

Statement delivered by Amb. Guillermo Rishchynski, Permanent Representative, Canada
Session on the Declaration– February 17, 2015

Mr. le Co-President,

Tout d'abord, je souhaite vous remercier pour le document sur les éléments de la déclaration. Le Canada croit qu'il s'agit d'un fondement utile en vue de nos discussions de la semaine. Permettez-moi de faire valoir les points suivants en lien avec la déclaration.

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Arguably our most challenging task, and one highlighted by Ambassador Kamau at the close of our Stocktaking Session, is to mobilize the world. The Declaration must inspire our leaders, governments at all levels, civil society, the private sector, and – importantly – ordinary people. A short, tightly focused and easily communicated Declaration will help us get there.

- At the outset, we should define the greatest global challenge to which this Agenda is responding – that of eradicating poverty.
- To frame the Agenda, Canada encourages the Co-Facilitators to weave a narrative on the basis of the six essential elements from the Secretary General's Synthesis Report. We agree with the view that the integrated nature of the Agenda should be reflected in this narrative; we just need to do this in a clear and concise way.
- And while the term "*essential elements*" is adequately functional, Canada believes we can find more inspiring language. For example, some have proposed referring to "*six imperatives*" or "*six keys*". There are most certainly other possibilities, and we would welcome a creative solution to this.
- As noted in January's session, we should also be thinking about a new title for our Agenda. While the name "Post-2015 Development Agenda" may serve our purpose for now, it will not be an inspiring choice once the Agenda has been finalized, nor would it make much sense in 2020. We would suggest "crowdsourcing" a title – this would engage stakeholders, build enthusiasm, and foster a sense of anticipation in the lead-up to the September Summit.

One important role the Declaration needs to play is to briefly contextualize our Post-2015 Agenda – that is, highlight how we got here, recognize the progress we've made, and acknowledge where we have fallen short. This should be at the forefront of the Declaration, and not at the end. In this context, as many in this room have previously noted, we should underscore the importance of completing the unfinished business of the MDGs, especially regarding maternal and child health. We should also acknowledge the critical role that sustainable economic growth plays in lifting people out of poverty.

Canada believes we need a Declaration rooted in a strong foundation of human rights. It needs to emphasize our collective commitment to focus on gender equality and women's empowerment. We must re-affirm our commitment to the world's poorest and most vulnerable, so that we "leave no one behind". In practical terms this means that no target be considered met unless met by the lowest quintile of the global population.

Lastly, as the elements paper implies, the Declaration should include concise references to the main chapters of the Agenda. In particular, Canada would support a strong reference to the

inclusion of a robust, effective, participatory and inclusive accountability framework for follow-up and review.

Finally, allow me to conclude with a few points on process, and one observation:

We appreciate the explanation provided by the co-facilitators on the programme that has been put forward and the fact that it is flexible and that we will not be negotiating at this early stage.

We continue to believe it will be critical to have clear parameters set in relation to this 'draft Declaration', or 'partial draft' as it has been called. We all need to be clear about the status of this document, and what will happen to it once this session concludes. And to the extent possible, we would prefer to have an elaborated Elements Paper rather than move directly to a draft declaration. While it may seem like semantics, these are important issues that will influence the atmosphere and tenor of our negotiations going forward.

We are also very keen to get some clarification on the work being done by experts in preparation for the March session, and hope that we can dedicate some time this week for a briefing on the work that is being done in advance of this session. If there is any flexibility in revisiting the program, we would encourage the co-facilitators to consider devoting some time to shed some light on the ongoing work regarding targets and indicators.

As we stressed during the stocktaking session, we will need to be disciplined in our efforts to focus. We cannot cover everything, and we should avoid fundamentally political issues, and we know very well what those are. We will therefore need to make a clear distinction between issues that truly belong to this process, and those that are being comprehensively handled by other UN bodies. And we will look to the Co-Facilitators for their strong leadership to guide us in remaining focussed.