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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Remarks

by

**H.E. Ambassador Tekeda Alemu,
Permanent Representative of the
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
to the United Nations**

At The

**First meeting of the Open Working Group
on
Sustainable Development Goals**

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New York

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to extend to you and your colleague congratulations on your election by acclamation to lead this very important Open Working Group. What the President of the General Assembly said at the opening of this session is valid – This is a historically significant process involving work which amounts to no less than defining a new pattern of global partnership. That is why you two face, as the President said, a daunting task; truly Herculean.

We have confidence that you two are the right ones to help us carry out this monumental task. You have shown your mettle during the preparation for this first session. It is our expectation that throughout its work, this Open Working Group would be truly open, inclusive and transparent, and be guided by the principle of consensus, as affirmed by the methods of work that we approved yesterday. This is a pillar of the Open Working Group and the only basis for success.

Let me also express appreciation to the President of the GA for his initiative and to the Secretary General for his excellent contribution, particularly for the number of initiatives he has taken to ensure that the Open Working Group would have all the necessary inputs. I wish to mention in particular the contribution of the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda and its report "Realizing the Future We Want for All".

I don't intend to say much on substantive matters since the thrust of our view has already been covered by Chad, on behalf of Africa, Fiji as President of the G-77 and China as well as by the Chair of the LDCs.

But let me just make a few points by way of stressing what the Chair of the LDCs has already highlighted.

First, it is our conviction that to be useful the SDGs have indeed to be transformative. It is this, among other things, that will take us beyond the MDGs while not overlooking the need to complete the unfinished business of the MDGs. The MDGs are not to be abandoned, but their weaknesses need to be overcome.

Second, It is critical that the starting point of countries is taken into account, something which was not done in the drawing up of the MDGs. This is critical for the LDCs. What was underlined by Benin as the Chair of the LDCs needs to be stressed.

Third, MDG 8 did miss the element of accountability and transparency. Means of implementation is also indeed critical. Without consideration of enablers it would be unrealistic for us to be able to overcome the weaknesses of the MDGs framework. I subscribe to what Brazil said on this and other points yesterday.

We realize this process is going to be complex and difficult. The Secretary General made one key point during the opening of this session: While relying on the input of those who are in a position to contribute because of various capacities they may have, we should not forget, he said, those who have no means to be here in this hall. He couldn't have been more correct.

I Thank You