

**Statement by Ambassador Sul Kyung-hoon
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea
2nd formal meeting of SDGs Open Working Group
Wednesay, 17 April 2013, New York**

Mr. Co-chair,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for organizing this 2nd meeting of the SDG Open Working Group (OWG) in an efficient manner.

Mr. Co-chair,

As we begin our substantive discussion on the conceptual issues of the SDGs, my delegation would like to reemphasize that Rio+20 Outcome Document should serve as our guiding principle.

The Rio+20 Outcome Document provided us with clear guidelines for the conceptualization of the SDGs. Among others, it states that the SDGs should be global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. It also states that the SDGs should address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their inter-linkages.

Mr. Co-chair,

We also believe that the SDGs should draw on the lessons learned from the MDGs. In this regard, we particularly appreciate the very informative analysis by the Technical Support Team on the MDGs' strengths and weaknesses as provided in the issue brief. While we agree with most of the analysis, we would like to highlight some areas for

consideration related to our MDG stocktaking.

First, we wish to note that the MDGs' weaknesses also serve as their strengths, and vice-versa. For example, the MDGs were criticized for lacking specific means and actions of implementation; such lack of specifics, however, allowed for policy space. On the other hand, the MDGs' simple and concise structure allowed them to be clear and easily communicable. As we take stock of the MDGs experience, it would be useful if we are cognizant of and to carefully evaluate such trade-offs.

Second, the MDGs are said to overlooked structural determinants of development and economic growth. In this respect, we are of the view that the SDGs need to reflect the role of economic growth and structural transformation in poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Thirdly, we believe that the SDGs should reflect concerns related to violence and conflict-affected countries. Special consideration should be given to fragile states along with other countries in special circumstances, such as SIDs, LDCs, and LLDCs.

Fourthly, the SDGs should build on existing framework and broaden forms of international cooperation, to effectively address new global challenges and respond to changing development landscape.

Mr. Co-chair,

With this in mind, let me provide some observations regarding our way forward.

First, in considering the framework for the SDGs, we believe that the SDGs could consist of both "stated development outcomes" and "drivers of change" or "processes". Outcome-focused goals are easily communicable and have the capacity to mobilize. However, we also recognize different circumstances that each country faces. In these areas,

“drivers of change” could serve as more effective or relevant goals.

Second, we note that it may be difficult to find priorities that are relevant for all countries. Choosing goals that could serve as priority areas for different set of countries may result in having an overly large set of goals which are not universal. As such, it would be best to formulate goals that sufficiently broadly cover most of the countries but allow differentiation in targets and indicators by country. In this regard, we would like to note that crafting differentiated targets would require delicate precision based on science-based data and information.

Third, with regards to means of implementation (MOI), we believe including MOIs as part of each and every SDG would not only be a problematic and extremely difficult exercise. It could also run the risk of “aggregation problem”. At a minimum, MOIs should be consistent with commitments that countries have already made in other fora.

Fourth, without doubt, balancing and integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in a single set of development goals will be a highly challenging work. We therefore believe it would be best to integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions within each SDG, wherever possible, such as for a goal on “sustainable energy for all”. Where this exercise cannot be done, or is not appropriate, we can compile a set or cluster of SDGs that each addresses different dimensions of sustainable development.

Finally, the Rio+20 Outcome Document indicated that SDGs are only a tool to help the world move towards poverty eradication and long-term sustainability. Achieving sustainable development requires a paradigm shift of economies and societies, including fundamental changes in production and consumption patterns. In this, we would like to emphasize the important role that inclusive green economy can play in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Mr. Co-Chair,

As you mentioned in the morning, we are now entering into uncharted road. In this regard, we sincerely hope that under your able leadership, diverse ideas and new thinking will be more actively encouraged, exchanged and explored in the course of our work.

Thank you.