



AUSTRALIA



Australian Mission to the United Nations

E-mail australia@un.int

150 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 www.AustraliaUN.org

23 June 2015

United Nations Headquarters, New York

Post-2015 Declaration

Statement by Kushla Munro, Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr Co-facilitators,

We thank you for your hard work in crafting the zero draft and agree that it is a credible basis to continue our negotiations.

We consider the current draft text in the Preamble and Declaration is a useful starting point and brings together many of the views of member states that were voiced during our stocktaking phase.

Australia supports a Declaration that is succinct and inspiring. It should clearly establish our core vision – to eradicate extreme poverty and promote sustainable prosperity – and focus on the key principles and values.

We have a number of suggestions to share on how we can deliver on this ambition.

Firstly, we see the preamble as a useful mechanism to succinctly summarise our vision for this agenda. In effect it should take the form of a short mission statement that makes our agenda accessible and easily understood by peoples of all ages and backgrounds.

In the Preamble we think it is important to emphasise two critical elements of sustainable development; eradicating poverty and gender equality.

Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge of our time and we have agreed on numerous occasions that it is the overarching objective of the post-2015 development agenda.

And gender equality is the greatest form of discrimination globally, without gender equality and the full realisation of women and girls' human rights, we are not fully utilising the efforts and potential of half the world to achieve sustainable development.

That said, we are happy to work with the text in the Preamble, and remain optimistic that we can craft a compelling communication piece that is acceptable to all Parties.

Co-facilitators,

We see the purpose of the declaration as providing the context, vision and rallying call for the post-2015 agenda. As such, the sections on “our world today”, “our vision”, and “a call for action to change our world” are at the core of the declaration.

As others have said, we are less convinced of the value of repeating or trying to summarise the content of the other three chapters in the declaration.

More specifically, on section two – ‘Our commitment to shared principles’ – we welcome the balanced reference to the Millennium Declaration and Rio as the foundational texts for our process. We are also far enough along to confidently reference the Addis Accord as the MOI pillar for our post-2015 outcome, but think we should all exercise restraint and resist the temptation to pepper the document with references to other texts.

Further we should remove the specific reference to common but differentiated responsibilities in paragraph 11. As previously mentioned, we do not support elevating one of the Rio principles over the others. Further, CBDR was formulated in a specific historical environmental context and we do not accept that it extends to a broader development agenda.

On the third section of the declaration — ‘Our World Today’ — we would like to see paragraph 12 on the challenges faced by our world today recast to more closely speak to the challenges being addressed by the goals and targets. In particular it is critical that this paragraph strongly reflect impediments to gender equality, including violence faced by women and girls throughout the world.

But we would be selling ourselves short if we did not balance this with reference to the significant opportunities available to support sustainable development, including:

- sustained economic growth and the opportunities it presents to increased shared prosperity;
- new flows of finance from a more diverse range of actors than we have ever seen before; and
- unprecedented technological advances.

On the fourth section of the declaration — Our Vision — we believe that paragraph 15 should be combined with paragraphs 3 and 7 to allow us to agree one consolidated vision that is echoed consistently across the outcome document.

Moving now to the fifth section of the declaration — ‘The new agenda’ — while we support much of the content in the paragraphs in this section, we see considerable

opportunities to streamline and shorten this section. We should leave it to each goal to speak to the key issues within sectors that we are seeking to address through the targets.

In paragraph 28, as already raised by the US and Canada, Australia does not support language on foreign occupation to be included in the Declaration of the post-2015 agenda.

We would also like to support the points raised by Colombia yesterday morning on the critical role that science will play to help us realise our ambitious agenda.

The declaration should also include a short statement on “how” we will implement the agenda. The implementation section could be considerably streamlined as we do not need to restate or confuse what is covered in later chapters.

We welcome efforts to acknowledge the key role played by a range of stakeholders including, civil society, business, philanthropics and the private sector.

To complement this, the Declaration should better articulate the values that underpin the agenda’s implementation including partnership, country ownership and mutual accountability.

Thank you.