

## **Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda**

### **Sustainable Development Goals March 23th-27th**

Statement by Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota, Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

Mr. Co-facilitator,

Seven months have gone by, and The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets have so far passed the test of spontaneous political and technical proofing.

A clear majority of stakeholders, within the UN and outside of it, has come to appreciate the breath and the depth of this new agenda.

In particular, there is perceived value in universality with differentiation as a new paradigm for international development cooperation.

And huge transformational potential has been recognized in integrating environmental sustainability, social inclusion and economic growth into a single umbrella concept.

Crosscutting integration of issues is also a groundbreaking achievement that should help bring all development actors in the UN System, and at the regional and national levels, into better alignment and closer coordination.

In September 2014, the General Assembly endorsed by consensus the Open Working Group proposal as the main basis for the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Governmental Agencies, NGOs, UN Agencies, Academia, Think tanks and development experts have discussed, assessed and commented on the SDGs. Opinions are overall very positive.

The OWG proposal has been considered a participatory and bottom-up process compared with the MDGs.

Reducing the number of goals and targets or simplifying language would not be possible at this point without loss of critical content, and without seriously affecting the views and priorities of 193 Member States, and many more stakeholders.

The same must be said of proposals for clustering or packaging the SDGs under a smaller number of so-called "elements". It is very difficult to do this without reinterpreting the position of Member States.

When you no longer can change such a complex text without running the risk of unraveling it, this is a clear sign that we have achieved the best possible outcome under the circumstances. Even "technical refinement" can be politically unwarranted and disruptive.

The SDGs speak for themselves. We don't really need a reductionist over layer.

Should some members believe we do, than we would insist that the neutral way to do it would be to respect the three dimensions of sustainable development set-out by our Heads of State and Government in Rio+20, adding to it a fourth dimension on the Means of Implementation. This is the idea behind the four P's proposal: People, Prosperity, Planet and Partnership.

Brazil supports the statement by South Africa on behalf of G-77/China, as well as the statement delivered by Ecuador on behalf of CELAC.

Mr. Co-facilitators,

Brazil commends the Statistical Commission for trying to meet your request regarding the elaboration of indicators.

The first technical report from the Statistical Commission illustrates the complexity of the mission. It also confirms we need more time.

Indicators, when ready, will still need to undergo regional and national scrutiny, or proofing. We should not rush to have them ready for adoption by September, firstly because this not formally required, and secondly because the task is daunting and the Commission itself has planned for at least until March of 2016.

The UN Statistical Commission needs time to fully grasp the intended nature of the SDGs. This will require the capacity of National Statistical Offices to move beyond their existing formal mandates and program of work.

We are concerned that the Commission's rating of indicators translates into an assessment of the quality, feasibility and relevance of targets, when all that is required is measurability from a statistical standpoint.

Goals from 10 to 16 received most of the lowest rating , whereas the first 8 SDGs received the best rating. There is an unbalance there.

These preliminary results can be attributed to several possible causes, such as: i) lack of time for statistical offices to consult with other areas of government, especially regarding environmental statistics; ii) greater capacity of Statistical Agencies, especially in developing countries, to deal with MDG-like indicators, and their lack of capacity to work with the three integrated dimensions of sustainable development, which make it more complex.

Developed and developing countries should be accorded differentiated treatment regarding their capacity to collect data and produce indicators, in line with the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities.

We have agreed that Developed countries should take the lead in moving toward sustainable patterns of consumption and production,

and this has to be reflected in the way indicators are elaborated and applied. Many developing countries are still to formulate the policies and monitoring frameworks for SCP-related targets, and will need more time to respond to these challenges.

Countries in special situation should also be taken into account, as several targets cater to specific demands of LDCs, SIDs and LLDCs.

Mr. Co-facilitator,

We believe the Statistical Commission is in need of guidance.

The priority should be to define a high-quality set of indicators that reflect the breadth and depth of the SDGs and their related targets.

All goals and targets must be treated on equal footing.

We consider all targets measurable, even if in different ways.

The Means of Implementation must also be measured and monitored, and cannot be disregarded.

Development of indicators should not undermine, re-open or even second-guess the agreed outcome of the OWG.

The Commission should also avoid introducing contentious notions that do not enjoy wide acceptance or that disturb the delicate political balance of the SDGs.

Global indicators must use official, public data produced by national statistical offices or other governmental agencies.

Data used to measure the indicators must be free, in principle, and respect confidentiality standards. They should comply with the 10 Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, according to General Assembly Resolution 68/261.

Capacity deficit is a central issue when it comes to data collection, development and monitoring of indicators. The importance of enhancing the capacity of developing countries to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data cannot be overstated.

Disaggregation of data is critical to make vulnerable groups visible. Though we do recognize that poverty has multiple dimensions, we believe we should not adopt many multidimensional indicators. They are complex and compound several issues, instead of disagreeing them. Multidimensional indicators can make specific need less visible, instead of increasing their visibility.

The United Nations Regional Commissions should play an important role in all aspects of indicators. They should define their own framework for follow-up and review of the SDGs, while also supporting countries to formulate indicators in light of their specific national and regional realities.

The High Level Group to be established under the auspices of the Statistical Commission should consider those issues carefully in guiding the work of the Intergovernmental Expert Group on SDGs Indicators. We emphasize the intergovernmental nature of the expert group, which will be supported by UN Agencies and international organizations as observers.

The UN Statistical Commission has established a timeline that points to the definition of a final framework of indicators by its next session, in March 2016.

When ready, the Statistical Commission will need to submit its proposal to the consideration of Member States for their political assessment, further guidance and recommendations.

Thank you, Mr. Co-facilitator.