

G7 must embrace strong commitments towards a sustainable and just world

Declaration by SDSN Germany¹ on the G7 Summit in Elmau, Germany in June 2015

At the beginning of June 2015, when Chancellor Angela Merkel welcomes her counterparts from the G7 countries to the second such summit in Germany held under her watch, she will open a different summit in a changed world. In Heiligendamm in 2007, the G7 was still the G8, and the summit stood for an attempt to bridge differences and to strive for cooperative global politics by involving important emerging economies as well as the continent of Africa. At the beginning of 2009, the G20 established themselves as the premier forum for their international economic cooperation. In the context of the Ukraine crisis, the G7 countries resolved in 2014 to meet, for the time being, without Russia. The 2015 Elmau Summit will be the first regular meeting in this once again reduced format – less than a global summit, rather a gathering of just a small number of larger industrialised countries in the midst of deepened divisions and tensions around the world.

We call on the G7 to undertake, in line with its self-conception as a community of values, every effort to avoid contributing to new block-building; instead, the cooperation among G7 countries must clearly serve key concerns of humankind and the multilateral processes addressing them.

In 2015, despite the ongoing crises and conflicts in the world, the global community has the opportunity, by successfully concluding three global conferences, to lay the foundation for a good life for all humans within the boundaries of our earth: (1) Adopting truly global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN Summit in New York in September 2015; (2) reaching an ambitious universal climate agreement fortified by effective monitoring mechanisms at the UN Climate Conference in Paris in December 2015; and (3) mobilising the necessary instruments and funding to implement both of these agendas at the Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July 2015. Geopolitics of today must steer clear of the power politics of yesterday; rather they have to turn into politics for the future of humankind and the earth. Reflecting on our common interest in a good tomorrow can help to see the current conflicts in a new light and find ways to overcome them.

We call on the G7 to emphatically rally behind these three interlinked processes, contribute to ambitious objectives and support the emerging global agenda by committing in Elmau to determined contributions at three levels:

(1) *In their own countries: Overcome non-sustainable consumption and production patterns*

In Elmau, the G7 should commit to embrace the SDGs for their own countries in national strategies for sustainable development and report on their progress in this respect at the G7 Summit in 2017. These strategies for each of the G7 countries should include, in particular, the following measures that are of global importance:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent by 2020 and by 90 percent by 2050 (compared to 1990),
- reducing food waste by 50 percent by 2030,
- tripling resource efficiency by 2030 (compared to the mid 1990s) and establishing an extensive circular economic system by 2050.

Germany should update its national strategy for sustainable development with a global perspective based on the SDGs and call for the same to be done in the European Union.

¹ Sustainable Development Solutions Network Germany; Decision by the Leadership Council from 18 March 2015

(2) *In their global policies: Align the rules of globalisation with sustainability and fairness*

In Elmau, the G7 should agree to consistently align their global policies with the SDGs, thereby sending a strong signal of their interest in creating a more inclusive and just world order. They should achieve this in three specific steps:

- aligning their bilateral and multilateral trade and investment agreements with global sustainability and non-discrimination of developing countries,
- creating conducive framework conditions for carbon-free or low-carbon energy technologies, also by at soonest establishing a global carbon price which reflects actual atmospheric scarcity conditions,
- readiness for a reform of the UN Security Council, the World Bank and the IMF as well as support for a stronger role of Africa and the African Union in global politics.

Germany should implement its commitment to social, environmental and human rights standards and obligations in international value chains and conclude binding agreements with other countries as well as with companies on ambitious and verifiable standards.

(3) *In their cooperation with others: Effectively support the implementation of the SDGs globally*

In a world of common but differentiated responsibilities, the willingness of others to contribute to global public goods and goals essentially depends on the extent to which the G7 countries fulfil their own commitments to support partners. Before the Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, the G7 should regain lost trust by making quantified, time-bound commitments in Elmau in three areas:

- doubling the G7's annual Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the poorest countries to over 50 billion USD by 2020 with the objective of implementing the SDGs inter alia in the areas of poverty and hunger, health and education,
- providing an additional 50 billion USD annually from 2020 to 2025 as the G7 contribution for climate finance in low- and middle-income countries, a third of which in the form of grants, in particular through the Green Climate Fund,
- preferential access for low-income countries to all essential sustainable technologies in the G7 countries by 2020.

Germany increased its ODA contributions by over 50 percent between the Millennium Summit in 2000 and the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm in 2007. In a further step, Germany should now commit to halve its gap to the 0.7 percent target by 2020.

As we are on the threshold of a promising half-year with three global summits on key issues of global sustainable development, we call on the G7 to act as a trailblazer by doing their homework in supporting a new, cooperative form of geopolitics and thus strengthen the positive dynamics of 2015, a year of global decisions.

*Prof. Dr. Dirk Messner · Prof. Dr. Dr. Klaus Töpfer
Chairs of the Leadership Council
SDSN Germany*