



## HELLENIC ASSOCIATION OF POLITICAL SCIENTISTS

Organization in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC UN)

### THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

**Mr. President**

**Your Excellences**

**Fellow Delegates**

**Dear CSO Representatives,**

On behalf of the **Hellenic Association of Political Scientists (H.A.P.Sc.)**, we thank you for the opportunity to participate at the 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development. We would like to address to all participants the necessity of effective and immediate decision-making for matters concerning poverty eradication, youth development, gender equality and civil protection, education and other important topics of the SDGs Agenda.

Our oral statement covers a range of topics leading to the strategies for the eradication of poverty within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While Greece is not presently experiencing internal violent conflict, the ongoing conflicts and the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region) have exacerbated and led to the influx of refugees and migrants in Greece and subsequently in the European Union. The influx of refugees has increased xenophobia and racism within the European Union, closing of the borders of the Member States and denying asylum and refugee protection to vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, terrorism and the increasing number of human trafficking and smuggling cases destabilize the security in the Mediterranean. Our country, Greece and other South Eastern countries are currently under economic recession and remain the main entry arrival points for people entering the European Union. It is vital, that the international community, namely international organizations, states, regional organizations and NGOs, focus their efforts on the enhancement of the indispensable actions in order to tackle the main areas of concern:

- safety and protection
- appropriate registration, information and housing
- water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) related issues,
- education and employment, with special emphasis on unaccompanied minors, families and vulnerable groups.

Even in these times of deep economic recession, South European countries are perceived as lands of hope and promise by impoverished populations.

As the UN Secretary-General, his Excellency Mr. António Guterres stated at the 28th Ordinary Summit of the African Union: “...*African borders remain open for those in need of protection when so many borders are being closed, even in the most developed countries in the world.*” All Member States and civil society actors should actively collaborate on an international level to help those in need of protection in every country in the world to promote peace, unity, development and change for the future generations.

**Mr President,**

We are hopeful that during discussions with the civil society actors and member states at the General Session, the Civil Society Forum as well as at the sub-panels of the **55th Session of the Commission for Social Development**, these issues will be discussed and reach liable measures and solutions, that will subsequently lead to the adoption of the Report of the Commission on its 55th session.

Thank you for your attention.

The Head of the Organization  
**The President of HAPSc**  
**Symeon Sidiropoulos**  
**Political Scientist BA, MSc, Ph.D.(c)**