



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT
AGENDA - GOALS AND TARGETS (New York, 22 July 2015)**

Co-facilitators,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The 19th of July - three days ago - was the one-year anniversary of our adoption of the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. This report was arrived-at through painstaking and intensive work stretching for a period of almost 18 months, during which time, the Members States of the Group participated constructively and in good faith.

The Group of 77 and China has consistently called for this entire report to be fully preserved and not to be re-opened or re-negotiated in line with the General Assembly resolution that endorsed it as the main basis for integrating the SDGs into the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

We are therefore pleased that these goals and targets have to a large extent been retained in the latest draft that you have prepared. These goals and targets reflect the global development priorities, particularly for developing countries.

Regarding the proposed revision of targets, the Group of 77 and China reiterates its view that no changes should be made which would alter the initial intention of the OWG-SDGs or undermine the integrity of the report. The Group has studied the proposed amendments to some targets. We need to examine very carefully whether the amendments are realistic, achievable, do not alter the substance of the original text, and - importantly - take into account the lack of capacity of some countries in attaining the proposed outcome. The Group's position has consistently been that we are not in favour of opening the SDGs so as to not compromise the delicate balance that was achieved in the adoption of the SDGs. We therefore maintain that we should maintain the SDGs as they were agreed in the Report of the OWG-SDGs, and in this regard we recall the methodology of work that was agreed upon during our last session - upon your proposal - namely that if there is no agreement on a proposed technical change or changes, we would maintain the SDGs as they currently stand.

Co-facilitators,

The Group notes that the Introduction to the Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals has been retained as an Annex in the current draft. We again stress that this Chapeau forms an integral part of the report of the OWG-SDGs. We therefore reiterate our call for the inclusion of this language as an integral part of the outcome document. This is because the introduction includes agreed consensus language providing a detailed context for the goals and targets. Excluding this part of the Report of the OWG-SDGs leaves an unnecessary contextual vacuum.

We are sensitive to any action that could not only undermine the delicate compromise but that could actually unravel the entire package that was encapsulated in the OWG-SDG report in its entirety.

Finally, the Group reiterates its view that a proposal on indicators should be presented for consideration to the relevant intergovernmental bodies by the UN Statistical Commission who has been tasked with the development of global indicators.

I thank you.