

**Statement on behalf of Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic,
Germany, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sierra Leone and Sweden**

that are members of the Justice Action Coalition

at the

**SDG 16 High-Level Conference on
“Advancing Peace, Justice and Institutions for Sustainable Development”**

**New York City
United Nations
12 May 2025**

Thank you, *Chair*,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Germany, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sierra Leone and Sweden who are members of the Justice Action Coalition

We represent the **Justice Action Coalition**, a multistakeholder cross-regional coalition championing equal access to justice for all as part of SDG16.

The Justice Action Coalition believes that access to justice is understood as the ability of people to resolve and prevent their justice problems, and to use justice as a platform, which enables them to participate in their economies and societies.

Mr. /Madam. Chair,

This SDG 16 Conference offers a timely opportunity to build on last year's review of SDG 16 at the High-Level Political Forum, while reflecting on the implementation of the Pact for the Future and informing critical negotiations, including on Financing for Development and the World Social Summit.

Mr. /Madam. Chair,

In a world facing violent conflicts and political instability, climate breakdown, mass displacement, and deepening inequality, justice is not a luxury.

It is a necessity.

It is through justice that societies can address root causes, mediate grievances, and protect the rights and dignity of all people. Justice provides the foundation upon which trust in institutions is built, democratic resilience is sustained and economies are built.

Without access to justice, people are left without recourse. Without strong institutions, democratic norms crumble. Without peace, sustainable development cannot take root. At the heart of every crisis lies a failure of justice — and at the heart of every lasting solution, justice prevails.

That is why we consider SDG16 both a goal in its own right, and a critical enabler of all other goals.

Mr./Madam Chair, justice needs are not randomly distributed.

Thus, we bring forth a call to action to:

1. **Prioritize people-centered justice** that responds to the needs of those most affected by injustice;

2. **Invest in justice systems** that are transparent, inclusive, and accountable, particularly at the community level;
3. **Integrate justice responses into crisis prevention, humanitarian efforts, and recovery planning;**
4. **Ensure meaningful participation** of communities in justice decision-making and democratic processes. By increasing participation and inclusivity, people-centered justice can strengthen democratic institutions and mitigate the threat of authoritarianism and conflict.

In closing, **Mr. /Mdme. Chair,**

Now more than ever, the global community must stand firm in the belief that justice is not only a path to peace — it is peace in action. In the face of division, justice unites. In the aftermath of crises, justice rebuilds. In times of uncertainty, justice restores hope and dignity.

I thank you.