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CIVICUS comments on the first draft of the Rio+20 zero draft, sections III, IV and V

24 February 2012

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation believes that sections III, IV and V of the Rio+20 zero draft document neglect to establish specific modalities to enhance multi-stakeholder engagement and guarantee the proper space necessary for multi-stakeholders to influence sustainable development policy. We also feel this zero draft needs to lay equal emphasis on social justice as one of the pillars of sustainable development. CIVICUS believes that protection of the vulnerable and marginalised, along with human rights and democratic freedoms, must remain at the centre of sustainable development policies, particularly economic growth initiatives.

Prior to pointing out additions to existing sections of the zero draft below, CIVICUS calls for the inclusion of 'Democracy' as a priority/key/thematic/cross-sectoral issue in Section V. We believe that democratic freedoms and an enabling environment for civil society are necessary conditions to enable public participation and ensure accountability towards sustainable development. We thus propose addition of language to guarantee democratic freedoms in accordance with the International Bill of Rights, and in particular, an enabling environment for civil society which includes the following elements: freedom of association; freedom of expression; the right to operate free from unwarranted state interference; the right to communicate and cooperate; the right to seek and secure funding; and the state's duty to protect.

Overall, CIVICUS calls for concrete, fair and ambitious outcomes from the Rio+20 conference to advance sustainable development. Following are additional comments to the first draft of the Rio+20 zero draft Sections III, IV and V.

III. Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

25. We are convinced that a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication should contribute to meeting key goals – in particular the priorities of poverty eradication, food security, sound water management, universal access to modern energy services, sustainable cities, management of oceans and improving resilience and disaster preparedness, as well as public health, human resource development and sustained, inclusive and equitable growth that generates employment, including for youth. It should be based on the Rio principles, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and should be people-centred and inclusive to ensure equitable distribution of benefits arising out a green economy for all citizens and all countries. **ADD: In particular, the needs of the vulnerable and marginalised groups must be prioritised in the creation of a green economy.**

27. We underscore that green economy is not intended as a rigid set of rules but rather as a decision-making framework to foster integrated consideration of the three pillars of

sustainable development in all relevant domains of public and private decision-making. **ADD: Nevertheless, commitments to advance a green economy by governments must be concrete and ambitious.**

29. We are convinced that green economy policies and measures can offer win-win opportunities to improve the integration of economic development with environmental sustainability to all countries, regardless of the structure of their economy and their level of development. **ADD: Green economy policies must also lay due emphasis on social justice by integrating it with the other two pillars of sustainable development.**

33. We support the creation of an international knowledge-sharing platform to facilitate countries' green economy policy design and implementation, including:

a) a menu of policy options **ADD: determined after comprehensive consultations with multi- stakeholders.**

38. We encourage all States to develop their own green economy strategies through a transparent process, **ADD: with specific modalities for engaging multi-stakeholders in consultations.**

40. We strongly encourage business and industry – organized by industrial sectors, cooperating across countries and in consultation with governments, workers and trade unions and other stakeholders – to develop green economy roadmaps for their respective sectors, with concrete goals and benchmarks of progress, including for net creation of jobs. **ADD: We also strongly encourage business and industry to adopt the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.**

42. We realize that to make significant progress towards building green economies will require new investments, new skills formation, technology development, transfer and access, and capacity building in all countries. We acknowledge the particular need to provide support to developing countries in this regard and agree:

c) To gradually eliminate subsidies **ADD: and economic policies** that have considerable negative effects on the environment and are incompatible with sustainable development, complemented with measures to protect poor and vulnerable groups;

43. We recognize the importance of measuring global progress. In this regard, we will be guided by **ADD: concrete targets and mechanisms to ensure accountability** that contain the following indicative goals and timeline

IV. Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development

44. We recognize that strong governance at local, national, regional and global levels is critical for advancing sustainable development. The strengthening and reform of the institutional framework should, among other things:

c) Monitor progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and relevant outcomes and agreements, at local, national, regional and global levels. **Mechanisms should be established to engage multi-stakeholders in the monitoring and implementation.**

49 alt. bis The work of the Council should be based on fundamental documents on sustainable development such as Agenda 21, the Rio principles and related outcomes. The Council should, inter alia, fully carry out the functions and mandates of the Commission for Sustainable Development. It would be guided by the need to promote integration of the three

pillars of sustainable development, promote effective implementation at all levels and promote effective institutional coherence. It should help in enhancing the involvement of all stakeholders, particularly major groups, in the follow-up of Rio+20. **Add: including review and reform of current multi-stakeholder modalities.**

49 alt ter. We request the President of the General Assembly to conduct open, transparent and inclusive negotiations, with the aim of establishing the mandate, modalities, functions, size, composition, membership, working methods and procedures of the Council and report on the outcome before the end of the 67th session of the General Assembly. **ADD: We also request the formal participation of multi-stakeholders in determining the makeup of the Council.**

54. We recognize that sustainable development must be given due consideration by the International Financial Institutions, especially the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the regional development banks, UNCTAD and the World Trade Organization in regulating global trade. In that regard, we request the international financial institutions to review their programmatic strategies to ensure the provision of better support to developing countries for the implementation of sustainable development. **ADD: We call on IFIs to democratise their governance to better serve the needs of developing countries.**

57. We agree to further consider the establishment of an Ombudsperson, or High Commissioner for Future Generations, to promote sustainable development. **REPLACE WITH: We resolve to establish an Ombudsperson for Future Generations to ensure prioritisation of sustainable development by UN member states and UN agencies.**

58. We agree to take steps to give further effect to Rio Principle 10 **ADD: and agree to prioritise public participation, access to information, and judicial remedies** at the global, regional and national level, as appropriate.

61. We underline the need for more coherent and integrated planning and decision-making at the national level. We therefore call on countries to establish and strengthen, as appropriate, national sustainable development councils to enable them to coordinate, consolidate and ensure the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues in the highest decision-making bodies, with **ADD: specific modalities for the integration and full participation of all stakeholders.**

V. Framework for action and follow-up

77. We stress the need to provide social protection to all members of society, including those who are not employed in the formal economy. In this regard, we strongly encourage national and local initiatives aimed at providing a social protection floor for all citizens. **ADD: We also stress that human rights must remain at the centre of economic growth initiatives.**

88. We reaffirm that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and express our deep concern that developing countries are particularly vulnerable to and are experiencing increased negative impacts from climate change, which is severely undermining food security and efforts to eradicate poverty, and also threatens the territorial integrity, viability and the very existence of small island developing states. **ADD: We call for a fair, ambitious and binding treaty to combat climate change and stress the urgent need for commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions.** We welcome the outcome of COP17 at Durban and look forward to the urgent implementation of all the agreements reached.

89. We encourage **ADD: ambitious and binding** international initiatives and partnerships to address the interrelationship among water, energy, food and climate change in order to

achieve synergies as well as to minimize conflicts among policy objectives, being particularly sensitive to impacts on vulnerable populations.

97. We agree to establish a 10-Year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) as part of a global pact on sustainable consumption and production, based on the text elaborated in the negotiations in the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development at its nineteenth session. **ADD: As part of this developed countries commit to ambitious targets that will reduce consumption and production.**

103. We call for removing barriers **ADD: and all discriminatory legislation** that have prevented women from being full participants in the economy and unlocking their potential as drivers of sustainable development, and agree to prioritize measures to promote gender equality in all spheres of our societies, including education, employment, ownership of resources, access to justice, political representation, institutional decision-making, care giving and household and community management.

105. We recognize that goals, targets and milestones are essential for measuring and accelerating progress towards sustainable development and agree to launch an inclusive process to devise by 2015:

a) a set of global Sustainable Development Goals that reflect an integrated and balanced treatment of the three dimensions of sustainable development, are consistent with the principles of Agenda 21, and are universal and applicable to all countries but allowing for differentiated **ADD: yet concrete and measurable** approaches among countries;

106. We **ADD: request specific modalities for the inclusion of** all stakeholders to join this process and request the UN Secretary-General to coordinate this process.

110. We resolve to strengthen the capacity of all countries in partnership with civil society to collect and analyze data and information needed to support the monitoring of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. **ADD: Civil society must be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of progress.** We request the Secretary-General, with the support of interested donors, the UN system, international organizations and other entities, to promote a global partnership in this regard.

116. We reaffirm the key role of the private sector in promoting sustainable development including through multi-stakeholder partnerships. Public policy should create a stable investment climate and regulatory framework conducive to long-term investment and socially and environmentally responsible behaviour by business and industry. **ADD: We also call for the implementation of a Financial Transaction Tax to raise funding for sustainable development.**

For more information, please contact:

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