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Statement

by

Amb. Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative,

at the

**Ministerial Segment of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on
sustainable development, under the auspices of ECOSOC
“Strengthening integration, implementation and review – the
HLPF after 2015”**

and the

**Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) of ECOSOC
“Managing the transition from the Millennium Development
Goals to the sustainable development goals: what it will take”**

New York

July 8, 2015

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a distinct honor for me to participate in the Ministerial Segment of the High Level Political Forum and the General Debate of the Annual Ministerial Review of the ECOSOC.

The wide-ranging discussions we have had under the HLPF over the past week are a testimony to the value that is being added by the High Level Political Forum to the global discourse on sustainable development.

As this space becomes the home of the SDGs and the new development agenda, we look forward to the Forum shaping up to harness the global political will and to meaningfully support the implementation of the new agenda.

Mr. President,

Two very interesting topics have been chosen for this year's HLPF and ECOSOC AMR – the shape of review under HLPF after 2015 and transitioning from MDGs to SDGs.

Allow me to briefly address both of them, albeit in reverse order.

Mr. President,

Year 2015 is a landmark for the international community, as we transition from the MDGs to a much wider, deeper and potentially transformative agenda.

The MDGs succeeded at least partially in galvanizing political will for action to eradicate poverty and achieve basic human development. The SDGs, on the other hand, *must* succeed if we are to provide a life of dignity to all of our people and heal the planet to health.

As we undertake this transition, we need to bear in mind two lessons.

First and foremost, what started off at the start of the Millennium – our collective project to end poverty – is a job half-done.

The figures indeed are daunting.

- Some 1.3 billion people, twice the combined population of Europe, live in poverty;
- 805 million are chronically undernourished;
- 1.7 billion lack access to essential medicines;

- nearly 1 billion lack access to safe drinking water and 2.6 billion to improved sanitation;
- 100 million are homeless while 1.6 billion lack access to adequate shelter;
- 1.3 billion have no access to electricity and 2.6 billion rely on biomass for their cooking needs;
- About a third of human deaths annually - almost 18 million - can be attributed to poverty related causes.

The staggering inequity within the global picture of poverty is even starker.

Child mortality rates in low income countries are 20 times higher than in high income countries. As much as 15% of the population in developing countries is under-nourished.

The gap in life expectancy between low income and high income countries is almost 16 years for men and 19 years for women. This means that a person born in a poor developing country lives 15-20 years less than a person in a rich developed country.

As we transition to the Post-2015 era, we must therefore keep our eyes firmly on the supreme objective of banishing poverty and hunger once and for all.

As the Secretary General has said, we can be the first generation to end poverty.

Let us rise to this historic opportunity and embrace this challenge.

Mr. President,

The second lesson we need to bear in mind is that if we are to heal our planet and respect planetary boundaries, our historical ways of consumption and reckless lifestyles must change.

If the whole world were to consume at the level of some of the most advanced countries today, resources equivalent to that of 15 planets would be required.

As Mahatma Gandhi said presciently, *“The Earth provides enough for everyone’s needs, but not for everyone’s greed”*.

What we need is a revolution towards sustainable lifestyles and harmony with nature. This is a journey on which the developed world will have to lead with conspicuous example.

Mr. President,

Turning to the issue of strengthening integration, implementation and review under HLPF, it is important to bear in mind that the overall objective of review itself is to enhance implementation and integration.

The HLPF's role in this regard must always be a facilitative one, rooted in latest evidence, but geared towards finding and spreading solutions.

Only such a system can incentivize participation.

HLPF's review of the development agenda must be rooted in national sovereignty and should seek to enhance international cooperation, with a focus on sharing of information, best practices and developmental experiences.

Given that it is anchoring an agenda that is universal in relevance but differentiated in action, the review framework must eschew a narrow vision of one-size-fits-all and recognize diverse national circumstances.

A special provision must be made to review the implementation of the commitments related to global partnership.

We are happy therefore that an understanding has been reached in the context of the Financing for Development Conference for an integrated, yet dedicated review framework for FfD outcomes and the means of implementation commitments under the HLPF.

Mr. President,

India stands ready to contribute to the historic endeavor we are embarking upon this year.

I thank you.
