

**Statement of the United States of America
for the Technical Review of Targets Session
of the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiation Process
Follow-Up and Review Session
May 20, 2015**

**As delivered by
Mr. Tony Pipa, U.S. Coordinator
for the Post-2015 Development Agenda**

Thank you Mr. Co-Facilitator, for this revised paper and the opportunity to speak again to the clarity, consistency, and technical rigor of our agenda, and thank you also to the Technical Task Team for the considerable work they have undertaken to advance this discussion. We are also grateful for the briefing we just received and appreciate the efforts of the Statistical Commission for their ongoing - and forthcoming - work on indicators, which will be vital for assessing our own progress and knowing when we're falling short and need to double down on our efforts.

At the heart of this dialogue today is the path set for us by the our common history: From Rio+20, our directive to create goals that are **“action-oriented, concise, and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries.”** And from our experience with the Millennium Development Goals, we have learned well that the targets that most clearly and precisely communicate what we are trying to achieve are also those that are most likely to maximize and mobilize joint action and which give us the best chance to ultimately achieve our goals.

As a result, we have long believed that early and iterative work to ensure the clarity and implementability of our targets - to solidify a convincing rationale for how they will each drive action and achieve results - is the surest way to reach the ambitious aspirations we are setting out for ourselves and that we all hold for our work here.

It is for this reason that we recognize the strong foundation and formidable evidence base that the Open Working Group has bestowed upon us. And it is also for this reason that we welcome now the robust efforts and conversation

begun by the TST, which we believe has resulted in real improvement to our agenda.

The nature of this work has demonstrated clearly to us that improvement is possible, critical, and motivating in its own right – and further that it can be done in a way that builds upon, rather than shakes or undermines, our strong foundation of prior progress.

We see this contribution to be a thought-provoking and important starting point to an essential conversation. We will speak briefly now to the substance of the 21 targets, but hope and intend, as we and others have said from the outset, that we continue to iteratively and continually ground our thinking in the best available evidence and experience – and that we remain open to new approaches and proposals as our work continues, to ensure the consistency, clarity, and implementability of the targets that we present to our leaders, so we are enabling a strong global commitment to end extreme poverty, leave no one behind, and ensure sustainable development.

Now to a few specific points:

- First, we believe that **many of these changes offer genuine, apolitical, and technical improvements to our agenda.** As the criteria suggest, they bring several targets in closer alignment with international agreement and better define an ambitious path to success. Examples include targets 3.2 and 6.3.
- Second, we appreciate the care with which the co-facilitators have chosen and presented these suggested improvements. We do see areas to **improve consistency in the application of the co-facilitators' criteria.** As we have argued from the outset, criteria for technical updates should be as held to an objective and consistent application. As such, we would hope that target 3.b be made coherent with existing international agreement – in this case the 2001 Doha Declaration – as described. In this same spirit, while the connection between humanitarian assistance and long-term sustainable development is among our government's highest priorities, on the principles that underlie this review, we do not see a technical rationale for the addition of humanitarian assistance in targets 1.5 and 11.5.

- Third, we support wholeheartedly the report's efforts to change "x%'s" to clear and specific benchmarks. We find that works best in areas where specificity has resulted in recommendations of relative improvement, as in the MDGs and as the in the recommendation of target 6.3, where "x%" is replaced with a clear and ambitious, but achievable "doubling of water recycling and reuse." In other areas, where the "x%" has been changed to absolute ambition, we would not want the change to have the unintended effect of making progress against the target a lesser priority in favor of more achievable targets.

In closing, it is precisely this kind of dialogue and review of our collective, strong work to date that will help us arrive at the strongest possible final product, and set us on the best path for ending extreme poverty and driving the fundamental change and progress we all seek to achieve. Thank you.