

**Turkey's Statement
in Follow up & Review Session
of Post 2015 Development Agenda Intergovernmental Negotiations**

**Goals, Targets and Indicators
(21 May 2015)**

- At the outset, let me recall our statement from the March session where we had expressed that we are not against in principle to “tweaking” of the SDG targets. However, this work should not lead to lowering the ambition level of the SDGs or reducing the number of targets.
- Against the background, let me share with you our opinions on a number of specific proposed changes in the revised targets document.
- We would like lend our support to the proposed changes to **targets 1.5 and 11.5**, where references to humanitarian emergencies and humanitarian assistance are proposed to be included in the texts.
- It is a fact that humanitarian emergencies erode the well-being of societies and undermine development efforts of countries.
- In parallel to this, we see value in bringing focus to the needs of people affected by complex humanitarian emergencies in our targets as well as including a reference to humanitarian assistance in recognition of its importance to disaster response.
- **Targets 4.4 and 4.b** on ensuring inclusive and quality education for qualified human resources are vitally important. We find the proposed changes acceptable.
- To give an example from our national practices, Turkey's Scientific and Technological Research Council (TÜBİTAK) has launched a “Graduate Scholarship Program for the Least Developed Countries” for the purpose of supporting the scientific education of scholars from the LDCs. So with this program, TÜBİTAK will award two students from each LDC country scholarships to undertake master and doctoral degrees in Turkish higher education institutes.
- On **target 6.6**, where the proposed change, as we understand from the explanation, stems from the desire to make the target stronger than the Aichi Target 14 to justify the extended timeframe.
- We believe that this approach is not compatible with other targets where changes are proposed to ensure rather conformity with the Aichi targets.
- Hence, for a more appropriate, realistic and consistent approach, we believe, if there will be a change in this target, it should rather read as follows: “By 2030, water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes have been **substantially** fully protected and restored.”

- On **target 14.c**, proposed change is to delete the phrase “for States parties thereto” when referring to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- Mr. Co-Facilitators, not all UN members are party to this instrument. That is the reason we had the reference to “for States parties thereto” in the first place in this target.
- When we look at the explanatory rationale for the proposed change for target 14.c, we see references to Rio+20 and SAMOA Pathway documents.
- Both Rio+20 and SAMOA Pathway are highly valuable cornerstone documents, which are the successful results of long, diligent and ambitious work of the UN membership.
- We were pleased to be a part of their preparation, we cherish them, we support them and we take action for their effective implementation. And without any doubt, we recognize their place right at the heart of our efforts in the area of sustainable development.
- Having said that and from a legalistic perspective, the pure fact that there were references in those documents to the UNCLOS does not make UNCLOS the reflection of international law for all states, definitely not for the states that are not party to it.
- In addition to that, the General Assembly resolutions that are cited as “omnibus” in the explanatory rationale, namely the Resolution 69/245 among others, are resolutions that are voted by the General Assembly every year. Hence these resolutions are texts that does not enjoy the consensus of the UN membership.
- With all these considerations, Mr. Co-Facilitators, we believe that the existing language in target 14.c should be preserved.
- Lastly, we welcome the proposed change on **target 17.2** regarding ODA to the LDCs.
- ODA flows remain the most important source of development finance for the LDCs. It is also important to reverse the trend of diminishing ODA to the LDCs.
- In line with this understanding, we welcome the proposal to refer to the Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs as the relevant framework in this target for including the phrase “at least”, which we believe may help boost the ODA flows to those most in need.
- For its part, Turkey committed to provide 200 million USD to LDCs every year starting from 2012, which we have not only fulfilled but almost doubled in 2012 and 2013.