



# AUSTRALIA



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**United Nations Headquarters, New York**

## **Sustainable Development Goals and targets**

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

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Thank you.

Mr Co-facilitators,

You have ably demonstrated the value of examining the targets to ensure specificity, measurability and consistency with international standards. We note that many of the proposed amendments bring precision and clarity to the targets, without upsetting the delicate political balance of the text. We are pleased that the proposed revisions, particularly on the x's, reflect an appropriate aspiration for global efforts.

We have reflected on some of the concerns raised by a number of member states on what "substantial increases" will mean in some targets and the implications of targets which call for 100 per cent aspiration for the targets to be achieved.

We think it would be useful for paragraph 50 to clarify our common understanding that while this agenda is universal, it is not uniform. And it will be for each government to consider how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated in national planning processes, policies and strategies. This could be achieved through some minor amendments and we would be happy to include written suggestions to the Secretariat.

Consistent with this approach, and the views expressed by Tonga of behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, and a number of other states, we consider the proposed revision to target 14.c (currently in the Annex) should be included in the outcome document to ensure its technical alignment with agreed UN language and international law.

We note that a number of the proposed revisions relate to the means of implementation, and could more closely align with extant international agreements including the recently concluded Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

On the handling of the Sustainable Development Goals Open Working Group chapeau, we do not think the case has been made to include the chapeau in this chapter. As other states have said, including the entirety of the chapeau in this chapter would lead to unnecessary repetition in the outcome document.

In conclusion, we cannot ask our Heads of State and Government to sign up targets that are incomplete and include “Xs”, that are unclear or fall short of existing commitments. We cannot shy away from this important task and this should not be left to another forum.