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The Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and with reference to latter's letter No.DSD/2012/529 dated 28 September 2012 has the honour to submit response by Pakistan to questionnaire related to the development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Secretariat, the assurances of its highest consideration.

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Response by Pakistan to the Questionnaire related to the development of SDGs

Question No 1:

2. Please list a limited number, preferably between five to ten, of the important priority areas that must be addressed through the SDGs to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development goals?

Answer

- i. Sustainable Energy and Energy Security
- ii. Water Security
- iii. Food security, farmers' livelihoods and rural development in developing countries
- iv. Poverty eradication
- v. Disaster Risk Reduction/ Disaster Management and Rehabilitation
- vi. Transportation
- vii. International financing for developing countries especially during crises
- viii. Reducing Child mortality especially girls
- ix. Women Empowerment
- x. External Debt

Question No 2:

2. How might the SDGs strive to balance the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development?

- a. Reflect social, economic and environmental dimensions within each SDG, possibly through associated targets?
- b. Integrate the MDGs, suitably modified/updated for post 2015, into a larger sustainable development framework.
- c. Expand MDG-7 (Environment sustainability) into a number of goals with a natural/environmental resource dimension (water, food energy etc)
- d. Other (please describe)

Answer

3. Pakistan supports the sub-bullet "a" as an important dimension in establishing and evolving SDGs. In our view each of the goals that we would be able to agree or identify must have three dimensions and each of the dimension have a comparable associated target or indicator.

4. Pakistan believes that sub-bullet "b" pre-empts the outcome of the associated processes by seeking to suggest integration. We believe that it is more important to draw lessons from the implementation of these goals. Such an exercise must focus on determining the absence of sustainable development indicators. Once such an exercise has been done, we should allow the processes to determine whether integrating MDGs into SDG framework is a good option or vice versa.

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5. Pakistan does not support sub-bullet 3. We believe this process- insofar as the environmental goals are concerned – is a much larger exercise that should first determine and collate several important environmental goals together. More importantly Pakistan believes that the environmental sustainability goals should be one of three pillars of each goal that we would identify and agree.

Question No. 3

6. Based on your experience with MDGs or other existing goals, what would be the key use of SDGs for your country (select two)

- a. Defining national policies
- b. Influencing national budget allocations
- c. Reviewing the impact of national policies
- d. Addressing key pressure leading to sustainability
- e. Helping to balance economic, social and environmental pillars in policy making
- f. Guiding development cooperation
- g. Other (Please specify)

Answer

7. In our view, the first two bullets (a and b) are more relevant as the SDGs could primarily help in defining and prioritizing the national policies and thereby influence the national budget allocations.

Questions No. 4

8. How can universally applicable SDGs be made practically relevant for countries at different levels of development? (Please refer to your country's situation as appropriate)

Answer

9. For Pakistan, the term universally applicable implies that implementing and achieving the goals would bind all countries. However, it would be important that obligations resulting from SDGs would bind countries at different level of economic development in a differentiated structure. For instance, those countries having achieved energy security would be obliged to move aggressively towards the sustainable energy and higher energy mix to ensure that their efforts in reducing environmental damage is more than those who are still struggling to ensure basic energy security and provision of energy services to their population and an energy mix which matches their level of economic development and capacity of people to pay for such energy services. Simply put, the nature and level of responsibility for different set of countries (given the level of economic development) should and must be different.

Question No. 5

10. The SDGs are supposed to be global in nature, should targets associated with those goals be:

- a. Common to all countries
- b. Defined by each country? Or
- c. Common but differentiated depending on country characteristics and level of development? If C, please explain how

Answer

11. It is Pakistan's view that global in nature implies that targets should be achieved at the global level. The distribution of achieving those targets in these areas should differ depending on the characteristics and level of development. In practice, targets in economic and social areas are linked to national development and between the developed and the developing countries. The targets or indicators – be they voluntary – in the economic and environmental pillars should be differentiated with developed countries assuming larger portion of meeting them. Insofar as social targets are concerned (such as poverty eradication, food security, health empowerment etc), the developing countries would assume larger portion of meeting them given their direct bearing on national economic development and good governance.

Question No. 6

12. Which existing goals and targets (e.g. MDGs, goals and targets in Agenda 21, JPOI) do you think should be incorporated – perhaps in updated form – in a proposal for sustainable development goals?

Answer

13. In our view, this question preempts the discussion and somewhat beyond the understanding reached as Rio+20 Conference. The Question assumes that only SDGs would form UN Development Agenda, where as the understanding was that SDGs should be integrated in the UN Development Agenda, which in all probability would go beyond the SDGs.

14. While Pakistan does not dispute the importance of this question, it is critical to underline that there was no agreement whether MDGs and such goals would be incorporated in the SDGs.

15. Foregoing in view, it is important that this particular issue should be left to the Open working Group or the High Level Panel to resolve.

Question No. 7

16. What specific steps can be taken to ensure that SDGs are coherent with and integrated into the UN Development Agenda?

Answer

- a. Primarily, the SDGs should emerge as one of the main implementing modalities in the evolution and implementation of the UN Development Agenda.
- b. Secondly, SDGs should be evolved and adopted as an instrumentality by the UN System as whole including in particular the International Development Institutions/ IFIs and Multilateral Development Banks.

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- c. Thirdly, there should be midterm targets which each of the UN System entities including the BWIs and IFIs should endeavour to achieve.
 - d. Fourthly, the UN must evolve an effective monitoring process that should ensure that the targets both mid term and long term are being met.

Question No. 8

17. How should assessment of progress towards the achievement of the SDGs be carried out at the global level?

Answer

18. Pakistan firmly believes that international targets – even if voluntary in nature – must be measured. However, the measuring of these targets should be both bottom up and top down.

19. In this regards, we should seek to draw lessons from the implementation and measures of the Millennium Development Goals. We would urge the UN Secretariat to undertake a study in close cooperation with the UN Development Programme to present to the member states an effective process of measuring progress.

Question No. 9

20. What measure should be taken to make the progress of developing a proposal for SDGs inclusive and participatory? How should civil society and other relevant stakeholders be engaged?

Answer

21. There are three levels at which the inclusivity and participation can and must be ensured:

- a. Based on the understanding that we have had from the negotiations on this issue, the Open Working Group would be establishing expert panels on specific issues to secure input and additional guidance on any or more areas which would comprise as part of the SDGs. Pakistan would support the inclusion of civil society and other relevant experts (academia, private sector, and think tanks) in those expert groups.
- b. It is again understood from the agreement that there will be national level consultations to be conducted by the Open Working Group either directly or through the UN System as a whole. In this context, it will and have to be ensured that civil society voice is taken account of and not merely consulted after the government has completed its work.
- c. Pakistan would propose that the Open Working Group should evolve a “recourse mechanism” in which it should be able to receive comments/ views and the civil society and other stakeholders directly from the national level particularly if established national consultative process have questioned submission. It would be crucial to ensure that an accountability mechanism is established in this respect directly by the Open Working Group.

Question No. 10

22. What principles should underpin the development of SDGs? (the UNTT report, for example, recommended adding (i) reducing inequalities and (ii) promoting human rights (iii) ensuring sustainability;

Answer

23. Pakistan would support these principles. However, we believe that there is considerable scope to underpin additional principles. Pakistan, therefore, proposes to include the need for principles under each of the three pillars.

a. Social Pillar

- i) Reducing inequalities
- ii) Promoting human rights
- iii) Ensuring sustainability

b. Economic pillar

- i) Promoting equity between and amongst countries
- ii) Fostering opportunities of trade and not aid
- iii) Addressing volatility in the economic of commodity prices and markets
- iv) Preventing external debt crises

c. Environmental Pillar

- i) Promoting sustainable use of energy
- ii) Reducing burden of adaptation
- iii) Preserving and enhancing forests

Question No. 11

24. How should new global partnership for development be constructed within and around the SDGs?

Answer

25. Pakistan believes that the new global partnership for development be constructed around the institutional arrangements and outcomes of process that we agreed at Rio+20. Essentially three main developments should guide the evolution of new Global Partnership.

- a. The New Financing Strategy for Sustainable Development to be constructed through a Working Group should be the central piece of the global partnership.
- b. The strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme must lead to enhance provision of resources.
- c. The review and monitoring should be done through the High Level Forum on Sustainable Development.

26. Do you have any other observations, ideas; input you would like to offer to inform the initial work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

Answer

27. Pakistan will be submitting additional observations and ideas to be used as inputs for the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in due course.