To the kind attention of:
Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations in New York
United Nations Secretariat, Agencies and Programmes

5th April 2022

Subject: Need to urgently agree on the 4th Financing for Development (FfD) conference at the ongoing FfD negotiations at the UN

Your Excellencies distinguished representatives of UN Member States,

We, the Civil Society Financing for Development Group (including the Women’s Working Group on FfD), are writing to you in the context of ongoing negotiations at the United Nations (UN) on the 2022 Financing for Development (FfD) negotiated outcome document.

We have strongly supported the long-overdue call for the 4th FfD conference in the zero draft from 22 March 2022 deciding to hold the next conference in 2024. We are disappointed to see this text diluted in the recent first draft to ‘consider having the conference in 2024’. This continued postponement of deciding the next FfD conference is deeply concerning in a context where it is clear that existing mechanisms and mandates are failing to address the multiple crises. There is an urgent need for a new global consensus on an economic system that works for people and the planet.

In addition, the ‘first draft’ of the FfD outcome document also calls for governments to support the Secretary-General’s proposal for convening a biennial summit (para 60). This proposal for a Biennial Summit between G20, ECOSOC, Secretary General (SG) and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) is extremely concerning and risks undermining the existing FfD process that is already mandated to address urgent global systemic challenges on debt, international tax abuse and other illicit financial flows, private finance, ODA, trade, technology and financial regulation in a universal, intergovernmental process with a legitimacy spanning 20 years.

The modalities of the FfD process already recognises civil society and the private sector as stakeholders for inputs, in addition to IFIs, WTO and UNCTAD, while ensuring that negotiations are clearly intergovernmental with member states as decision-makers. We find it unacceptable for the United Nations to promote structures that privilege a handful of member states (such as the G20) instead of reaffirming existing universal, inclusive processes.

In conclusion, we urge you and your government to:

- Reject this Secretary-General proposal for a ‘Biennial Summit’ that would reinforce the lack of inclusiveness and the isolation of existing economic governance dynamics.
- Support the need to urgently agree on the next FfD conference in 2024 at the ongoing FfD negotiations and uphold existing inclusive, multilateral processes at the UN.

We remain at your disposal for any further clarifications.

Sincerely yours,

Civil Society Financing for Development Group (https://csoforffd.org) (including the Women’s Working Group on Financing for Development)