

Statement of Iceland for the discussion on the Declaration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

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Co-facilitators

At the outset, let me thank you for the thoughtful paper on the possible technical revision of targets from the Open Working Group proposal. We realize that this is a complex exercise given the delicate balance of the OWG goals and targets and we appreciate the restraint that you have shown in outlining the targets that will need to be updated.

It is important to note that at the time of their adoption, the goals and targets of the OWG were not seen as a final product, but were adopted under the assumption that they could be further refined. This is evident from the last meeting of the OWG as well as from the fact that the GA decided to use its report as the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals in the post-2015 development agenda, allowing for the consideration of other inputs as well. Another detail that clearly reveals the non-finite nature of the outcome document is the fact that many targets still contained X-s.

While we recognize the delicate balance achieved in the OWG outcome, Iceland is of the view that our collective credibility relies on us making the necessary refinements to the targets to eliminate inconsistencies. This can be done without reopening the agreement of the OWG outcome. Let us be clear: Iceland hears it loud and clear that the co-facilitators do not view the proposed revisions as a precedent for further revisions to come. This is simply to ensure that we have a factually and legally credible text to present to the summit.

Let me highlight a couple of revisions from your list:

Target 3.6: The initial target of halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020, was initially a typo in the OWG outcome. As it stands the target is not realistic. Although we want our agenda to be ambitious, unrealistic goals face the risk of being abandoned. We fully agree with the proposed revision and the co-facilitators' reasoning.

Target 15.3: This target is revised under the criteria of specificity and indeed the deadline for achieving this target was moved from 2030 in OWG 11 to 2020 in the outcome. As one of the initial proponents of this target, we believe this was also a typo that must be corrected. The vision for a land-degradation neutral world originates from "the future we want" and such a recent commitment will not be achievable in five years' time. In fact, the same logic applies to this target as the previous one: unrealistic goals face the risk of being abandoned. Iceland therefore supports this revision.

Target 14.c: We appreciate the inclusion of this target in the co-facilitators' revision. As noted in their explanatory rationale the target is not consistent with international law as it was phrased in the OWG outcome. The revised language, although not perfect, better reflects that UNCLOS is the codification of customary international law and is applied by most states, including states non-party to the convention. Meanwhile, the proposed revision, like the existing agreed language on the subject, does not change in any way the legal status of states that have not recognized the Convention.

Furthermore, Iceland also supports all the revisions made for specificity, in particular those that remove the Xs that remained in the document.