

UK statement on Goals and Targets

Let me start by aligning the UK with the statement made by the European Union on behalf of the EU and its member states.

Co-facilitators, we welcome the inclusion in the outcome document of your package of technical tweaks to a small number of targets. We have been consistent in our call for all of these revisions to be made in the text.

We believe that, as a result of these changes, we have a stronger and more coherent product that we can feel comfortable in sending to our heads of state and government to be signed off in September.

We agree with you, co-facilitators, that we simply could not ask our Heads of State and Government to sign up to a target that is defined by an “x” or that falls below existing standards. We also believe that our credibility relies on ensuring our targets are in line with international law. With that in mind we join the Federated States of Micronesia, Iceland and the large number of other member states that have expressed concerns about the current drafting of target 14c on UNCLOS, and call for an agreed technical revision to be incorporated in the final text alongside the other tweaks.

We have listened carefully to the statement by the G77 and other member states who have expressed concern that any changes should not affect the intention, substance, or integrity of the Open Working Group’s proposed targets. We find that the updated targets proposed by the co-facilitators are tweaks of a technical nature that improve our product as a whole. They do not change the intention the Open Working Group’s goals and targets, nor do they undermine the delicate balance of that proposal.

Co-facilitators, you might recall that, in the past, we have argued for a more thorough review of the targets proposed by the Open Working Group. We have listened carefully to your guidance on the need to focus on getting a “good-enough” outcome, rather than seeking perfection. In the spirit of reaching consensus, assuming that member states do not wish to re-open the goals and targets more widely and the delicate balance therein, and that we build in a process to “future-proof” the framework in the follow-up and review section, we are content to accept a package of minimal technical amendments, and we appeal to all delegations to join us in this as a compromise way forward.

Let me join others in welcoming your proposal for a very short introduction to the goals and targets. We do not agree on including the Open Working Group’s chapeau in the outcome document as that would lead to repetition of large elements of the declaration.

On para 51, which lists some ongoing processes that are relevant to the successful implementation of the SDGs. The challenge, as ever, with partial lists is to ensure balance, inclusivity and relevance. One option, as Norway suggested, is to drop the list altogether. Alternatively, if you choose to include

this paragraph, we would expect to see a reference to efforts to complete the Doha Development Agenda negotiations in the WTO which, if achieved, would have a hugely positive impact on sustainable jobs, growth and economic development.

Lastly, like others, we do not wish to see a duplication of the MoI targets in both sections 2 and 3. Our sense is that they will have greatest prominence and visibility, and emphasise most clearly that the Means of Implementation for the post-2015 development agenda comprise both the Addis Action Agenda and the Means of Implementation goal and targets - by including them in section 3.

Thank you