

U.S. Statement on Goals and Targets

Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations

As delivered by Tony Pipa, U.S. Special Coordinator for the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Wednesday, July 22

Thank you, Mr. Co-Facilitator. We appreciate the conversation here today, one with many considered and thoughtful suggestions, and we join other delegations in thanking you for your leadership. We also want to thank your teams for their consistent dedication and hard work. All these efforts have ably led us to the final stage of our enormous task.

While our conversation is not yet complete, it is impressive to reflect on just how far we have collectively come on goals and targets. After three years of broad-based consultations and rigorous evaluation of the best evidence available, we have defined an ambitious blueprint. We embrace the 17 goals and the comprehensive vision for sustainable development that they comprise.

These **goals reaffirm and strengthen** our commitment to finish the “unfinished business” of the MDGs, such as **ending extreme poverty and preventable child and maternal deaths**, while also taking **our ambition a step further**. They address the uneven distribution of MDG results and incorporate critical, previously overlooked drivers of development progress – such as environmental conservation, economic growth, sustainable energy, gender, peaceful societies and accountable and transparent institutions.

We are proud of the robust collaboration among Member States and other stakeholders during the Open Working Group, and we are confident we can all work together in the same constructive, collaborative spirit to finish this agenda by July 31 and give our leaders a document they can be proud to sign in September.

As we have said consistently throughout this process, our goals and targets will determine the success of our agenda. Our **experience with the MDGs shows that clear, ambitious, evidence-based, and measurable strategic priorities will drive action and achieve results**.

In this spirit, we support the effort to make technical improvements to the targets. **Our motivation is simple: we want this agenda, and the goals and targets within it, to succeed**. The proposed revisions to improve the precision of our targets and alignment with international agreements will strengthen – not weaken – our political bargain, and will give us a more common cause around which to rally. We have heard a rich debate around the challenge of bringing more specificity to those targets with x%, and we have also heard support for consistency with international agreements. We want to be sure to get both right – and, as many have mentioned, to do so without upsetting the political balance reflected in the overall agenda and without changing the intent of the targets as presented. We view the proposed changes as successful in this regard.

On the x's, we find the changes to be most productive in areas where added quantification has resulted in recommendations of relative improvement, and where that relative improvement is feasible and specific – as in the recommendation of target 6.3, where “x%” is replaced with a

clear and ambitious “at least doubling of water recycling and reuse.” If it is, as you say, a challenge to assign specific levels for all the x’s in an internationally accepted manner at this time, we are willing to support greater specificity at the national level during the implementation of this agenda and work to ensure that our follow-up and review processes and structures provide us a strong basis for setting and assessing specific progress on such targets.

We believe several of the target changes **add clarity and specificity that will help drive action**. Among these are targets 3.2 on child mortality, 3.6 on road safety, 12.4 on chemical and waste management, and 15.5 on biodiversity. We can see that **target 3.2**, which proposes specific target numbers for both neonatal mortality and under-5 mortality, **provides a welcome basis for continued momentum** on following through on one of the essential unfinished MDGs.

We note that Goal 8.7 has added new suggested language on ending modern slavery and human trafficking. We do not recall any hearing robust proposals for this change, and would like to hear more from the co-facilitators about how and why it was included in this draft. We note that we can support a change to include a reference to eradicating “all forms of modern slavery” - and consequently we would delete references to “forced labor” and “human trafficking” as redundant.

Also, as we’ve brought to your attention before, in two cases, targets 2.5 and 15.6, we still see problems with implementability and inconsistency with international agreements that can be addressed with the change of a couple words, so hope and expect these will be aligned in our final framework.

As we mentioned yesterday in our statement, we feel that all the issues in the OWG chapeau in annex 3 have been addressed in the political declaration or the targets, and do not support its continued inclusion as an annex.

Like other member states, we are reviewing the Addis outcome in detail with a view to appropriately aligning that outcome with relevant targets and look forward to that discussion tomorrow.

Thank you again, Mr Co-Facilitator. We believe this set of technical adjustments improves our agenda while protecting the balance and intent of the goals and targets. With their integration we believe we can move towards finalizing this agenda, and look forward to working with you all constructively as we move to the finish.