

Statement of Major Group and Other Stakeholder on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Cambodia Government at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen

We appreciate the Cambodian government, particularly the Ministry of Planning, for completing the localization process of the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), which has resulted in the formation of the Cambodia Sustainable Development Goals, and presenting the Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the 2019 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Together, we can achieve the SDGs. However, most people, especially the indigenous peoples and marginalized group, are still unaware of what the SDGs are. Moreover, there are challenges mainstreaming SDGs into policy framework at a sub-national level. With regard to these concerns, what will the Cambodian government and stakeholders do? We recommend all stakeholders, to the respective Ministry, to take immediate action in incorporating the SDGs into the national development agenda by inclusively engaging the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs), involving indigenous peoples in all stages.

What are the commitments of stakeholders and the Cambodian government to ensure an inclusive partnership in all of its stages? In the spirit of an inclusive participatory approach, reflecting the progress, achievements, and challenges of the SDGs should involve all key stakeholders, especially indigenous peoples. In addition, we need a clear mechanism to ensure that inputs and recommendations from CSOs are taken into account at the ministerial level. The government should provide a more inclusive space, a clear guideline, and a sufficient amount of time for CSOs to meaningfully participate in the future VNR process.

Accomplishing the SDGs is an ambitious plan. Therefore, we recommend that the government create and regulate public policies in which the private sector and itself can allocate financial resources towards fulfilling the SDGs, while ensuring effective budget management through verifiable transparency and accountability. We understand that the Cambodian government has concerns about SDGs financing, but the government's commitment to achieving the SDGs is essential to reaching optimal success of the national development agenda.