



MEDIA STATEMENT

14 December 2016

The People's Advocate held today, 14 December 2016, its Annual Conference, "*Aligning SDGs with Human Rights- Sustainable Development Goals and the role of the Human Rights Institutions in their implementation*"

The Participants were greeted by Mr. Igli Totozani, the People's Advocate; Mr. Ilir Meta, the Speaker of the Parliament; Mrs. Ermonela Felaj, State Minister for Relations with the Parliament on behalf of Mr. Edi Rama, the Albanian Prime Minister; Mr. Donald Lu, Ambassador of the USA to Albania; Mr. Brian J. Williams, UN Resident Coordinator to Albania; and Mr. Mads Sandau-Jensen, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to Albania.

The Conference was divided into three panels with a focus on a human rights approach to attaining the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Panel I: Leave no one behind- End poverty in all its forms and promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth- The discussion centered on the adoption of a human rights based approach to achieving SDG-s 1 & 8. According to the Study carried out by People's Advocate Institution in cooperation with the Albanian Centre for Economic Research, "Calculation of the subsistence minimum in Albania", the minimum living standard was estimated at 16,000 ALL /month per capita based on 2015 data.

Indeed a human rights based approach in policy making and resource allocation at the central and local level, is a prerequisite to achieve this goal. Discussion focused on the application of HRBA to SDG 1&8 with focus on pro-poor growth, adequate consideration of vulnerable groups, values of participation and need of progress towards equality and non-discrimination. Discussion on development-oriented policies that support productive activities and decent job creation for men and women, youth and marginalized took center stage. Also, collaboration of the HR institutions with government institutions and other partners and stakeholders in these aspects was discussed.

Panel II: Leave no one behind- Invest in people and greater social cohesion. What opportunities do SDGs bring for HRs and vice-versa. Albania's adherence in global HR treaties and conventions brings the obligation to implement international norms and standards by establishing more inclusive systems and ways of working that can help to

reach vulnerable groups- especially Roma/ Egyptian and disabled- in the areas of social inclusion, education, health. Discussions focused on association of SDGs 3,4,5 with the HRs aspects. Access of all groups of society, especially those marginalized in exercising their entitlements to equitable quality services occupied the core of the discussions. Interdependence of HRs in the areas of social inclusion, education, health and mainstreaming gender equality and equality of opportunities to achieve greater social cohesion was pointed out as an essential pre-requisite by those who took the floor.

Panel III: HR aspects of Environment and Climate Change. Environment and Climate Change underlie each of the Sustainable Development Goals, from ending poverty to promoting good health to ensuring vibrant and equitable economies around the world. An analysis of current environmental goals and targets shows that the ones making most progress tend to be embedded in effective governance regimes. A human rights perspective on environmental protection, promotes equality, freedom and human dignity and improves the effectiveness of policy making. More sustainable and robust policy outcomes can be generated when those individuals most affected by development and environmental policies participate in decision-making processes.

The participants pointed out that in Albania government, parliament, civil society and the international community should work together to protect the environment, adapt to climate change, and promote green growth, while making sure that those affected have a voice.