

**Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations
General Statement by the United States of America
by Mr. Tony Pipa, U.S. Special Coordinator for Post-2015**

As Delivered
June 22, 2015

- **Thank you, Mr. Co-Facilitator, and thanks to both of you for your leadership and guidance in getting us to this point.** We welcome this zero draft as a good starting point that can serve as a foundation for a productive and ultimately successful negotiation. We thank you both for attempting to balance a broad array of interests and input, which further affirms that we are in good hands as we enter the final stage of this process.
- We look forward to engaging over these final weeks to make the most of our collective opportunity: to achieve an ambitious and actionable **global consensus on sustainable development**, one that **brings an end to poverty, that is inclusive and leaves no one behind, and that ensures environmental sustainability**. These must remain the core of the agenda, and we appreciate very much your central focus on these ambitions within the zero draft.
- It is breathtaking to realize that we are within reach of ending extreme poverty within a generation, and as others have said, we think it important to note this commitment in the declaration itself. Our collective political and moral commitment to the most vulnerable of our citizens must be our compass as we encounter and work through the different issues we will encounter over the next several weeks.
- **The successes of the MDGs demonstrated to the world the power of setting global goals.** We made groundbreaking innovations, collectively provided resources in new and powerful ways, improved our capacity to collect and compare data and increased our ability to measure and assess our progress. Most of all, we achieved real and lasting results. This is why we have engaged in this discussion earnestly and rigorously from the beginning, and why it has been so important to take an evidence-based approach and ask what we know about what works and what will work, what will compel the most effective action.
- Such rationales must continue to guide our deliberations. And indeed, as others have mentioned, the political declaration can further strengthen the link between the lessons of the MDGs and the sustainable development goals, especially as it relates to countries where we have seen uneven or limited progress. In going further than the MDGs, we are setting new levels of ambition in defining a comprehensive vision and set of norms for what it will take to achieve a world without want, one which our planet can sustain.

- For all of these reasons, we find this an exciting time to be in this room.
- We find much to admire in the zero draft, but we see this as a beginning. We have much work to do yet to secure the transformative and actionable agenda we all deserve. It is also worth noting that the outcome of the Third Financing for Development conference in Addis will impact each piece of our agenda, and we must thus allow the space to digest and consider the relevance and application of the results from those proceedings once complete.
- Turning now to the Political Declaration: **First, in our view, there is little more important to the success of the sustainable development goals than a powerful political declaration—a concise, compelling central vision that can itself serve as a call to action.** One that both inspires and reflects the depth of our collective commitment. One that speaks in plain terms as much to our mothers as to our ministers, our daughters and diplomats. We see the political declaration as the means to translate and communicate this excitement and energy to the widest possible audience.
- Yours was an enormous and daunting task, and in the zero draft, you have laid out the initial elements of success. **As many member states have said today, we see opportunities in the political declaration to go even further— to offer a clearer and more ambitious articulation of our vision.**
- Tangibly, we recommend that the beginning of this Declaration define – and communicate, in practical terms – the central purpose and key elements of this agenda. **We see the Declaration not as an executive summary of the agenda, but rather a vision for our leaders to agree.** The proposed preamble represents an important contribution and attempt to provide this framing. Either here or in the declaration, we have always felt that a few concise paragraphs up front will help set the stage and define the ambition of the agenda as a whole, while also keeping people listening – and compelling them to action.
- Getting such a communication tool right is extremely important. We have heard delegations already provide several ideas, and we appreciate the attempt with the five P’s to come up with punchy, memorable terms that can be a guide for a new reader to what we are trying to achieve here. While the 5P’s need not be *the* vehicle we use, we see it as a viable option. Regardless, we must build our central vision out further, and be more explicit, or it will remain unclear to the uninitiated.
- Here are a few ideas:
 - Focus on a limited central set of ideas, and **identify for each a clear action and outcome** – e.g. dignity for people, economic transformation for prosperity.

- Add an explanatory few lines to illustrate and clarify the meaning and content of each. For example, a paragraph on dignity for people could make clear that this agenda is intended to speak to the most marginalized in our societies –that we should consider no goal or target met unless met by the bottom quintile of the world’s population. It could also explicitly highlight the unique needs of women and girls – and of the opportunity for historic progress in gender equality.
 - It could draw upon “the New Agenda” section, particularly portions of paragraphs 17-28, allowing us to streamline this section of the Declaration and make it a true complement to the Goals and Targets chapter.
- We look forward to further dialogue about **how to transform this opening into a compelling and meaningful story of change.**
 - Second, **our text and review of trends should focus not only on the problems and challenges that we face, but also on the enormous opportunities before us, providing a more positive treatment of the possible.** Tangibly, we would recommend a more comprehensive treatment of the positive momentum of the past 15 years and the opportunities they herald for the next 15. Your paragraphs 8 and 9 are an excellent start, but should go further. And with the “world today” section, we should acknowledge the enormous opportunity afforded by living in a time of **unprecedented connectivity.** There is value in recognizing that the world has evolved over the last fifteen years in ways that none of us may have imagined 15 years ago, and this is likely to happen once again.
 - Third, a common commitment to **universality, partnership and shared responsibility.** Our President has consistently pushed to improve the opportunity of all our citizens in line with the principles contained in this agenda. Over the past several months, our Domestic Policy Council has been digging into this agenda and identifying opportunities to mobilize real change within our own system, while offering, at the same time, lessons from our experiences about what can truly move the needle in the range of areas that our agenda covers – from housing and homelessness to education standards to energy innovation.
 - These efforts reflect our commitment to the concept of universality, and the shared responsibility that comes with it. Ultimately, our ability to achieve the set of goals and targets we have all worked tirelessly to shape depends upon the engagement and ownership of this agenda by a wide array of actors, and of course, by each of our countries.
 - **We would recommend further emphasis on country ownership,** as each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development. We believe strongly that our new global partnership, like our new agenda, must reflect the economic and global realities of today – and how they

are likely to evolve over the next 15 years, reflecting the shared responsibility of the global community to making progress on this agenda.

- We all share an equal commitment to this agenda, to maximize our efforts even while our capacities are different, and the United States remains as committed as ever to assisting the most vulnerable to a path to achievement. The hallmark of a universal agenda, and of successful development, is that effort and implementation are tailored to national and local contexts to maximize national relevance and to evolve as conditions change. However, we do not see the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) as a proxy for this nor applicable to this development agenda.
- In closing, I want to flag a few final concepts, and look forward to additional opportunities to discuss this text, as there is a great deal more to work through and flesh out. We hope and expect this to remain an open conversation.
 - As the Ambassador from Rwanda mentioned earlier, we believe each of the final sections of the Declaration— the New Agenda, the Means of Implementation, and Follow-Up and Review to be an unnecessary rearticulation of what will follow in the coming chapters.
 - To the extent that we retain “the New Agenda” paragraphs, there are several omitted areas of emphasis that we think need to be included. We expect to have ample time to discuss this in future sessions.
 - We should do all we can to ensure that the concept of leave no one behind—inclusivity and especially a focus on the poorest and marginalized groups—remains at the center of this agenda. References to women and girls as agents of change can be strengthened; references to children and youth should also go beyond their vulnerability and recognize their participation and leadership.
 - And we are concerned that the Declaration’s treatment of non-discrimination does not go far enough. It notably omits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and this must be corrected.
 - We believe strongly in the role that effective and accountable institutions have on ensuring sustainable progress. The focus on transparency and participation, especially of external stakeholders, can be strengthened.
 - As we have noted before, we do not believe that this Declaration is an appropriate venue for language on Foreign Occupation, and we expect that it will be removed in the next version.

- Likewise, the current reference to Right to Development does not belong alongside the Declaration on Human Rights.
- Regarding the Annexes – we see these as issues for further discussion, rather than as pieces of a final text. We look forward to discussions on each, and expect to incorporate relevant elements into our main text, and do not support their inclusion as currently presented in a final document.
- Mr. Co-Facilitator, the work ahead is ambitious, and at times daunting, but we have a strong foundation on which to build. This is the beginning of an important and essential conversation, and we look forward to all of its permutations and to reaching agreement on an agenda worthy not only of our heads of state and government, but ultimately of all our citizens.