



Speaking Points Ambassador Michael Gerber

Side Event on “Integrating Human Rights in Financing for Development”

*Wednesday, 15 July 2015 – 13:15-14:45
Hilton Hotel, Jacaranda*

Looking at the FFD Outcome Document from a human rights perspective

- Overall, when **looking at the outcome from a rights-perspective**, Switzerland considers that the text we are adopting here in Addis Ababa marks a **strong step forward compared to Monterrey** 13 years ago. And rightly so. The Addis Outcome Document concerns macro-economic questions of financial flows – yet we must never forget that ultimately these macro-economic global questions can and shall have **huge impacts on individuals**.
- For me, that is what rights are all about: putting the individual at the centre. And yet, that is more easily said than done. The often repeated catch-phrase of the Post-2015 Agenda is “**leaving no one behind**”. We have heard this so often that we almost forget what it means.
- A key human rights principle that is exactly about making sure that things are not just repeated at conferences but that things are actually implemented in practice is the **principle of accountability**.
- I will therefore structure my remarks according to these two aspects:
1) Firstly looking at the **Outcome Document** through the lens of individuals, in particular women, migrants and those most affected by hunger worldwide. **2) Secondly**, I will address the question of **ac-**

countability, follow-up and review of the commitments we are making here in Addis and later this year in New York.

Specific focus on Gender equality

- Gender equality and women's empowerment is not just the right thing to do. It's smart economics. None of our goals can be fully achieved without the inclusion of women and girls as **agents and drivers of change**. Gender equality as well as women's and girls' empowerment is imperative for the realization of sustainable development, economic growth, poverty eradication and real prosperity.
- Switzerland has been very engaged in the intergovernmental discussions and negotiations on FFD to bring attention to the **economic dimension** of gender equality and has highlighted the **multidimensional policy changes** required to achieve gender equality within the timeframe of the Post-2015 Agenda. Indeed, achieving gender equality in the Post-2015 Agenda requires **means to overcome** political, social and economic **gaps** as well as structural **barriers** for the empowerment of women and girls.
- We welcome the Addis Ababa Action Agenda which urges States to undertake **transformative policy actions** for gender equality and women's empowerment and stresses the importance of prioritizing women and girls in investments and legislations across all chapters of the document.
- Looking at Monterrey and Doha, the amount of areas where the role of women is highlighted has increased significantly. The mainstreaming has improved drastically and in the key chapters there are stand-alone paragraphs on GEWE. *[The key aspects are: a clear commitment to transformative policy action for GEWE, including through investments (para6); economic empowerment which is particularly clear in the section on domestic resource mobilization (para21) and*

private finance (para41); the aspects of financial literacy and inclusion as well as access to technology; and there is a commitment to gender responsive public financial management (para30).]

- Yesterday, at a similar side-event, UN Women launched its **Addis Ababa Action Plan for Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**. Switzerland committed, jointly with other Member states, IFIs and UN development partners, to take additional actions to further support the realization of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.
- The endorsement of this Action Plan is a promising answer to the existing implementation gaps on gender equality policies.

Specific focus on Migration

- We welcome the approach in the Addis Outcome Document of **putting human rights at the center of international migration**. It is an approach we share in our own migration and development programmes.
- Switzerland was particularly active in supporting the inclusion of language on migration that considers also the **benefits of migration** for the development of countries and individuals.
- Switzerland supports Governments in sending countries in the development and implementation **national policies** that make migration safer, and reduce the risk of exploitation. We help strengthen services that benefit migrants and their families. These include the provision of rights awareness, legal aid protection and referral services, as well as assistance for returnees.

Specific focus on Food security

- The Addis Ababa Action Agenda rightly calls it unacceptable that close to 800 Million people today still suffer from hunger and malnu-

trition. It refers to the crucial role of smallholders and women farmers in enhancing food security, and the need for agricultural investment. Yet, the language could even be stronger if the **relevance of human rights** in that respect would be mentioned.

- We believe that the human rights framework should guide agricultural investments and reform. Where the **poor** have limited access to land and face insecure tenure rights, it is difficult for them to overcome hunger and poverty. Human rights principles such as **non-discrimination and equality** helps us keeping in mind that marginalized groups (such as women, ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, but also pastoralists) face particular risks in the context of agricultural reforms. Adherence to the human rights framework ensures that these groups will benefit from reform processes and not end up being worse off.
- Switzerland has played a significant role in developing global standards on agricultural reform and food security based on human rights. The Committee on World Food Security's **Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Land Tenure**, and the **Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and food systems** have been adopted with our support.
- We are now working on their **implementation**. Our Mekong programme, for instance, promotes the adoption of policies and practices that are aligned with these standards. A **rights-based approach** ensures that women and ethnic minorities, who face additional barriers in accessing resources and securing their tenure rights, are given particular attention.
- Two human rights principles remain central in our approaches. First, we support **participatory processes** that involve governments, civil society, and representatives of affected groups. We supported the

International Land Coalition, an umbrella body comprising inter-governmental organizations, research centres as well as civil society actors, which has driven much of the process that led to the adoption of the above-mentioned global standards.

- Second, **access to justice** remains a cornerstone of the Swiss engagement, both with regard to food security and international migration. Human rights are only meaningful if individuals can obtain redress and justice in case of violations. And this in turn will ensure that no-one is left behind.

Follow-up and review: ensuring the key principle of accountability

- A key human rights principle is the principle of **accountability**. Switzerland is committed to ensuring that the Post-2015 Agenda and FFD framework are actually implemented in practice. That is one key reason why Switzerland has been so active on the question of monitoring, follow-up and review of the Post-2015 Agenda and the FFD outcome document.
- In setting up the follow-up of the FFD Outcome Document, it will be important to apply human rights principles such as **transparency**, **inclusiveness** and **meaningful participation** for stakeholders.
- Switzerland and many other countries advocated for **broad inclusivity** of relevant stakeholders. For us this means the institutional partners such as the IFIs, but also broader stakeholders such as the private sector and civil society.
- In their **national reports** on the Post-2015 Agenda, we expect that countries would report not only on the goals and targets but also on the **means of implementation and commitments** made here in Addis. In this way, the national reports would provide a sound basis for a thorough “**policy-coherence-check**” for countries.

- Of course, the reporting, monitoring and review of the Post-2015 Agenda, including the Addis commitments, is voluntary. We expect the mechanism to be a positive one of **mutual learning and knowledge exchange** rather than a punitive or finger-pointing exercise.
- In my informal discussions with many countries, I see that there is strong political will from many countries to lead by example. In this way, we hope that countries could “champion” the exercise of monitoring and review early on to set the bar for a robust mechanism that will inspire all.