

## **UK: Opening statement and declaration**

The UK aligns with the statement made by the representative of the European Commission on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

Co-facilitators let me start by thanking you for your guidance so far and express our confidence in your leadership going forward.

We feel that your draft reflects the consultations so far and strikes a good balance between necessary detail and language that is reasonably simple and jargon-free. We see it as a good basis for further discussion.

Turning to the declaration.

The UK has been clear that the declaration must have a strong communications element that can act as a call to action and inspire people around the world. That will be crucial to getting implementation off on the right foot. We believe that the draft declaration does well in providing an inspiring vision as well as setting the context for our goals and targets.

The preamble in particular provides a strong basis for communicating our agenda. We note the comments by other member states – we also have improvements that we would like to make to the preamble. But it is important – as Ambassador Kamau said – that we are able to speak to people outside this room, and the preamble is essential in this regard.

We are pleased to see a clear commitment to ‘leave no one behind’. This is emblematic of our agenda. We also support the statement made by the Ambassador of Benin on behalf of the LDC group supporting the proposal that no target should be considered met unless met by all social and economic groups. When it comes to implementation this simple idea will be a touchstone for our ambition.

Co-facilitators, let me touch on a few areas where the draft could be strengthened.

First – as the Ambassador of Benin said, our vision of an end to poverty is critically important. We are explicitly committing to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 and we were surprised that the Declaration does not reflect that specific ambition more clearly.

Second – as others from across the membership have said - the declaration would be strengthened by stronger language on the importance of addressing climate change in order to eradicate poverty, including a clear reference to the agreed global objective to limit the global average temperature to 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

Third – the language on vulnerability and non-discrimination is not as strong as it should be. As part of our commitment to leave no-one behind we should be clear that nobody, regardless of their status, will be discriminated against.

Fourth, co-facilitators, I note your concern to avoid introducing too many issues. However, there is one area that has risen rapidly up the international agenda over that past year, and that is the impact of antimicrobial resistance both on health outcomes and the prospects for sustainable food security. We feel that this should be articulated in the declaration.

Fifth, we are pleased to see the importance of gender equality, human rights, peace, good governance and the rule of law as key priorities for this agenda. We would like to see stronger emphasis on economic and political empowerment, and the promotion and protection of the human rights, of women and girls, and universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

Sixth, we welcome your efforts to use language that is acceptable to all member states and to avoid falling back on agreed UN language. That makes sense – how can old language reflect a new paradigm?! We would like to highlight a few areas where we have specific concerns.

- We do not accept that CBDR applies as an overarching principle to the post-2015 development agenda and do not understand why it should be singled out from other Rio principles.
- A number of member states do not accept the declaration on the right to development. This should not be included here alongside the declaration on human rights.

Co-facilitators, we stand ready to engage constructively with all member states as we enter into the final stages of our negotiations. So let me finish by emphasising our gratitude for your continued efforts and for furnishing us with a good basis through the draft declaration.

Thank you