

## **On Declaration and Preamble - July (Norway)**

Let me start by joining others in welcoming the new draft as another step towards our final agreement on this agenda.

I will concentrate my comments today on the preamble and the declaration.

Goals and targets are the core of this agenda. Whatever comes in addition, should add value to the goals and facilitate their implementation.

We think the main purpose - and added value - of the declaration should be to give the "Why" and the vision of the agenda, and be a clear call for action.

The added value of the preamble should be to communicate the thrust of the agenda in a crisp and clear manner.

Neither of them should be an executive summary of the agenda. In our view, the current draft goes too far in that direction.

### **More specifically on the preamble:**

For the preamble to serve its purpose of being a communication tool, it should be short and crisp, without trying to paraphrase the goals and targets or repeating elements from the declaration. In other words, it should be significantly shorter than the current draft.

If we are to build the communication around a handful or so of key words, we need to make sure they represent the essence of the agenda. Substance matters more than whether they all start with the same letter (in English). We have two main difficulties with the five Ps: First, we are concerned that separating People, Planet and Prosperity as separate elements represent going back to silos rather than integrating the three dimensions of SD. Second, like Thailand, we believe Justice should be highlighted as one of the key words, as it is a prerequisite for SD.

### **On the declaration:**

We welcome that the vision has been moved further up in the declaration, and that it has a more positive tone than in the zero draft.

It is crucial that the declaration reflects that we remain committed to the promotion, protection and fulfillment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The sections of the declaration that go furthest in trying to summarize the rest of the agenda are those on The new agenda and on Implementation. These could both benefit from being substantially shortened.

The section on "**the new agenda**", in particular paras 23 to 30, goes far in paraphrasing what some of the goals and targets are all about. As we stated at the last session, this is a slippery slope. Partly because we quickly end up reformulating the goals and targets, partly because a number of goal themes are not covered.

Let me give a few examples of how, in this attempt to summarize the goals and targets, some have been reformulated or important elements left out:

In para 24 on health, universal health coverage is lifted up as seeming to be the overall goal, while in SDG 3 it is one among a number of equally important targets.

In para 25, there is a reference to "modern energy provision", which is far from the essence of SDG 7 on energy. As a minimum, "sustainable" should be used together with modern when speaking of energy.

Para 19 on gender equality can similarly be seen as a diluted version of Goal 5. Among the crucial elements of that goal not mentioned here is the need to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

We have heard a number of other delegations also pointing to what they see as unbalanced references to goals and targets in this section. Rather than spending a lot of time on an unnecessary renegotiation or reformulation of the goals, it is better to refrain from paraphrasing *some* than having to include them all. The Goals and Targets speak for themselves. We hence suggest that this section is significantly shortened.

The same goes for the section on **Implementation**. We should be careful not to reopen the agreement from Addis last week.

We question the added value of paras 34 to 36, as these issues are dealt with both in the Addis outcome document and in the SDGs, and we should not include text here that is not consistent with those.

We furthermore do not see the need for the new para 38 on the family, and suggest its deletion.

I thank you.