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Post 2015 Stocktaking Session: Integrating sustainable development goals and targets into the post-2015 development agenda

Statement by Kushla Munro, Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

As delivered

Yesterday Australia expressed its views on the declaration and therefore, in the interests of time, we will focus our intervention on the goals and targets.

The SDGs and targets lie at the core of the post-2015 development agenda and the outcome of the Open Working Group provides a good basis for how we will consider the goals and targets into the final post-2015 agenda.

We anticipate that the targets will influence policies and budgets worth trillions of dollars and affect the lives of billions of people.

All countries, including my own, will need to translate the targets to their own national circumstances so it's important, therefore, that we get the targets in the best possible shape.

This will be central to ensuring the effectiveness and credibility of the post-2015 agenda.

For these reasons, alongside many other parties in this room, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation to undertake a technical review of the OWG targets.

We do note, however, the concerns expressed by a number of colleagues to preserve the balance and integrity of the OWG proposal.

In charting a way forward, we need to manage the tension between these concerns and the need to undertake the technical assessment of the targets.

In doing so we should remember that there is a very high level of consensus on many of the goals in the OWG outcome, in particular those building on the MDGs.

Therefore, as a way forward, we would like to propose that the UN task team be asked to bring forward a technical analysis of the targets under a subset of goals that enjoy a high level of consensus — namely poverty, food security, education, water, and economic growth.

Further we propose that this should be based on simple and clear criteria, including whether each individual target is:

- quantified and measurable; and
- consistent with existing international commitments and latest evidence

We would expect that this analysis would enable Member States to gain a better appreciation of the technical work and how this would aid a more effective post-2015 outcome.

On this basis we would suggest that this initial analysis be made available to Member States in time for the February session of the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations.

If agreed as a way forward, the UN Task Team's analysis should be coordinated with the work of the UN Statistical Commission on indicators.

We look forward to receiving progress reports from the UN Statistical Commission on this work but agree with others that the indicators are a technical exercise and should not be negotiated in the intergovernmental process.

Co-facilitators,

We benefitted greatly from the input of external experts and organisations during the OWG process. Our final suggestion is that we invite to our session on the goals and targets in March, senior political and/or bureaucratic figures to gain their insights on how they would approach the implementation of the draft post 2015 framework.

Understanding how different countries would translate as many as 17 goals and 169 targets to their national circumstances, both the opportunities and challenges, would be instructive; particularly if we heard perspectives from LDCs, as well as from emerging and developed economies.

Thank you.