

July 4, 2018

## STATEMENT

### 38<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council

#### Annual Thematic Discussion on Technical Cooperation:

#### **Human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals: enhancing human rights technical cooperation and capacity-building to contribute to the effective and inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Mr. President,

the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) would like to thank the High Commissioner for his excellent report on effective technical assistance by the human rights system for the realization of the 2030 Agenda. We are grateful for the ongoing work of the Office in this regard and look forward to further strengthening collaboration between OHCHR and national human rights institutions (NHRIs), which are working worldwide to ensure that "no one is left behind" in sustainable development through their core functions.

At its 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference in Mexico in 2015, NHRIs adopted the *Mérida Declaration on the role of NHRIs in implementation of the 2030 Agenda*. In this Declaration, NHRIs underlined the mutually reinforcing nature of human rights and the 2030 Agenda and outlined a number of activities through which NHRIs would contribute to a human rights-based implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment was most recently reaffirmed in the *Kigali Declaration* by the Network of African NHRIs in November 2017.

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NHRIs have a robust and independent mandate, play a key role to bring civil society, government and other stakeholders together, monitor and report on the situation of vulnerable groups, and advise national government. They are therefore key partners in facilitating an inclusive and effective follow-up process to the 2030 Agenda at the national level. Their work is equally critical to ensure government accountability for unequal progress, and to facilitate access to justice for victims of human rights violations committed in the context of development activities.

Three years into the implementation, NHRIs around the world have produced a rich body of good practice on integrating human rights principles and recommendations with sustainable development policies. A number of NHRIs have included the SDGs into their working plans, including the NHRI of Mexico, and engage with national SDG mechanisms. Some NHRIs, including the ones in Argentina, Denmark, Germany, and New Zealand, have connected recommendations emerging from the Universal Periodic Review and UN Treaty Bodies to the SDGs to facilitate joint implementation. Others, like the NHRI of Indonesia, have been active in shaping national indicators to measure SDG implementation from a human rights perspective. A number of NHRIs have been assigned monitoring roles for parts of the 2030 Agenda, and the NHRIs of Kenya and Palestine have formally entered into a collaboration with the National Statistical Office to operationalize a human rights-based approach to data. Finally, some NHRIs including Australia and Denmark are supporting human rights-based implementation of the SDGs through technical co-operation programs beyond state borders.

GANHRI as well as the NHRI regional networks have established Working Groups on the 2030 Agenda to further exchange knowledge and good practice between member institutions, and to engage with review mechanisms at the regional and global level. We call on the Human Rights Council to further support the role of NHRIs and recognize NHRIs as partners in the shared endeavour of achieving the SDGs for all. This includes securing access of NHRIs to sustainable development forums at the global and regional level. We look forward to collaborating with OHCHR and with other stakeholders in promoting a human rights-based approach to the 2030 Agenda at all levels.

Thank you.