

54th COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF FRIENDS OF THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

**4 February 2016
New York**

Mr. Chair,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Group of Friends of the Optional Protocol of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which consists of 16 countries (Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Finland, France, Italy, Mongolia, Montenegro, Portugal, Spain and Uruguay) and is co-chaired by Portugal and Uruguay, is working to highlight the indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights does not establish new obligations for states, but is an important tool for strengthening the implementation of the Convention and offers a mechanism of redress for those whose rights have been violated. We, countries of the Group of Friends of the Optional Protocol, invite states that have not yet done so to ratify the OP-CESCR and stand ready to share our experiences on the implementation of this important Covenant.

The recently adopted 2030 Agenda contains many goals and targets related to the fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights. We warmly welcome the Agenda and wish to highlight the need to implement it in accordance with international human rights law, particularly the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. A human rights perspective will help us achieve the ambitious objective of leaving no one behind and ensuring the equal dignity of all, without discrimination of any kind.

This is the first CSocD after the adoption of Agenda 2030. In our view, the CSocD should truly integrate Agenda 2030 in its work and it should do so in coordination - not in isolation - with the other subsidiary organs of ECOSOC as well as with ECOSOC itself. This will contribute to the implementation of ECOSOC resolution 68/1 which states, among others, that the ECOSOC theme should be mainstreamed through the work of the subsidiary bodies.

Thank you,