



B E L A R U S

Please check against delivery

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda
Third session

New York, March 26, 2015

STATEMENT

by Valentin RYBAKOV
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Belarus

Results of the open working group on sustainable development goals currently constitute the key arrangement in the run-up to the summit.

We all, however, understand that, as is the case with any compromise between the interests of the various parties, the current SDG list, although a very important one, should not perhaps be regarded as a perfect document. In addition to its volume, the potential difficulty with the perception of the SDGs is that not all of the issues discussed in the working group have been reflected in the group's final document. Belarus, for instance, not only repeatedly expressed concerns, but also made specific proposals for reflection in the SDGs the issues of the family as a factor of sustainable development. A number of parties, on the contrary, may not be entirely satisfied with the inclusion in the list of goals of the topics that have only an indirect relationship to development.

After all, list of goals is not a sacred text, but rather an assistance tool for governments wishing to check their priorities and actions against the global average.

In this context the main task of all our countries will be the actual accomplishment of the SDGs based on national priorities with the help of clear indicators. Whereas the task of the UN system will be to provide the most effective assistance in bringing the new development agenda to life.

By approving the new development agenda at the summit, our heads of states and governments will have to present the SDGs as the most technical part of the agenda with plain human language. Any globally important issues that concern the peoples of our countries, can be given due consideration at the summit and its outcomes. Summit's outcome document should allow such possibility, whether in the declaration part or in the introduction to the sustainable development goals and targets. This approach could contribute to the unifying nature of the new agenda.

Discussion on future indicators requires a few comments.

First, the work on possible universal indicators that countries may use at their discretion should be done for reference purposes. We understand that such work has already been launched within the UN Statistical Commission with participation of national statistical bodies. We invite the Statistical Commission to give due priority to this work and to report to member states on its progress.

Second, we should carefully examine the extent to which it is possible to have a single set of indicators, that countries with the variety of their challenges and priorities could use to check their sustainable development progress. In our view, it would be justified if the relevant UN structures, Secretariat would ensure the comprehensive support to member states, for example, through

appropriate projects, in developing their national indicators that would be fully reasonable in view of country priorities.

Let me take this opportunity to inform the participants in the negotiations that Belarus takes necessary preparatory steps for the adoption and national implementation of the new sustainable development agenda.

In February, the government of Belarus endorsed the national sustainable development strategy for the period up to 2030. The strategy was prepared by the government with the participation of NGOs, business community, academia and international organizations. This document sets conceptual vision for long-term economic, social and environmental development. It will serve as a strategic framework for the preparation of national programmes and estimates, including in the context of the implementation of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

In the period prior to the implementation of the new agenda Belarus intends to pursue an active preparatory work, including in the sphere of capacity building and exchange of experience. In January 2015, an international conference in Minsk with the participation of UN agencies and partner countries examined the new perspectives and opportunities of technical cooperation between Belarus and the United Nations. Later in April, Belarus will host an international conference on innovative industrial development in middle-income countries. These and other activities will be focused on the period after 2015, including the future implementation of the SDGs.