

UK opening statement

I would like to start by aligning the UK with the EU Statement this morning

Co-facilitators

We stand at a critical moment in history – an unprecedented opportunity to put the world on a sustainable development path and eradicate extreme poverty once and for all. Alongside the Finance for Development and the Climate Change negotiations, our discussions here represent the defining challenges of our time. Much rides on our ability to reach consensus on an inspiring, clear, concise and actionable agenda. This will be a critical test of multilateralism.

We agree, we are not starting from scratch. The proposal from the Open Working Group will serve as our main basis. It establishes the breadth of the agenda and we must preserve its careful balance. We also believe it is important to recognize and draw on other inputs that have brought us to where we are today – including the Reports of the High Level Panel and the ICESDF, and the UN Secretary General's Synthesis Report.

The UK is proud to have met its commitment to deliver on the 0.7% target. We have a lot vested in our work. Above all we want to conclude a post-2015 development agenda that will work, and serve as a strategy that serves all people in all countries. A universal agenda, which we will all live up to – separately and collectively. We are concerned to avoid a situation where a state can pick and choose which targets or means of implementation they deliver. It is therefore essential that the agenda can be implemented in its entirety in all countries. Only that way can we collectively achieve our vision of the future we want.

We strongly agree that the agenda should represent the very best technical thinking and evidence base – be measurable, implementable and action-oriented. We made great progress in the Open Working Group. We have the breadth and balance of the SDGs. But to ensure successful implementation we need to ensure that the targets are as robust as they possibly can be.

As I have said, we should not undermine the balance of the OWG, but at the same time make best use of the technical expertise of the UN system to ensure our proposals are technically sound. We therefore hope, as others have said, that our discussions can take advantage of the Secretary General's readiness to assist with a "technical proofing" of targets to ensure that they reinforce international ambition, avoid duplication and, as Nancy Birdsall said this morning, are simple, measurable and empower citizens to hold their governments to account. We agree with Brazil that we must not allow this process to lower ambition – there must be no back-

tracking on international commitments and norms. We look forward to further detail on this process from you.

The UK welcomes the emphasis by South Africa, speaking on behalf of the G77, on the poorest and most marginalised. We should make clear our expectation that no-one is left behind, and goals and targets will only be considered met if they are met by all relevant social and economic groups.

As well as being technically sound, we must ensure the agenda will inspire citizens and politicians alike - a concern I know that all member states will share. In that respect we welcome the UN Secretary General's suggestion of 6 essential elements, which could help frame and bring clarity to the post-2015 agenda.

Finally, the UK believes that our ambition for sustainable development outcomes must be met with equal ambition on means of implementation. The UK is fully committed to the 0.7% target and we want to see a raft of other finance and non-finance policy measures, equal to the ambition of the SDGs. We have in the Finance For Development process a great opportunity to assist with this.

Co-facilitators

The eyes of the world are upon us. Through Action/2015 young people 15 years of age across the world are demanding the world they want for 2030. Collectively we, the United Nations, need to rise to this call in a new spirit of global partnership. We have one chance only to get this right.