

## STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION

HIGH-LEVEL THEMATIC DEBATE ON ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Plenary session

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New York

*Delivered by Patrizio Civili, Permanent Observer, IDLO*

### Check against delivery

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,

On behalf of IDLO Director-General Irene Khan and IDLO Member Parties, let me at the outset thank you for the precious opportunity offered to our organization to participate in this important debate. The international community owes you, Mr. President, a great debt of gratitude for the conception of this event. This is indeed the time to move from declarations and commitments to concrete action. But it has not always proved easy in these halls, in moving from shaping strategies to guiding implementation, to avoid falling into the traps of fragmentation—of losing sight of the way policies and actions impact each other and can synergize or fundamentally nullify each other.

The basic messages in the Political Declaration that precedes the SDGs in Agenda 2030— that the SDGs are integrated and indivisible and should strive for a new balance among the three dimensions of sustainable development; the “transformative” ambition of the new Agenda and its universal relevance; the new comprehensive approach to the concept of sustainability that emerges from the Agenda, encompassing environmental dimensions but equally the imperatives of equity and social inclusion—these overall messages are as crucial to engendering effective action for development as the specific targets that accompany the 17 SDGs that follow the Declaration.

This event, while approached first and foremost as a call for action, has been conceived in a way that brings together these fundamental principles underlying the SDGs and links progress towards the new Agenda with the outcomes of Paris and Addis. As such, it projects for the international community the solid, comprehensive platform that is required to forge ahead with a new sense of purpose and a new sense of clarity as to what it takes to make real progress and sustain it.

IDLO is not part of the UN family but is equally strongly committed to do its full part to support countries and indeed the UN system in a sustained effort to implement both the letter and the spirit of the 2030 Agenda, deeply rooted as the new Agenda is in the UN Charter and the human rights agenda.

IDLO has found in the new Agenda - in the Political Declaration, in Goal 16 and indeed across all of the SDGs - a most heartening reflection of the approach that is guiding us in furthering our core mandate to advance the rule of law and development. It is an approach that looks beyond process and focuses on outcomes: on gearing the law and its application to correct injustices and inequalities that hamper development progress and that not only prevent the poor, women, minorities, migrants from sharing in the benefits of development, but also keep them from being active agents to sustain progress. This is the reason why, throughout the UN processes leading to the adoption of the Agenda, we found it necessary to promote and contribute equally to events specifically devoted to exploring the place of the rule of law in development, and to events addressing gender equality, combatting inequalities and the whole issue of social inclusion. And, incidentally, this is why we are currently actively engaged in discussions on the development of indicators that can project progress across individual Agenda goals.

IDLO's Assembly of Parties was one of the first inter-governmental bodies since the adoption of Agenda 2030 to discuss, at its annual session last November, how both IDLO technical cooperation and its advocacy can maximize their contribution towards the new Agenda. Among the themes that run across the discussions were the importance of the constitutional grounding of the concept of sustainable development and an approach to advancing the rule of law that links peace building with development. The Assembly mandated us to place the issue of IDLO's contribution to Agenda 2030 at the heart of the elaboration of a new Strategic Plan for the organization for 2017/2030 and, in so doing, to give priority to our contribution to capacity building - one of the crucial Means of Implementation promoted under Goal 17 - to help support and sustain progress towards Goal 16 and across the SDGs.

Let me conclude with a thought that IDLO Director-General Irene Khan put to the UN Summit at the time of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda "Building the rule of law takes vision, time and money. But it is the soundest investment there is. The more governments and the international community are willing to invest in it, the less they will have to scramble to address catastrophic development failures, from famines to refugee crises".

*The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) enables governments and empowers people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.*