



**Statement
By**

**H.E. Mr. Thomas Mayr Harting
Head of Delegation
Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

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

**United Nations
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Excellencies,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Acceding Country Croatia^{*}, the Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia^{*}, Montenegro^{*}, Iceland[†] and Serbia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Let me underline the strong determination of the EU and its Member States to work closely with partners towards the definition of global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such SDGs should be coherent with and integrated in the UN development agenda beyond 2015 with a view to an overarching framework for post-2015, without deviating efforts from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. In this respect, let me stress the need to effectively coordinate the work for development of the SDGs and for defining the post-2015 development agenda. Let me also reaffirm that the formulation of SDGs should be coherent with existing internationally agreed goals and targets. Undoubtedly, there is a fundamental link between ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future and we need collectively to reinforce this link in years ahead.

We consider that the SDGs should address and incorporate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced, holistic and coherent way. We believe that, while taking into account different national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities and levels of development, the SDGs should be

^{*}*Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

[†]*Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.*

global in nature and universally applicable to all countries, limited in number, action-oriented, easy to communicate and linked to concrete targets and indicators.

We look forward to the future proceedings of the group, in an inclusive and transparent way, with the input and support from the UN system. We welcome the initial report of the UN Secretary General and thank him for the mechanisms put in place to ensure this support. Our work in the Group needs to be informed by research-based evidence and expert analysis and inputs from the broadest possible range of stakeholders. We also welcome the progress made towards furthering discussions on the post 2015 development agenda including the work of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel and the wide-ranging national, thematic and regional consultations that are being led by the UN system. The EU and its Member States look forward to the outcomes from these various processes.

We are currently developing our common thinking and in this regard are committed to listen, consider, interact and assess proposals made by others. It is also in this spirit that we have shared our preliminary views last November in response to the questionnaire prepared by UN DESA.

In line with our clear position towards the definition of a comprehensive and coherent post 2015 framework, we would also welcome any preliminary contribution that the Open Working Group could provide to the September Special Event to follow up efforts towards achieving the MDGs.

Once more, the EU and its Member States are fully committed to work together with partners in the Open Working Group to contribute to the timely preparation of the report of the Group to the General Assembly at its 68th session.

Thank you.