



Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Fifth Session

Goals, targets and indicators

New York, 21 May 2015

Statement by Switzerland

Thank you Co-Facilitators,

As we have already stated in March, Switzerland considers the proposal of the Open Working Group on SDGs (OWG) on **goals and targets** the best possible outcome, balancing the interests of all member states. The goals and targets set our collective ambition and we therefore also consider that the reservations made last year do not constitute an intrinsic part of the OWG proposal.

We thank the Co-Facilitators for the proposal on the revision of certain targets. In our view, any proposed change must not touch the **substantial content** of the OWG proposal as doing so would endanger the political balance of the SDG-proposal. The proposed changes should therefore *exclusively* focus on **increasing coherence and clarity** of the SDGs **for more effective implementation** of the goal framework, consistent with international agreements.

As other delegations have stressed, changes proposed may not lower the **level of ambition** of the OWG targets, based on “technical” arguments of clarity or feasibility.

With this in mind, we would support possible changes to the OWG proposal, but **only under the condition** that the **scope** of the exercise is limited to the following two instances:

- a) Where targets contain an “**x**” **value**, we welcome proposals to quantify these, based on the existing levels of ambition and agreements or commitments as well as the expert advice of the UN system.
- b) Where targets **contradict or fall below existing international agreements or commitments** (for example concerning ambition, scope, degree of participation or the like) wording should be amended only in order to *raise* the level of ambition.
 - As was stressed by the EU and others, the proposed changes to the targets in **goal 15** still appear to lower the ambition of agreed Aichi targets. We would therefore prefer to stick to the proposal of the Open Working Group referring to the Aichi target date 2020.
 - Also with regard to **target 6.6** we prefer to keep the timeline of 2020, while reminding you of the difficult discussion we had in a specific breakout group of the OWG on transboundary water cooperation, which we facilitated, and in which member states also agreed on the proposed formulation of target 6.6.

Where we cannot agree, the **fallback option** would be the Open Working Group proposal. The changes proposed would therefore be a matter of “**take-it-or-leave-it**” and not re-open the substance for discussion.

Secondly, on **indicators**:

We welcome the update given by the UN Statistical Commission on the state of the ongoing work. Switzerland is convinced that indicators must be elaborated by statisticians and experts in a **transparent** manner, and today’s meeting is a good example of how transparency can be reached.

Indicators are the backbone of monitoring and review of the SDGs and crucial for successful implementation of the agenda. Therefore, they must reflect the **ambitious political will** expressed in the respective targets.

Concretely, we would therefore expect that the **Post-2015 Outcome Document** will contain the following elements:

- It must recall the importance of a **robust set of indicators**, based on an indicator framework, as crucial to ensure effective monitoring and ultimately effective implementation of the agenda.
- Based also on paragraph 38 of the Rio+20 document, it must give the UN Statistics Commission a **clear mandate** to elaborate an indicator framework and a set of indicators based in the ambitious SDGs, based on the **roadmap** as approved by the UN Statistical Commission at its 46th session, and to be adopted at its 47th session.
- Thirdly, the Outcome Document must also call for the UN Statistical Commission in fulfilling its mandate, to **monitor progress** on the global indicators and report on progress towards the goals and targets at the global level through building up a **global database**, in close collaboration with national statistics offices, the UN system and other providers of relevant data, in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the **Interagency and Expert Group on SDG indicators**.

Finally, the Outcome Document should also underline the importance of strengthening the **statistical capacity** in countries. In this regard, such a step is important for **transformation also in the statistical world**, respectively the need for **new approaches**, including integrated monitoring for sustainable development. Strengthening capacities should be understood as **strengthening existing systems**, respectively be part of *ongoing* monitoring efforts at the different levels.

Thank you.