

Saudi Arabia Intervention, Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
April 2nd, 2014

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair.

We will begin by discussing energy. It is in our view that access to energy plays an important role in development and that the Rio+20 summit recognizes its critical role. Considering that more than 1.3 billion people lack access to electricity and 2.7 billion lack clean cooking facilities, there is much work to be done. I will not reiterate the in depth statistics and data that we heard at the 5th session regarding the intersection of access to energy and a myriad of its developmental issues such as health, water and food security, gender equality and poverty eradication.

Nevertheless, It is clear that energy has numerous interlinkages with many crucial developmental issues. Thus, Energy should not be a standalone goal but rather be included in targets across the board to limit its negative impacts.

Mr. Co-Chair,

More specifically, in addressing the focus areas document from March 19th, we have some comments regarding energy.

- We support point a) “ensuring universal access, for both women and men, to modern energy services”
- We would like point B to use the agreed upon language from Rio and Johannesburg and thus, it should read “greater reliance on advanced energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies” (para 127) and remove any specific mention of “low or zero-emissions technologies”
- We would like to remove point E, regarding fossil fuel subsidies as we believe this is policy prescriptive and hence against the agreed understanding of the SDGs purpose. Moreover, countries’ sovereignty should not be impeded and their right

to development should be respected. Fossil fuel subsidies may hinder the development of countries, especially developing ones. In addition, there are no agreements or clear definitions as to what subsidies entail.

- We emphasize point F and G and believe that technology transfer and capacity building is crucial as well as finance mobilization for technology.

On Economic Growth, Industrialization, and Infrastructure:

These three topics are very important to development and without their respective implementation, sustainable development is not possible. As it has been mentioned on how thoroughly they interact, we are still waiting to see how and where they should be placed within the SDG framework. However, we do emphasize that they need to be present as either goals or targets.

On economic growth, we align ourselves with those that highlighted the importance of economic diversification, including technological support. This would not only serve as a platform for growth, but for sustainable development.