AGENDA ITEM 4: Review of regional progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and opportunities for achieving the SDGs

(a) Progress towards the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 at the regional level (reporting back from the SDG Round tables)

Stakeholder statement - OHCHR

Delivered by Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights

Duration: 3 minutes

Esteemed colleagues,

The 2030 Agenda sets out a vision for sustainable development that is firmly grounded in human rights.

With interlocked crises eroding progress on many SDGs, we are long overdue in leveraging human rights as the problem solver it can be. We must stop treating human rights and sustainable development as separate issues. We are now preparing for the Summit of the Future. It will be critical that the Pact underlines that the three pillars of the UN – peace and security, development and human rights – are interlinked and mutually reinforcing and include a commitment to strengthen the human rights pillar to reflect its equal value and importance.

In this region as elsewhere, key concerns include the rule of law, restrictions on civic space, freedom of expression and assembly, attacks on human rights defenders, including environmental defenders and journalists, impunity for human rights violations, and limitations on judicial independence.
OHCHR’s recent report with UNDP and other partners shows little or no progress towards Goal 16 since 2015 and a significant lack of data overall.

Without urgent action, the little progress achieved under SDG 16 will be reversed, with repercussions across all the Goals.

Climate change is undermining nearly all SDGs, in particular, SDG 1 and SDG 2, since its impact worsens the situation of already marginalized people.

We need climate action, both on adaptation and mitigation, that prioritises equity, social and climate justice, rights-based approaches, and inclusivity, leading to more sustainable outcomes, fewer trade-offs, and climate resilient development.

We need independent, effective and well-resourced National Human Rights Institutions, in line with the Paris Principles, with the capacity and expertise to monitor and follow up on States’ implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

We need robust partnerships, at local, regional and global levels.

We must maintain human rights at the centre of our economic policies. Human rights must be used to guide all economic and social policies, to navigate trade-offs in taxation, budgets, trade and investment policies, and to ensure access to education, healthcare, food, social security and a clean and healthy environment for all.

Human rights economies work to reduce inequalities, prioritise action on the triple planetary crisis, and rely on a fully reformed, transparent and accountable international financial architecture.

Investing in inclusive, rights-based data partnerships is critical for safeguarding and accelerating hard-won progress under the 2030 Agenda.
OHCHR stands ready to work closely with SDG 16 data partners to strengthen the Human Rights Based Approach to Data, in collaboration with other UN Agencies.

Thank you.