Recommendations for the Council Conclusions on the EC Communication:

Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future

SDG Watch Europe is a European, cross-sectoral, civil society alliance committed to supporting the implementation, monitoring and follow up of the 2030 Agenda by the EU and its member states. We believe that the Council Conclusions to be adopted in June 2017 under the Maltese EU Presidency represent an important opportunity for EU member states to address the lack of European leadership and ambition shown to date regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A year and a half has passed since the 2030 Agenda was first adopted by all UN member states in New York. Unfortunately, there has been little evidence of any real European political momentum to support the implementation of this vitally important sustainable development agenda, either in terms of EU internal or external policy-making and action. The lack of coordination between, and timely action on the part of the EU and its member states is difficult to understand in light of the failures of today's policies to tackle poverty, and their direct contribution to rising inequality, the destruction of the environment, threats to health, the concentration of wealth and political power in fewer and fewer hands, and the disaffection of many people across Europe with the European Union, its institutions and policies.

In the Rome Declaration[1], published on 25 March on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome, the leaders of 27 Members States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission have reaffirmed their promise to work towards a sustainable Europe. The adoption of the Council Conclusions provides an important opportunity for the EU and its member states to outline a clear road map and set of concrete actions, with targets and timelines, to ensure the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda in EU internal, and external policy-making and legislations. The Conclusions should actively engage other stakeholders in all aspects of planning, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of Agenda 2030 implementation to ensure the full and timely achievement of its goals and targets.

SDG Watch Europe calls on member states to address the following concerns in their Council Conclusions:

Vision and Implementation

- Call for the European Commission to lead in developing an overarching EU Sustainable Development Strategy, including a concrete plan of integrated implementation covering all goals and respective targets, with a 2030 timeline to guide the EU and its member states in their national implementation, and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda, including all areas of internal and external policy development and action.

- Request the European Commission to further develop its current mapping of EU policies into a comprehensive and in-depth gap analysis, with associated actions, based on a transparent and

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1 The Declaration lists several objectives which can only be reached if the EU and its Member States commit to an ambitious implementation plan for the Sustainable Development Goals: the transition towards a sustainable society based on technological transformation, innovation and structural reforms, a clean and safe environment, social justice and the fight against poverty, equality between men and women, and access to quality education are specifically mentioned.

inclusive process. The gap analysis should identify the shortcomings in existing EU policy frameworks, and the critical interlinkages and potential incoherence between policies. It should thus be a forward-looking exercise that proposes more concrete steps to be taken to address these issues and ensure policy coherence to support the overall EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

- Call for a clear plan of implementation to accompany the overarching strategy in order to ensure that it actually delivers on its objectives. Until a new EU Sustainable Development Strategy is adopted, existing policy coordination mechanisms, such as the European Semester and others can already be employed to a greater extent for integrating all aspects of SDG implementation and guide the member states in SDG implementation.

- Recognise the limits of GDP as a measure of overall progress and agree and adopt a common and ambitious set of European progress indicators covering social, economic, environmental, and governance factors, which should be used to guide and act as a dashboard for all EU and member state decision-making.

Policy Coherence

- Ensure that the overarching EU Sustainable Development Strategy and implementation plan addresses the four dimensions of Sustainable Development equally (social, economic, environmental and governance). Ensure the Strategy applies a "whole of government" method to overcome the 'silo' or unintegrated approach to policy development and implementation. Ensure coherence with the perspective of culture as a transversal element of sustainable development.

- Commit to strengthening policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD) at all levels and in all policy areas where the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is concerned and request the Commission to propose new mechanisms to ensure adequate and regular impact assessments and transparent arbitration in the event of divergences between different policies of the Union. The EU and its member states should ensure that no European policy undermines other countries' abilities to achieve sustainable development or to realise people's human rights.

- Introduce European legislation that would oblige companies to mandatory Human Rights due diligence to ensure that they *identify, prevent, mitigate and account for adverse human rights and environmental impacts.* The EU should also introduce measures that would allow and ease access to European courts for victims of human rights abuses by EU based companies. The EU and its member states need to contribute constructively to the initiative to establish a UN Treaty on business and human rights with the aim to ensure maximum rights for victims of human rights abuses*.

- Aiming at equality between men and women of all generations, commit to leaving no one behind and prioritising the most marginalised (including but not limited to children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, older persons, Roma, indigenous peoples, refugees, homeless people, internally displaced persons, and migrants) by providing the leadership needed in its application of legally binding agreements and human rights conventions, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Multi Stakeholder Engagement

- Commit to supporting the operationalisation of an inclusive, multi-stakeholder approach to implementation as set out by the 2030 Agenda. The democratic deficit that has characterised European politics over many decades could benefit from the involvement and inclusion of

diverse citizen-led stakeholder groups in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a basis for a new Europe.

- Call for the commitment in the Communication to establish a [Multi Stakeholder Platform](#) on Sustainable Development to be acted upon promptly by the Commission. Ensure that this platform is given a mandate to advise upon, and to monitor the EU's implementation of its commitments as set out in the 2030 Agenda, and to provide its recommendations to the highest level of EU institutions.

- Call on the Commission to recognise the critical role of active citizenship and global citizen education to achieve sustainable development. Support wide-ranging public awareness campaigns on the 2030 Agenda across the EU in order to educate, build capacity, and engage people of all ages, including the most marginalised, to encourage cross sectoral support for the Sustainable Development Goals and their implementation.

Robust Monitoring and Accountability

- Establish robust monitoring, accountability and review frameworks at EU and member state levels, based on the collection of quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data and using both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

- Agree and set a date for the EU to report to regional and global 2030 Agenda accountability mechanisms established by the UN - including the UNECE Regional Review mechanism and the High-level-Political Forum (HLPF) – before the end of this Commission's mandate, demonstrating that the EU is serious about implementing the 2030 Agenda and willing to submit itself to external scrutiny and review.

Financing

- Call on the Commission to ensure that the next Multiannual Financial Framework promotes sustainable development priorities throughout the EU budget and that the four dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic, environmental and governance - are all addressed in a comprehensive manner through sustainability proofing, with no one dimension outweighing another in importance or in funding.

- Ensure that current financing instruments and financing commitments (including ODA) are being met and are in support of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

- Call on the Commission to also explore all possible options for generating innovative and additional sources of public finance, including carbon and environmental taxes, a financial transaction tax, and to adopt and strengthen measures to fight tax havens, tax dodging and promote fair taxation, in order to mobilise the resources necessary, to allow the Commission and member states to meet their 2030 commitments.

- While reaching the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals will need all stakeholders, including the private sector on board, there should be clearer recognition of the strengths and limitations of each actor. The Council should recognise that the private sector has in many cases been responsible for excessive resource waste, pollution and human rights abuses, and adequate safeguards, accountability mechanisms and redress mechanisms are needed to ensure that the private sector plays a positive role in the 2030 Agenda.

SDG Watch Europe Member

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- Act Alliance EU
- AICEM Italy
- ALDA - European Association for Local Democracy
- Alianza por la Solidaridad/SOLIDAR
- ASVIS - Italian Alliance for the Sustainable Development
- Beyond 2015
- Caritas Europa
- CBM
- CEE web for Biodiversity
- CEV- European Volunteer Centre
- Child Fund Alliance
- Child Helpline International
- Climate Action Network Europe (CAN Europe)
- Climate Alliance
- COFACE - Confederation of Family Organisations in the EU
- CONCORD
- Confederation of Family Organisations in the EU (COFACE)
- Conservation International Europe CI-Europe
- Cooperatives Europe
- Culture Action Europe
- Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevoelkerung (DSW)
- Don Bosco International
- Ecocity
- Education International
- ESN
- EU-CORD
- Eurochild
- Eurodiaconia
- EuroNGOs
- European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN)
- European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)
- European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning
- European Disability Forum (EDF)
- European Environment Bureau (EEB)
- European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless
- European Network of National Civil Society Associations
- European Partnerhip for Democracy
- European Public Health Alliane (EPHA)
- European Trade Union Confederation
- European Volunteer Centre
- European Women's Lobby
- European Youth Forum
- Fair Trade Advocacy Office
- Fair Trials
- FERN
- Forest Stewardship Council
- Friends of the Earth Europe
- GCAP Italy
- Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)

- Global Forum for Media Development (GFMD)
- Global Forum on Migration and Development
- Global Health Advocates
- Green Budget Europe
- HelpAge International
- Housing Europe
- IBON International
- International Catholic Migration Commission
- International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Group
- International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
- International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPF EN)
- International Trade Union Confederation
- IPPF European Network
- Light for the World
- Light for the World International
- Lithuanian NGDO Platform (NNVBO Platforma)
- MADE Network
- Make Mothers Matter EU delegation
- National Youth Council of Ireland
- Open Knowledge Foundation Germany
- Organization
- Oxfam Internatonal EU Office
- Plan International
- Plan International EU Office
- Save the Children
- Search for Common Ground
- SLOGA - Slovenian Global Action
- Social Platform
- Soleterre - Strategie di Pace ONLUS
- SOLIDAR
- SOS Children's Villages International
- Stop AIDS Alliance
- Terre des Hommes
- The Danish 92 Group
- The Finnish NGDO Platform to the EU Kehys
- Transparency International EU
- VSO International
- Wetlands International - European Association
- Women Engage for the Common Future (WECF)
- Women in Europe for a Common Future
- World Vision
- World Vision EU Representation Office
- World Wide Fund
- World Wild Life Fund European Policy Office (WWF)