

**JOINT STATEMENT: THE POWER OF INCLUSION AND THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY (delivered at HRC-
March 20, 2017 – list of co-signatory countries below)**

On behalf of xx other states I am honoured to deliver this statement on the power of inclusion and the benefits of diversity.

Confronted by alarming acts and expressions of exclusion, xenophobia, racism and discrimination in its multiple forms, we reaffirm that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace. We further recall that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated, and that everyone is entitled to enjoy these rights equally and without distinction.

Inclusive societies recognize and respect diversity as a source of strength. They cherish diversity as an asset for the advancement and welfare of humanity.

Diversity is an indisputable fact. While each context is unique, all communities, countries and regions of the world are diverse. Today, patterns of migration, urbanization, technological change and other forces create unprecedented opportunities to benefit from our diversity. Doing so however requires deliberate action.

Inclusion is a conscious choice to respect diversity and maximize its economic, social, cultural, civil and political benefits, both locally and globally.

Inclusive economic growth reduces income inequality. Economies that capitalize on their diversity are more innovative, adaptive and competitive. Inclusive workplaces are more productive, and have higher employee and client satisfaction. Evidence indicates that companies with diverse boards perform better.

Inclusive social policies and services provide more equitable access to resources and reduce social exclusion and marginalization. Inclusive communities have better education and health outcomes and they foster a sense of belonging and resilience, which lead to lower rates of crime, and increased resistance to extremist messaging.

A rich cultural life flourishes when creative expression and the free exchange of ideas are nurtured. Inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue enriches communities and increases social cohesion. Inclusive approaches to the arts and sport bring diverse people together, enhancing the human experience for all.

There are widespread civil and political benefits when governments design and implement inclusive legislation and policies which support human rights for all without discrimination. This leads to greater public participation and legitimacy for public institutions.

Inclusion is essential to the realization of the three pillars of the UN: international peace and security, respect for human rights, and sustainable development, including the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and the commitment to 'leave no one behind'.

Guided by the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and the core international human rights instruments, we undertake to nourish a culture of inclusion; to encourage the deliberate design of inclusive public policies; and to share research and best practices on inclusion. We call on others to do the same.

Co-signatory countries (as of March 20) are: Albania; Algeria; Andorra; Armenia; Australia; Austria; Belgium; Benin; Bosnia; Brazil; Bulgaria; Canada; Chile; Colombia; Croatia; Cyprus; Czech Republic; **Denmark**; Djibouti; Egypt; Estonia; Fiji; Finland; **France**; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Guatemala; Honduras; **Hungary**; Iceland; Indonesia; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Jamaica; **Japan**; Jordan; Latvia; **Lebanon**; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Madagascar; Malta; Mauritius; Malaysia; Mexico; Mongolia; Montenegro; Morocco; Namibia; **Netherlands**; New Zealand; Norway; **Pakistan**; Panama; Paraguay; Peru; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Korea; Romania; Rwanda; San Marino; Serbia; Sierra Leone; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sri Lanka; Sweden; Switzerland; Thailand; Timor Leste; Tunisia; Turkey; United Kingdom; Ukraine; United States; Uruguay.