well as experts, practitioners and academia specifically working on Agenda 2030 and particularly on Goal 16.

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| **DATES AND VENUE** |

The IRDD workshop will be co-organized by International IDEA, the United Nations Office in Geneva and the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies. The event will be held in the margins of the 37th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) at the Palais des Nations on 13 March 2018.

Considering the limitations in space and security procedures at the Palais des Nations, we would greatly appreciate if you could register to attend this Workshop by sending your full name, title, organization, phone number and email address to [l.consuegra@idea.int](mailto:l.consuegra@idea.int) by **5 March 2018 COB**.