

**Statement by Austria**

Mr Co-Chair,

Austria fully supports the statement made by the distinguished representative of the European Union earlier today.

At the outset, allow me to express Austria's appreciation for your continued and steady efforts and leadership. The revised version of the focus area document is again a very good basis for the coming more detailed discussions.

Before turning to today's focus areas, let me address a few points concerning the Focus Areas Document as a whole:

1. Austria supports a rights based approach for the future SDGs based on the universality and indivisibility of human rights and the principles of inclusion and participation in decision-making processes; non-discrimination, equality and equity; transparency and accountability. This implies that human rights are used as a binding legal framework (with a focus on core human rights obligations) and apply minimum thresholds for the progressive realization of rights. We call for human rights to be mainstreamed throughout the goals of the new development agenda and into all targets. Consequently, targets and indicators should be framed to ensure that we are measuring qualitative progress, instead of merely quantity. Further, the monitoring and reporting system of the future post 2015 framework should be interlinked with existing human rights monitoring mechanisms.
2. Following the cancellation of focus area 12 (promote equality) the rights and concerns of vulnerable and/or marginalized groups, in particular children and persons with disabilities, are not reflected adequately in the new document. Consequently the rights of vulnerable and/or marginalized groups should be mainstreamed throughout the new focus areas. Therefore we believe that especially the rights and concerns of people with disabilities should be better reflected in the focus areas concerning poverty eradication, health and employment. Further, Austria proposes a separate goal on children as well as mainstreaming children into the post-2015 agenda. In this context we furthermore ask the Co-Chairs to place a priority, in particular, on meeting the needs and rights for girls, who experience some of the most severe discrimination and yet play an essential role in the achievement of sustainable development.
3. Capacity development is key for all focus areas and should be facilitated for all stakeholders, especially at sub-national level. In this respect, strengthening capacities and capabilities should not be limited to civil servants (public sector) but also address the requirements of civil society and the private sector.

4. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities should under no circumstances be expanded to the SDGs or the post-2015-agenda as a whole. It should be limited to its original context of environmental degradation and also reflect the evolution of it.

### **Focus area 1. Poverty eradication, building shared prosperity and promoting equality**

Mr Co-Chair,

Concerning today's focus area, Austria welcomes the prominent role of extreme poverty eradication and the consideration of disparities and relative poverty, including in developed countries in the new Focus Areas Document. It is important to recognize that poverty is a complex and worldwide challenge that needs multidimensional, sustainable solutions. We therefore appreciate the inclusion of social protection and social protection floors by the Co-Chairs but believe that social protection coverage should also explicitly refer to persons with disabilities

Let me add one comment to the Focus area Poverty Eradication: Point f) is appreciated, but should be completed by "access to services and benefits", which includes education and health.

We therefore propose that paragraph f) reads as follows: "ensure equality of economic opportunity for all women and men, including secure rights to own land, property and other productive assets and access to services and benefits for all women and men."

### **Focus area 2. Sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition**

Mr Co-Chair,

Concerning the second focus area under discussion, "sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition", we support the suggested actions and appreciate the inclusion of resilience.

However, Austria is convinced that the issues of food sovereignty, land tenure, post-harvest losses and food waste are not only important to tackle the problem of climate change, but also to eradicate poverty. Therefore Austria believes that the deletion of those issues from the focus area should be reconsidered.

Having in mind the importance mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment throughout the whole document, on target b) we would like to add: "and maternal malnutrition."