

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS OF THE POLITICAL DECLARATION OF THE “WORLD SOCIAL SUMMIT” IN 2025, UNDER THE TITLE “THE SECOND WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT”**

The upcoming WSS-WSSD2 must serve as a **catalyst for Social Development action**, reaffirming global solidarity and ensuring that no one is left behind. By adopting a **consensual and forward-looking Political Declaration**, the Summit is expected to lay the foundation for **a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world**, address gaps, recommit to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action and **give momentum** towards the implementation of **the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

The cofacilitators received **very substantive submissions from Member States and Groups**.

This food for Thought paper reflects the main substantive elements for the political declaration as well as its structure based, **only**, on the submissions and contributions received by the cofacilitators and **based on the preparatory process foreseen in the modalities**.

While this is not a document for negotiation, **the feedback and positions of delegations on the content and different sections of this paper is intended to provide a solid basis for the preparation of the Zero Draft of the political declaration**.

There was a broad conversation with **other stakeholders**, especially at **the hearing on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November and in the framework of the Commission on Social Development**. Multiple stakeholders have substantiated their interventions with written documents. **The cofacilitators also took part in the February monthly dialogue with Major Groups organized by the President of ECOSOC**. A new hearing with stakeholders will be held in the coming weeks.

On the timeline, many delegations indicated their general support for the proposed timeline while underlining the need for ample time to prepare. **A detailed timeline of negotiations for the political declaration will be provided after the informal on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March**. Delegations are of course invited to share their views on this and the amount of informal foreseen.

### **I. Structure of the Political Declaration.**

The Political Declaration shall be **concise, clear, action-oriented, consensual, and readable**. **it should both create the necessary political momentum and reach people around the globe**.

**We invite Delegations to provide feedback on the following proposed structure of the Political Declaration:**

- A. Preamble/Chapeau: Vision of the Summit and reasons for the convening.**
- B. Assessment of progress and gaps in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action and the Social dimension of sustainable development.**

- C. Call for action to close the gaps in the commitments of Copenhagen and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 agenda.
- D. Process of follow-up, review, and implementation of the political declaration

## II. General context:

- The commitments made in **Copenhagen** have played a **pivotal role in shaping global social policies**, processes, and frameworks over the past decades. They have **directly influenced the 2030 Agenda** for Sustainable Development, which, through its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, reaffirmed the vision and aspirations set forth in the Copenhagen Summit. However, despite the progress achieved, **many of these commitments remain unfulfilled**, and **significant gaps persist** in efforts to realize their full potential.
- In an increasingly **fast-changing world marked by technological advancements, climate change, natural disasters, geopolitical tensions undermining peace and security, economic shifts, social disruptions, worsening of refugees' crisis, deepening of inequalities, and other emerging global challenges**, the need to bridge these gaps has **never been more urgent**. Likewise, demographic shifts, including population ageing, are reshaping societies, challenging existing policies, and creating new opportunities for social development.
- **Despite 30 years of efforts** made after the convening of the First World Summit for Social Development progress in this sphere has been slow and uneven and major gaps remain. Without being exhaustive we can note:
  - **Over one billion people** continue to live in acute multidimensional poverty.
  - **10-35% of people that exited poverty relapsed back in the past 3 decades**, and **food insecurity is still a reality** for countless families. Recent crises have exposed the fragility of previous gains.
  - On the positive side, in 2024, the global **unemployment rate** reached an historic low of 5 per cent. This was, however, not uniformly experienced across all demographics and regions. **Youth unemployment remains a pressing concern, often with rates close to three times that of adults.**
  - **Almost 60 per cent of the global population is concerned about losing their job or not finding a job.**
  - **160 million children are in child labor.**
  - **Informal employment remains pervasive, with an estimated two billion people – 57.8 per cent of the world's employed population – making their living in the informal economy.**
  - Two thirds of the world population live in countries where **income inequality** has grown since 1990. **Global wage inequality remains very high. Millions of workers continue to earn wages and incomes that are insufficient for a decent standard of living.** Men continue to earn more than women, and **workers in the informal economy are overrepresented** at the low end of the wage distribution.
  - **3.8 billion people lack any kind of social safety net, including 1.8 billion children worldwide.**

Yet, the challenges are not insurmountable. **Progress can be achieved.** The path forward depends heavily on policy choices and collective action. While past efforts have laid a strong foundation, **a key lesson from the last three decades is that incremental change is not sufficient. Strengthening the social dimension of sustainable development requires more than short-term fixes or reactive measures in times of crisis.**

**The Copenhagen Declaration championed the integration of social, economic, and environmental policies to ensure mutual reinforcement and coherence.** Looking forward, the international community is invited to explore **bold and effective social policies** that are woven into a **whole-of-government, whole-of-society, people-centred, and integrated approaches.** These approaches would help ensure **policy coherence**, inter-ministerial coordination, multi-stakeholder engagement and integrated responses **and avoid policy silos across sectors.**

Addressing today's social challenges at their root requires **building trust and a renewed commitment, innovative solutions, and inclusive international cooperation** to fully translate the promises into **promising and concrete outcomes for all.**

### **III. General Principles:**

- **Reaffirmation** of the commitments made in the **Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action** and validation of their continued relevance.
- **Reaffirmation** of the commitment to the full and timely implementation of the **2030 Agenda and its social dimension**, and its pledge to leave no one behind and **to place people at the centre of development.**
- **Reaffirmation** of the commitment to **the three core pillars of social development: poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social integration**, with emphasis on addressing gaps in implementation and promoting equality and equity.
- **Reaffirmation** of the commitment to **effective multilateralism** and strengthened **international cooperation** and integrated vision of social development aimed at **social justice, global solidarity, harmony and equality within and among countries.**
- **Reaffirmation** of the commitment for the **promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.**
- The importance of building on **the 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration** and creating synergies with the commitments of **the Pact for the Future** and its annexes as it has **deliverables on a range of issues that should inform and support the social dimension of sustainable development.**

#### IV. Call for action to close the gaps in the commitments of Copenhagen and give momentum towards the implementation of the 2030 agenda.

Below go the fields of actions that have been identified from the different inputs received by the co-facilitators.

**Copenhagen Declaration** outlined that that **the three core themes of social development, namely, poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all and social integration, are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. An enabling environment needs to be created so that all three objectives can be pursued simultaneously. Social development and social justice** are indispensable for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security within and among nations, and, in turn, **social development and social justice cannot be attained in the absence of peace and security or in the absence of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.**

##### ▪ **Poverty Eradication:**

- **Adopting a holistic approach towards the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions**, while ensuring that the focus is not on a bare minimum measure to be just perched above the poverty line threshold, but to ensure building resilience to shocks to avoid exiting and relapsing back.
- **Upscaling investment in social protection is necessary to** eradicate poverty and fostering social inclusion and promoting the transition to formal employment whilst enhancing resilience to interconnected shocks like pandemics, conflicts, and climate change. This including through **the funding of social protection floors**, with particular attention to the needs of people in impoverished and vulnerable situations and **strengthening social protection systems to guarantee universal coverage**, providing stability and security across the life course. **Member States may wish to consider a realistic target to extend social protection coverage by at least two percentage points per year.**
- Designing and implementing **Multidimensional Poverty Measurements (MPM) to better measure poverty in its various dimensions and targeted public policies** and the development of alternative **indicators to go beyond GDP as the sole measure of progress**, focusing on broader metrics that **capture human wellbeing, environmental sustainability, and social equity.**
- **Strengthening financing for social development at national, regional, and international levels and ensuring predictable and sustainable resources for developing countries** to implement poverty eradication policies and social programs.

##### ▪ **Full and productive employment and decent work for all:**

- Macroeconomic **policies that create decent jobs and an engaged private sector** are essential for advancing social development strategies.

- **Increasing productivity, industrialization, investing in entrepreneurship, especially for women and youth, supporting MSMEs, the social and solidarity economy, digital innovation, agricultural transformation and recognizing the significant contribution of the public sector to job creation.**
- **Investing in skills and life-long learning**, particularly in **new and emerging technologies** and a low-carbon economy and **ensuring enabling environment for foreign and local investments.**
- With one in five young persons' not in employment, education or training, **concrete actions need to be taken to address this.**
- **Strengthening the labor market institutions, including** promoting, protecting, and **investing in social dialogue.**
- Upscaling investment in **social protection [see above section].**
- **Address challenges posed by the energy transition and technological advancements** by promoting the shift from informal to formal employment, ensuring fair wages, decent work conditions, and workers' rights.
- Acknowledging **the fundamental principles and rights at work** and encouraging to ratifying and implementing all relevant conventions.
  
- **Social Integration:**
  - **Promoting intergenerational solidarity and dialogue**, and social cohesion and creating an enabling environment to ensure human dignity and decent life for all.
  - **Promoting and creating an enabling environment to ensure human dignity and decent life for all**, and for the participation of **women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, people living in poverty and in rural and remote areas, and those in vulnerable and impoverished situations such as internally displaced persons, and migrants, in the political, economic and social life**, while integrating their needs into mainstream economic and social policies.
  - **Reducing inequalities within and among countries**, ensuring fair income distribution and expanding access to basic services. **Considering the demographic changes and their variety of impacts on social integration. For older persons**, need for strengthening social protection systems, access to healthcare, long-term care, employment opportunities, policies supporting older workers, lifelong learning, and digital inclusion. **For youth, ensuring access to quality education, STEM and digital skills.** Investing in **early childhood development**, ensuring access to education, health, nutrition and protection of children against violence, exploitation and abuse and combating child labour.
  - Emphasizing the importance of enabling **persons with disabilities**, to participate fully and meaningfully in society.
  - Recognizing **the role of culture in social integration** and social cohesion.
  - Advancing Measures to **eliminate all forms of racism and discrimination and promote social equity.**

- **Food security and nutrition:**
  - Reinforcing measures for **sustainable, inclusive and resilient agriculture and food systems**, i.e., to ensure **food security and nutrition**, particularly for early childhood.
  - **Combatting hunger and poverty** must be reinforced through global initiatives, such as the **Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty**.
  - Strengthening **the rights of small-scale farmers** in food systems transformation.
  - Acknowledging **the crucial role of equitable access to land and productive** resources in eradicating poverty and advancing rural development.
  
- **Physical and mental health to meet Universal Health Coverage:**
  - Recommit to attaining the **goals of universal and equitable access to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health**, and the access of all to primary health care, including by leveraging digital technologies, on-line services, artificial intelligence and transfer of technologies and know-how.
  - **Strengthening resilient, universal health systems** that ensure prevention, preparedness and response for future pandemics and other health emergencies, with a focus on local and regional production of medicines and vaccines, and access to medical and other health technologies.
  - **Advancing digital health systems** to support better public health surveillance and personalized care. Strengthening digital health innovation and solutions including telemedicine to aid universal health coverage and improve healthcare service delivery.
  - Addressing **non-communicable diseases (NCDs), mental health and maternal and child health** as priority areas.
  
- **Quality Education and life-long learning:**
  - Promote **public, universal, and quality education** that leverages new technologies while **addressing digital divides within and among countries**, considering their varying levels of development.
  - **Expand access to technical and vocational education and training and life-long learning**, particularly in digital literacy, **STEM** fields, using **innovative and technology-driven solutions to bridge gaps between urban, rural, and remote areas**.
  - **Enhance investment in training, research & development** in the field of AI with a focus on issues of importance for developing countries.
  
- **Harnessing technology and artificial intelligence to advance social development:**
  - **Leveraging digital technologies, including AI**, to accelerate the achievement of social development goals, while measuring the potential costs and benefits in the design, implementation and delivery of social policies and services **ensuring equitable access, bridging all digital divides, within and between countries, leaving no one behind**.
  - **Addressing the spread of disinformation, hate speech, and digital threats** to democracy while upholding freedom of expression.

- **Climate Resilience, Just Transition and DRR:**
  - **Commitment to climate adaptation and mitigation**, ensuring a just transition for workers.
  - Strengthening **adaptive social protection systems for vulnerable** populations to climate change, climate-related disasters.
  - **Integrating disasters risk reduction, early warning systems and preparedness** and enhancing resilience to interconnected shocks.
  - **Mobilizing climate finance and technology transfers** to developing countries.
- **Gender equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls.**
  - Taking comprehensive **measures to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls both as a prerequisite and a goal of sustainable development, ensuring fair wages, equitable care work, combating gender-based violence, access to sexual and reproductive health.**
  - **Encouraging women-led development** and reiterate commitment to **enhancing women's full, equal, and meaningful participation as decision makers** for addressing global challenges inclusively and in contributing as active participants in all spheres of society.
- **Adequate housing, urbanization and water and sanitation:**
  - Promoting of an **adequate standard of living**, including the **provision of adequate housing and transportation, safe drinking water and sanitation.**
  - **Recognizing the role of inclusive and sustainable urbanization, and bridging the gaps between urban, rural and remote areas.**
- **Migration:**
  - Recognizing of **migration as a driver of inclusive growth and sustainable development**, the positive contributions of migrants to social and economic development and the importance to promote **safe, orderly and regular migration pathways.**
- **Financing social development international cooperation.**
  - Strengthening efforts and actions to **secure adequate and sustainable financing for social development and investments in social policies.**
  - Advancing the **reform of the international financial architecture** to enhance **participation of developing countries and address external debt challenges.**
  - **Enhancing international cooperation on tax matters** will be key in supporting social development in the years to come. Hence the importance of constructively engaging in negotiations on the **UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation.**
  - **Addressing unilateral coercive measures** imposed against countries in the global south and their impact on social development.
  - Promoting the role of North-South, **South-South and Triangular cooperation** in tackling social challenges and advancing solutions for social development.
  - **The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4)** provides a unique opportunity to bridge the SDGs financing gap at all levels, including for social development

- **Social policies and the role of the Family:**

- Emphasizing the need to **create and adapt existing social policies** on care and support systems, applying a holistic social development approach, **which integrates the role of the family**, in providing care and support to its members, as an enabler of and contributor to social development.

- **Renew the social contract:**

- Ensuring the **cohesion of societies**, including by fostering **inclusive social dialogue**.
- **A renewed global social contract** anchored in the respect for human and labor rights and fundamental freedoms.

## **V. Implementation, follow-up, and Review of the political declaration.**

**Delegations came back with a wide range of follow-up ideas. We would like to hear the views of delegations with regards to:**

- **Quinquennial (every 5 years) review process** to assess progress, to identify gaps and renew commitments. **We would like to hear views of delegations with regards to the interval of such review, scope and mechanism.**
- **The strengthening of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) as the primary follow-up body for social development commitments** and its revitalization in light of **action 43 of the Pact of the Future**. Delegations are also invited to share views on **what are the main elements of its revitalization and what will be its role in the implementation, preparation and follow-up and review process.**
- **The role of the UN system, including the Regional Economic Commissions and UN entities and specialized agencies (such as ILO and WHO)** and multi-stakeholder engagement in the implementation, follow-up and review process.
- **Need for building capacities for robust data collection and social statistics analysis** to identify gaps and measure progress towards achieving social development goals.
- **Enhancing financing mechanisms.**
- Accelerating the Implementation of UN **Global Accelerator for Jobs & Social Protection.**
- **Strengthening partnerships** between governments, academia, civil society, international organizations, and the private sector i.e. through peer-reviews or sharing best practices.