

**Statement by Ambassador Sul Kyung-hoon
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea
1st formal meeting of SDGs Working Group
Thursday, 14 March 2013, New York**

President of the General Assembly,
Secretary-General,
Mr. Co-chairs,

At the outset, I would like to warmly welcome the first formal meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. I would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing today's meeting, and congratulate the two co-chairs on their appointment. As we begin this journey to uncharted territory, I am confident that the co-chairs will lead us toward the groundbreaking achievement of the SDGs that we not only want, but also need. This SDGs WG, which should have been constituted by the 67th General Assembly, is now long overdue. As such, I truly hope that today's meeting will not only kick-start, but also expedite the process of the SDGs Working Group.

Just as the MDGs have been an invaluable tool in focusing and mobilizing our collective global development efforts over the last decade, the Republic of Korea believes that the SDGs will also play a vital role in securing focused and coherent attention and action on sustainable development in the post-2015 period.

The SDGs are one of the most important outcomes of Rio+20, and, as such, Rio's outcome document should serve as the guiding principle in our efforts to develop the SDGs. In Rio, we agreed that the SDGs should integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner, and also prove to be global in both their nature and universal applicability. In order to ensure that the SDGs are universally applicable, the goals' priority areas should be wide in scope and relevant to all countries. However, we note that the SDGs can have different implications for different countries, depending on their national realities, capacities, and levels of development. In this regard, particular attention should be paid to countries in special circumstances including the LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, and those in Africa.

However, the SDGs should not divert our focus or efforts from the achievement of the MDGs. Indeed, we must stay focused on meeting MDGs as their target dates approaches. Greater progress towards the MDGs will fuel confidence and mobilize critical support for the ambitious SDGs and the larger post-2015 Development Agenda. As such, the SDGs should be coherent and integrated with the UN development agenda beyond 2015, with a view towards developing an overarching framework for the post-2015 era.

Mr. Co-chairs,

In light of these historic tasks ahead of us, my delegation places the utmost importance on the following points.

First, the Republic of Korea wants to highlight priority areas that must be addressed through the SDGs. The Rio+20 outcome document provides a solid foundation on thematic/sectoral priority areas. Among these, however, the Republic of Korea places particular emphasis on four priority areas. These include poverty eradication, energy, water, and food security—with poverty eradication being our highest priority and overarching goal.

Furthermore, we are also focusing on other important cross-cutting issues, including education, gender equality, climate change, job creation, and green economy. In particular, we would like to recall that the Rio+20 outcome document recognized “green economy” as one of the important tools available for achieving sustainable development.

Second, in addition to defining what to achieve, we need to identify exactly how we are going to achieve the SDGs. In light of this, the means of implementation and partnership are of critical importance to the success of the SDGs. Given the magnitude of the financing needs that accompany sustainable development, we need significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, as well as effective use of financing in order to prompt sustainable development.

In Rio, we committed to reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development. It is necessary to form a new global partnership where a wide range of development actors can participate. As such, my delegation feels that it would be beneficial to utilize existing partnership mechanisms, such as the Busan Global Partnership, rather than establish a completely new one.

Third, for successful implementation of the SDG, we need to establish a robust review and monitoring mechanism. Progress towards the achievement of the SDGs needs to be assessed and accompanied by appropriate measurable targets and indicators. ECOSOC and the to-be-newly-established High Level Political Forum should be the principle bodies for review and monitoring of the SDGs. The ongoing discussion on ECOSOC reform and the establishment of the HLPF should incorporate these functions to assess and lay the groundwork for the achievement of the SDGs.

Fourth, the SDGs process should be open, inclusive, transparent, and effective. It is essential that the work of the OWG be informed by research-based evidence and expert analysis. In this respect, multiple stakeholders should be consulted throughout the

entirety of the SDG development process. Indeed, their participation in the works of the OWG and via consultation made through online platform is absolutely necessary during this process.

Finally, increased work related to sustainable development is already underway, such as the HLPF, the committee on development financing strategy, and the GA's Special Event on MDG progress, to name just a few. In all of these settings, we need to ensure effective coordination and coherence so that they can provide invaluable input to the Post-2015 Development Agenda while simultaneously avoiding an overlap of work and unneeded duplicity. In this regard, the leadership of the UN Secretary-General and the role of the UN Secretariat will be critical moving forward.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

Let me conclude by reemphasizing the Republic of Korea's strong commitment to, and active participation in, the Open Working Group on the SDGs.

Thank you.