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Agenda item:
**STATUS REPORT ON IPDC'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA PROCESS**

INFORMATION NOTE

SUMMARY CONTENT OF DOCUMENT

This document presents an update on the activities undertaken within the framework of the Knowledge-Driven Media Development (KDMD) Initiative, with specific focus on leveraging knowledge gained from IPDC's media support to advocate for the inclusion of free, independent and pluralistic media in the post-2015 development agenda.

STATUS REPORT ON IPDC'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA PROCESS

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1. BACKGROUND

This status report is for the information of the IPDC Council on work carried out in response to the ongoing consultations for a post-2015 development agenda. The co-chairs of the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have since proposed a series of 17 goals and associated targets.

Corresponding to UNESCO's submissions to the United Nations Technical Support Team (TST) to the OWG and related actions via the IPDC's Knowledge-Driven Media Development Initiative, the various iterations of

the OWG documents have included aspects of ensuring “public access to information” and protecting “fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements” – grouped as targets under a possible goal 16 which aims to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.¹

Although the final Outcome Document of the OWG retained these important aspects of communication, it excluded the element of “freedom of media”. In part, then, this update serves as an appeal for Member States to constantly and consistently advocate for the inclusion of free, independent and pluralistic media as a key target and indicator of sustainable development, particularly as the process now decidedly moves into the arena of domestic and UN General Assembly discussions.

2. MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

As early as 2013, the CI Sector was already involved with the post-2015 consultative process, authoring a Think Piece on the role of media in strengthening democracy and development.² Titled “Beyond 2015: Media as democracy and development” this writing formed part of the Sector’s contribution to the first round of the “World We Want 2015” e-consultations in January 2013 during Phase 1: *What should be the governance building blocks for a post-2015 agenda?* It can be accessed at: <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/273401>.

Internally, via the Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP), the Sector submitted its position for possible inclusion in the Millennium Development Goals framing paper, under the auspices of the Steering Group meeting of the post-2015 Environmental Sustainability consultation, co-chaired by UNDP and UNEP. Another manifestation of the Sector’s intellectual contribution was when the bulk of the Think Piece was used in a paper presented by the Director of the UNESCO Regional Science Bureau for Asia and the Pacific at a panel session on “Taking more action for sustainable development: can media help?” during the Asia Media Summit (2013) in Manado. This event was attended by high-level government officials, including the Indonesian and the Cambodian Minister of Communication and Information, several ambassadors, and prominent media experts. In this regard, it may be recalled that H.E. Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, then President of Indonesia (where the 2013 Asia Media Summit took place), was one of the Co-Chairs of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

This work was noted by the 58th meeting of the IPDC Bureau.

It has been reinforced by the 37th session of the UNESCO General Conference in November 2013 agreed on Resolution 64 titled “UNESCO participation in the preparations for a post-2015 development agenda”. This text recommended “that the importance of promoting freedom of expression and universal access to knowledge and its preservation - including, among others, through free, pluralistic and independent media, both offline and online – as indispensable elements for flourishing democracies and to foster citizen participation be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda.”³

IPDC’s knowledge was also taken into account in the development and adoption of the Paris Declaration arising from the 2014 World Press Freedom Day conference at the UNESCO headquarters. This Declaration also links the right of access to information, independent media, and journalists’ safety to the post-2015 development agenda. The Director-General subsequently wrote to the UN Secretary-General to bring this Declaration to his

¹ See Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. 2014. *Outcome Document - Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*. Available [0]: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>. Accessed 03/09/2014.

² http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/post2015/pdf/UNESCO_Media_Democracy_Development.pdf

³ <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002261/226162e.pdf>

attention. As part of this process, the IPDC Secretariat prepared a discussion brief on why free, independent and pluralistic media deserve to be at the heart of a post-2015 development agenda. The brief, accessible online,⁴ makes empirical, governance and normative arguments for recognising that free, independent and pluralistic media are a key aspect of sustainable development as a process based on public participation and the interaction of state and non-state actors.

A related event involved UNESCO co-convening with the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD) – a body representing over 200 media development actors – a meeting in Washington DC aimed at refining the targets as well as developing possible indicators for the goals proposed by the OWG. The outcome of this work was subsequently shared with some UN Member States in New York and the co-chairs of the OWG prior to their 12th and 13th sessions.

A further development had the proposal to the UN Open Working Group, within the then focus area 19 “Peaceful and non-violent societies, rule of law and capable institutions” of the following target “Promote freedom of expression and independent and pluralistic media as well as universal and inclusive access to and preservation of information and knowledge, both offline and online.” The supporting text states: “For UNESCO, freedom of expression and its corollary of press freedom and freedom of information are both fundamental rights as well as enablers of goals relevant to the post-2015 development agenda, including for example in the areas of good governance and the fight against impunity as aspects of peaceful societies characterized by human rights and the rule of law.”⁵ A Discussion Brief elaborated possible targets and applicable indicators using UNESCO-relevant indicators.⁶

In addition, during the visit in 2014 to UNESCO by Dr Amina Mohammed, the Special Advisor of the UN Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, the sector held a direct meeting where issues of media freedom were raised, including briefing her on how the Sector could meaningfully contribute to the post-2015 consultative process.

In August 2014, the Global Media Forum conference co-hosted by UNESCO and the government of Indonesia adopted the “Bali Road Map”⁷ called on UNESCO and the international community to “endorse the inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals of freedom of expression, including press freedom and the right to seek and receive information, given that these are not only essential rights but also enablers in the Sustainable Development Goals and the wider development agenda”. It also urged UNESCO and the international community “to promote greater understanding about the importance of freedom of expression and a free, independent and pluralistic media, including their value as underpinnings for sustainable development, good governance and the rule of law.” The Bali Road Map has been brought to the attention of the UN Secretary General by UNESCO’s Director General.

Ongoing efforts in regard to IPDC and the Post-2015 Agenda include:

- Seeking to collaborate with the Council of Europe and other strategic partners to undertake research into safety of journalists as a possible indicator of development, the results of which could inform ongoing discussions about the importance of data in measuring Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This will build on the Media Development Indicators and the Journalists’ Safety Indicators.

⁴ See the following URL: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/news/post_2015_agenda_brief.pdf.

⁵ UNESCO’s participation in the preparations for a post-2015 development agenda. Overview of goals and targets proposed. Document 194 EX/14.INF.2 PARIS, 8 April 2014 <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002273/227355e.pdf>

⁶ Free, independent and pluralistic media in the post-2015 development agenda. A discussion brief. March 15, 2014; http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/news/post_2015_agenda_brief.pdf

⁷ http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/media_in_the_post_2015_development_agenda/#.VBXvc_mSwrc

- Broadening IPDC's existing relations with WAN-IFRA (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers) and the World Bank Institute to include other global actors, as has been the case with UNESCO's partnership with the Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD), which represents over 200 media development actors pushing for the inclusion of media issues in any new sustainable development package.

3. CONCLUSION

The IPDC, by contributing evidence-based insights to the ongoing consultation on sustainable development beyond 2015, has an opportunity to demonstrate global intellectual leadership on the role of free, independent and pluralistic media as a catalyst for human development. The focus on *knowledge* is paving way for the international media development community to become more visible to the key architects of international development policies, and thus enrich the mainstream sustainable development debate.

4. COUNCIL ACTION

The Council, having discussed this document, may wish to:

- Welcome the status report and encourage continual engagement by the IPDC in helping to shape the post-2015 development agenda.