

**Written Submission by the Philippines on the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations
(Stock-taking Session) 19-21 January 2015, New York**

1. The Philippines concurs with the general objective of attaining a just, equitable and inclusive society for all. To achieve this, it is indeed important to strive for people-centered sustainable development with active engagement of all stakeholders.
2. In this stock-taking Session, the establishment of a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) should be grounded on respect for universal human rights and the effective eradication of extreme poverty with a mutually agreed timeline among countries (Goal 1), where the SDGS are guided by a set of outcomes applicable to all;
3. We believe that for sustainable development to be effective, cooperation among member countries is necessary. This however, should not only be limited to the traditional development cooperation through financial flows/aids. It has to be in tandem with other forms of cooperation (knowledge sharing, capacity building, and technology transfer, among others, that can have a positive impact on both poverty eradication and sustainable development, and takes into consideration country needs and priorities. SDG goals should also reflect how the system will enable and support other development actors. To this end, we need to explore innovative ways to effectively work with other stakeholders as inclusive as possible, to include the poor, those with disabilities, women, civil society, indigenous and local communities, multilateral institutions, the business community, and private philanthropy.
4. The Philippines believes that the main consideration for an effective, global monitoring and accountability framework for sustainable development is to establish mutually-agreed upon targets, both for advanced countries and for developing nations which they can deliver and sustain. Shared accountability among donor countries and aid-recipient countries could be the main component in this accountability and monitoring framework, as this will facilitate effectiveness of development assistance and aid efficiency. Likewise, an effective mechanism on reporting national results could be established in order to ensure accurate transmission of results to the global framework.

Thus, the formulation of clear, measurable and verifiable Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), harmonized with the post-2015 development agenda would translate into regional and national priorities. The realization of these goals should be attained at the local level and should result in improved well-being of people at the grassroots level. Mechanisms, system and structures, anchored on the principles of good governance, would support local actions for sustainable development.

5. There is a need for countries to be aware that they set their own national targets – taking into account country contexts and national circumstances – while being guided by global level ambitions. Accordingly, it should be made clear that in assessing each country's progress in attaining the SDGs, the basis will be the country targets and not the global targets; this has been a source of confusion in the country-reporting

of their Millennium Development Goals. That is to say, discussions on the attainment of the SDGs should include lessons learned from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) such as the importance of ensuring the capacity and commitment of all concerned government agencies and local officials in an SDG project implementation.

While the Philippines recognize that the goals and targets of the SDGs are essentially aspirational, we deem it necessary that the global performance in attaining the MDG targets be considered as well (i.e., should we be realistic or continue to be ambitious with the goals and targets which, based on performance in attaining the MDGs, seemed unattainable within 15 years?).

6. In planning for attaining the resulting SDGs, the Philippines notes that the investments/support should be in accordance with the national plans and programmes. In this, we should strive for official development assistance (ODA) to be properly coordinated with the national governments since bypassing country systems and not coordinating with the central governments tend to overburden the local government units being tapped by external development partners to carry out the development tasks.
7. On a larger perspective on SDG targets, the Philippines suggests the (a) un-bundling of targets to make them more doable, and (b) that the SDGs targets be made more specific and more quantifiable to facilitate better implementation and monitoring.
8. The Philippine is deeply appreciative of the recognition given to migrant workers' concerns in the SDG targets. However, the protection of the rights and well-being of families of migrant workers was not given its due attention in the SDGs. It should be noted that apart from the migrant workers themselves, their families, particularly those that are living with them in a foreign country, also require protection (i.e., against discrimination). The new SDGS may well address the concerns of migrant workers' families or be reflected in the SDG targets.
9. The Philippines believes that sustainable development is not achievable with the existence of wide disparities among countries. Hence, we strongly support the inclusion of a goal on reducing inequality within and among countries, including gender gaps.
10. With the increase in the number of goals (17 goals), and 169 targets, there would be a resulting increase in the actual number of indicators of the SDGs. Accordingly, the Philippines believes that there is a need to further strengthen the capacities of national statistical agencies to ensure the production/availability of evidence-based, high quality, and internationally comparable data.

11. The Philippines further believes that while the entire set of 17 Goals and 169 Targets should no longer be subject to any re-negotiations, there still are sound, practical reasons for merging some targets and goals or refining their language. For instance, Targets 3.3 a Targets 3.4 could be merge. Or that Goal 4.4 –“To increase by (x) percent, the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment “. It would be quite difficult to operationalize “relevant skills” as they need to be defined based on country context or globally, based on local demand versus global demand.
12. The Philippines further notes that all the 17 Goals and 169 Targets, would require national governments to address the issue of setting priorities for these SDGs Goals and Targets, as to their urgency, planning, and implementation requirements, allocating investment and national funding support and/or sourcing for official development assistance. Likewise, the ensuing large numbers of Indicators would place enormous burdens on national governments whether they be in planning for the SDGs, implementing the SDGS or monitoring the SDGs.