

**Statement by Ambassador Hahn Choong-hee**

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10<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly Open Working Group on SDGs

Monday, 31 March 2014 New York

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Thank you Mr. Co-Chair,

On behalf of the Republic of Korea, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for all your hard work and excellent leadership, which have made meaningful progress up until this 10th Meeting of the Open Working Group on SDGs.

One of the encouraging facts is that we have reached consensus on many important principles and elements on what the SDGs should aim for and what shape the SDG framework should take. I hope that consensus will soon emerge on the remaining issues such as the principle of common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) and means of implementation (MOI).

Mr. Co-Chairs,

Allow me to share some general comments on methodology, on defining goals and targets, and on poverty eradication.

We believe that the proposed eight (8) clusters may serve as an excellent starting point for translating a whole range of valuable views into a more concrete and succinct form of framework. The proposed eight (8) clusters already present a possible set of goals and core elements or targets that each goal should encompass. However, we need to look over the proposed cluster carefully based on nexus and mutual connectivity.

For instance, I believe the focus area of “Promote Equality” in the proposed Cluster 1 may be more suitable if it is placed in Cluster 2, which mainly covers the social pillar of sustainable development such as education, health, employment, and gender equality. Another reflection is regarding the energy issue included in Cluster 4. This cluster seems to cover general economic issues among the 19 focus areas; therefore, I suggest that energy issue be a separate cluster by itself. The reason is that energy is a real nexus connecting economic efficiency, social equality, and environmental sustainability; however, the current MDGs framework has not paid sufficient attention to these important issues.

Second issue is regarding defining goals and targets. When it comes to the issue of defining goals and targets through the clustering approach, it is very important to make sure that we share a common understanding on key guiding principles in setting goals and targets. In this regard, I would like to stress several elements to be as guiding principles.

First, building upon the lessons learned from the MDGs, we need to agree upon a limited number of goals, which are simple, clear, visionary and aspirational. I believe around ten (10) SDGs would serve this purpose.

Second, whilst we aim for universal application in the pursuit of goals clearly, there is a need for flexibility at the target level in order to encompass the different interests and emphasis of three population groups within their national and regional contexts: the world’s poorest and low income countries (LICs), middle income countries (MICs), and the global population as a whole.

Third, any remaining disagreements should not overshadow the agreement that we have already reached. We need to submit a report on SDGs by August 2014, and the output of our collective efforts will serve as an inspiration for development of the current and next generation. Therefore, Korea is of the view that it is critically important to reaffirm the sense of urgency and foster a sense of fresh hope in dealing with the remaining challenging issues such as CBDR and MOI.

Mr. Co-Chair,

I would like to explain Korea's main focus areas. On this first day of our five (5) day long deliberations, I would like to make clear that Republic of Korea has some points of interests among the 19 focus areas. I believe at least these items should be reflected as stand-alone goals. These include among others, poverty eradication, quality education for all, sustainable energy for all, water and sanitation, economic growth, managing natural resources in a sustainable manner, and means of implementation.

As far as eradicating poverty is concerned, I think this is very important as indicated in "The Future We Want." Eradicating poverty is the greatest goal and challenge facing the whole world today. And, ensuring the way for the very survival of humanity is the minimum requisite for advancing the discussion on sustainability. In this regard, eradication of poverty is the biggest challenge facing the LDCs and other LICs, and the international community is responsible for meeting the needs and supporting the rights of the world's poorest people.

Against this backdrop, let me propose three specific targets for this category. First is eradicating absolute poverty. I believe that we should be more ambitious than the MDGs. The MDGs framework has focused on halving the population in absolute poverty, not on ending absolute poverty. Second target is reducing the share of people living below the national poverty line. Apart from absolute poverty, I believe that targets should allow flexibility in accordance with national context. Third target is enhancing social protection and social safety net with a particular emphasis on the poorest and the most vulnerable population. I believe that particular consideration is needed towards disadvantaged people. These are general remarks, and we can come back on any specific issues later today and this week.

Thank you, Mr. Co-chair.