

Statement to be delivered by Savio Carvalho, Global Campaigns Director, WaterAid on behalf of the NGO Major Group at the ECOSOC General Debate, 19 July 2018

Your Excellencies,

The world is not on track to reach the 2030 Agenda. As the world steadily becomes a more unequal place, a sense of urgency around achieving this Agenda is lacking, and the opportunity to imbue the process with meaningful accountability at all levels is quickly dissipating.

For this Agenda to be truly transformative, immediate action is required to reorient and restructure global systems towards equity, human rights and justice.

We congratulate the 191 member states who voted in support of the ministerial declaration. However, the HLPF proceedings reveal insufficient leadership and a lack of commitment. We now urge you to remain united, ambitious and focused in delivery of the 2030 Agenda; and towards the true realization of the principle of 'leave no one behind'.

We are concerned that unlike the Human Rights Council, the HLPF provides no mandate for parallel or 'shadow reports' on country-level implementation, and call for this to be taken into consideration during the 2019 review of the HLPF modalities.

We welcome the initiative to pre-approve one side event for each constituency of the Major Groups and other Stakeholders, and we hope this practice will continue.

Nonetheless, we regret to observe that the overall space for civil society at the HLPF is shrinking. This year, only around 20% of the official slots for side events were granted to civil society, whereas one full day was dedicated to a closed business forum.

Likewise, opportunities for the MGoS to intervene in the official sessions have decreased, critically affecting interaction during the VNR presentations: 2 minutes is clearly not enough to represent all MGoS in one statement.

We need the HLPF to lead by example by creating the conditions for meaningful and constructive dialogue, being a true platform for learning and accountability.

We are looking forward to the 2019 HLPF, at heads of state level and the beginning of the review of its modalities. However, we express our serious concerns that this platform is proving insufficient against both the expectations of its role in monitoring and review, and the crises of the larger global structures in which the HLPF attempts to intervene.

We rededicate ourselves to ensuring that justice speaks louder than the voices of entrenched power; and that our energy and commitment will counteract the forces of complacency that have set into the multilateral system.

We call on governments to use the space of the HLPF to meaningfully advance the 2030 Agenda through leadership and political guidance, honest acknowledgments of challenges, and concrete indications that political, economic, social, and environmental paradigms will shift towards human rights and dignity for all.

I thank you.