

Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiation Process
U.S. Introductory Statement
As delivered by Tony Pipa, U.S. Lead Negotiator
January 19, 2015

Thank you Co-Facilitators for the work you have done to get us to this productive starting point. We know we are in good hands with your leadership, and look forward to working closely with you and all of our colleagues here today over these coming and enormously important months.

The energy here today is palpable, and demonstrates what an electrifying time it is to work on these issues. As other colleagues, have mentioned, the Millennium Development Goals set us on a path to remarkable and sustained progress, and gave us a model for the effective and transformative use of the multilateral system. The Rio+20 Conference then reaffirmed, recharged, and rightly broadened our commitment to sustainable development – inclusive of environmental sustainability and focused centrally on poverty eradication. Both the MDG and Rio+20 lineage gives our global community a common purpose and voice, and we must use their lessons wisely.

As Nancy Birdsall mentioned, it is really fitting that this discussion kicks off on the day when we here in the U.S. celebrate the work and life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., given his legacy on improving the lives of all people and his advocacy for justice, peace, and opportunity. Our mandate is to build upon the successes of Rio+20 and the MDGs, and to **define an inspirational, affirmative, and clear vision for the future – one that citizens the world over can easily understand and grasp; one that is deeply grounded in the best evidence; and one that is practical and drives action.** The challenges confronting humanity continue to increase in their complexity and gravity, and once again the multi-lateral system must rise to the test. Only through collective action can we deliver on the hope for a better future that drives this agenda.

We begin with widespread global attention rightly focused on what we undertake here today, given, as we have said before, the truly unprecedented opportunity before us: to put an end to extreme poverty—which would be a breathtaking achievement—while protecting and preserving the planet’s resources; to reduce inequality in all of our societies and tackle environmental sustainability as a fundamental part of these efforts; to empower women and girls – indeed, to mobilize the talents and resources of the multitude of actors that must work in partnership to deliver on this agenda, which in addition to governments includes civil society, businesses, universities, our faith institutions, and citizens across the world; and to learn from years of development experience and apply those lessons to help us go even further. We recognize that success requires this agenda to be universally applied, with responsibilities shared and cooperation greater than ever before. The US is committed at the highest levels to be a strong partner in defining and implementing an agenda that fulfills this promise.

Let me now just offer some brief initial views on how to organize ourselves to get there. We all know well that we face a crush of concurrent processes, high-level events,

and dialogues. We must therefore be strategic and disciplined about how we use our time here.

To maintain maximum focus, we recommend three guiding principles: 1) use evidence as our **guide** and implementation as our **goal**, 2) avoid duplication with other key processes, and 3) be iterative and flexible as we move forward toward a zero draft.

First, on **evidence**. We have built an immense repertoire of knowledge and experience over the last decades about what works and what doesn't, and what actions produce durable results. That knowledge applies to every element of this agenda – from our narrative to our goals and targets to our monitoring mechanisms to our implementation processes.

In our view, therefore, **our sessions should focus explicitly and transparently on surfacing the latest and best knowledge and evidence for each element of our agenda and test it against the targets we already have through a technical review.** In practical terms, we have a good model for doing this from the stocktaking sessions of the Open Working Group. Institutionally and geographically diverse experts briefed and dialogued with us on the whole range of thematic issues to be tackled within this agenda. They were interactive, allowing all Member States to engage directly and from this, to land on relevant proposals, solutions and approaches. We have not yet had this opportunity however on the topics of our coming sessions.

We therefore recommend several sessions over the coming four months focused on the science of development, of implementation, and of monitoring. Knowing well that this agenda will rise or fall on the extent to which it can be implemented, we would recommend that throughout each topic, we maintain a focus on what will drive action and achieve results. We will offer specific examples and recommendations for this as we discuss the particular elements in future sessions throughout this week.

Second, regarding **duplication of work**, we appreciate the efforts you have already undertaken to align our process and create synergies with preparations for the Financing for Development and Climate Conferences. We hope that we will be able to design our sessions with this same thoughtful coordination.

One possible approach - which we will build out further tomorrow in the Means of Implementation session - is to discuss the various elements of MOI and Global Partnership – financing, science and technology, and policy enablers - within the context of the FFD Conference, while using our sessions here to surface additional, critical thinking about implementation writ large. We strongly believe it would be valuable to hear from the ministers, mayors, small business owners and others who will have to implement this agenda, as well as from experts in implementation science from a variety of fields. We think there is considerable potential for new learning and added value in this space.

Third, as I close these remarks, we want to emphasize the importance of **flexibility**. Evidence about policy implementation in every sphere tells us that flexibility, adaptation, and evidence-driven learning is crucial. If our goal here is to surface the best ideas and approaches – no matter the source – then we will need an approach that can be adapted as our individual and collective knowledge grows.

Mr. Co-Facilitator, the work ahead is ambitious, and at times daunting, but we have a strong foundation on which to build. We must engage and secure the commitment of our capitals – you have ours at the highest level – and we look forward to reaching agreement on an agenda next September worthy not only of our heads of state and government but ultimately of all our citizens.

Thank you.