

## 7<sup>th</sup> Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on Post-2015 Development Agenda

### Intervention by Mr. Puneet Agrawal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs on 'Technical Proofing of SDG targets'

July 22, 2015

Thank you **Mr. Co-Facilitator**,

India aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77.

Like the Group of 77, we also remain wary of the proposed technical proofing, even as we understand and appreciate the good intent behind it.

We are comforted by your reassurance that the fundamental basis for this exercise will be consensus and that in case of disagreement, we will revert back to the OWG outcome.

We also note your reassurance that the purpose of this exercise should not be to alter the number of goals and targets or disturb the delicate political balance contained in the OWG proposal, which may happen with the addition of new issues not previously discussed.

In this context, we remain unconvinced with the nature of criteria that is sought to be applied to this exercise.

We can see the logic behind amending the Xs and Ys.

We can also perhaps understand the idea of amending some targets which may be inconsistent with existing agreements or to enhance measurability.

But there are proposals in your package that do not meet these criteria. Moreover, even in case of those targets where there seems a broad agreement that a technical revision is necessary, there exists a very wide divergence as to *how* exactly the technical revision will be carried out.

The delegation of AOSIS made a compelling case of difference between 'technical' versus 'substantive' revisions.

Targets 1.5 and 8.7 are two examples where the proposed changes are not ‘technical’ but ‘substantive’.

The further changes proposed to target 8.7 in this iteration came as a surprise to us and could be a potent example of how technical proofing could potentially alter the delicate political balance of the OWG outcome. The issues that are proposed to be added to this target, important as they are, were never discussed among member states. This in our view, will not qualify as ‘technical proofing’, but is rather a substantive change which could lead to the inclusion of other issues.

**Mr. Co-Facilitator,**

I would also like to take this opportunity to respond to your question about the merits and logic of including the Chapeau to the OWG outcome as part of the Chapter on SDGs.

The point about duplication is fair, but what needs to be remembered is that the political formulations in the Chapeau are what finally made the agreement on the SDGs possible.

The case of reaffirmation of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, both in relation to sustainable development in general and climate change in particular, is a case in point. It is therefore not fair now to separate the political understanding from the substantive goals and targets in the name of duplication. The SDGs and the political understandings that made them possible are part of one package that cannot be unraveled.

Finally, we are in agreement with the European Union that paragraph 51 is unnecessary as it lists processes selectively and invariably leaves out several others that may also be relevant.

Moreover, as this paragraph links sustainable development solely with environmental agreements and processes, it reinforces a mistaken notion that somehow one of the three dimensions of sustainable development is more important than the others.

We would support the proposal therefore for paragraph 51 to be removed.

I thank you.

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