



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

E-mail australia@un.int

150 East 42nd Street, New York NY 10017-5612 Ph 212 - 351 6600 Fax 212 - 351 6610 www.AustraliaUN.org

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Sustainable Development Goals and targets

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

Thank you Mr Co-facilitators.

In the interests of time, we will turn immediately to the questions you posed yesterday evening and this morning.

First, on the handling of the proposed target revisions, Australia is willing to be constructive in our forward approach.

Noting there are additional changes we would have preferred to be included in the revisions, Australia is willing to be flexible at this stage.

We are willing to accept target revisions 1 to 11 that address the X's, numerical value and specificity.

Regarding proposed revisions 12 to 20 on 'consistency with international agreements':

- on target 14c, we can accept the alternate language proposal as we view it can usefully bridge common ground on this issue
- on target 17.2, we note that the current reformulation still falls short of aligning with Addis agreement or the Istanbul Program of Action. In the spirit of compromise, however, we could accept the target with the insertion of 'respective' prior to 'official'
- we can accept the remaining target revisions that bring consistency with international agreements.

On the additional proposals to targets on LLDCs, we are willing to engage in further discussion on the proposals put forward by the LLDCs, which would appear to demonstrate that it is possible to make changes without upsetting the delicate political balance of the goals and targets.

Second, on the handling of the OWG chapeau.

In the spirit of cooperation, we have gone back and carefully re-examined the chapeau to objectively consider what the chapeau would add to the outcome document.

In doing so, we found that the chapeau's concepts are adequately captured in our current text. By way of example, paragraph 6 of the chapeau on the foundational sustainable development documents is captured in paragraph 12 of our declaration. So too is paragraph 10 on the needs of countries in special situations, which is captured by paragraph 23 of our declaration. Further those paragraphs which speak to the operation of the agenda and the importance of data collection (namely paragraphs 17 and 18 of the chapeau) are captured in paragraphs 17, 50, 57, 63, 70 and 72 of our outcome document.

Our examination also found that 12 of 18 chapeau paragraphs are simply factual statements describing what was included in the Rio+20 outcome document. They are retrospective reflections that do not recommit us to take action nor reaffirm our political will. In contrast, and as befitting an agenda which will guide our efforts for the next fifteen years, the corresponding paragraphs in the current text are forward looking and reflect our collective commitments. For example, the declaration is stronger in declaring our political commitment to end poverty, to promote human rights, and to uphold the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, if there are concepts that have escaped our review and that others believe are important to draw up from the chapeau — such as democratic societies raised by the European Union — we believe these should be identified more specifically and arguments put forward as to why they must be included.