

The Forum Ottawa Declaration

The representatives of international volunteer cooperation organisations gathered in Ottawa from all regions of the world 14th-17th October 2012 for the annual meeting of The International Forum on Development Service, together with other volunteer groups and volunteer involving organisations,

- acknowledging the contributions of millions of volunteers worldwide to human rights, equality, peace, development and societal wellbeing.
- recognising paragraph 43 of the Rio +20 outcome document “The Future We Want” which underscores that: *“broad public participation and access to information and judicial and administrative proceedings are essential to the promotion of sustainable development and that sustainable development requires the meaningful involvement and active participation of regional, national and subnational legislatures and judiciaries, and all major groups: women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organisations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers, as well as other stakeholders, including local communities, **volunteer groups** and foundations, migrants and families as well as older persons and persons with disabilities.”*
- further emphasising paragraph 248 of the Rio +20 Outcome document which states that *“We resolve to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly.”*
- underscoring the importance of an inclusive process which formally embraces volunteer groups as stakeholders in the follow up of Rio +20.
- welcoming and commending the Secretary General’s Statement to the UN Assembly on 28th of June which states *“And let us not forget the 64 million individual actions captured by the “Volunteer Action Counts” initiative spearheaded by the United Nations Volunteers. This is a remarkable testament to bottom-up, grass-roots commitment. It is yet one more demonstration of how Rio+20 is mobilizing a global movement for change.”*
- recalling the General Assembly Resolution A/RES/65/1 “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals” paragraph 17 *“We call on civil society, including non-governmental organizations, voluntary associations and foundations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels, to enhance their role in national development efforts as well as their contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and we commit ourselves as national Governments to the inclusion of these stakeholders.”*

We therefore commit to:

- continued mobilisation by rallying the organisations present, our partners, individuals and communities where we work for the ongoing pursuit for sustainable development,
- work more closely with the major groups and other stakeholders and encourage the active participation of volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations in processes that contribute to decision-making, planning and

implementation of policies and programs for sustainable development at all levels, in accordance with the Rio +20 Outcome document,

- ongoing mobilisation of volunteers and organisations working with communities and individuals across the world as change actors for sustainable development during the next three years and post 2015.

The undersigned organisations and volunteers around the world, at the invitation of the International Forum on Development Service, stand ready to engage in the follow up process to Rio+20, in particular:

- to substantively participate, as part of an inclusive process, in equal terms with other stakeholders and the traditional Major Groups of Agenda 21, in any mechanism or modality of engagement with the intergovernmental Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as the proposal to create a multi-stakeholder advisory group on sustainable development goals (MAG),
- to further commit to actively engage in any mechanism of multi-stakeholder engagement with the future High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that, in accordance with paragraph 84 of the Rio+20 outcome document, will be established to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development,
- to work with other volunteering organisations and other stakeholders in support of the deliberations of the High-level Panel on Post 2015 and to support the work and outreach of the Secretariat of the Post 2015 Development Agenda,
- to actively engage through our national constituencies in discussions about the post 2015 development framework at the national level, including in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) led national consultations organised around the world.

Ottawa, 17 October 2012

The undersigned organisations have supported the FORUM Ottawa Declaration per 7 January 2013:

Volunteer Service Abroad – New Zealand
CUSO International – Canada
Singapore International Foundation – Singapore
Volunteer Service Overseas Jitolee – Kenya
FK Norway/Fredskorpset - Norway
Australian Volunteers International – Australia
Mayan Families – Guatemala
Unité Suisse – Switzerland
Skillshare International – United Kingdom
Red Iberoamericana De Bosques Modelo (Modern Forestry) – Costa Rica
Cachapoal Model Forest – Chile
Canadian Crossroads International – Canada
Uniterra – Canada
Japan International Cooperation Agency - Japan
VSO International



Fresh & Young Brains Development Initiative, Nigeria
African Youth Initiative on Climate Change
South East European Youth Network (SEEYN)
Uganda National Volunteers Link, Uganda
FUNDATED, Guatemala
Comhlámh, Ireland
The International Center for Innovations in Civic Participation (ICP), USA
Cross-Cultural Solutions, USA