

ELYES LAKHAL, COUNSELLOR

STATEMENT OF MR. MOHAMED KHALED KHARI, AMBASSADOR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TUNISIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) (NEW YORK, 14 MARCH, 2013)

Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation would like to acknowledge your dedication, Mr President, to ensuring a successful commencement of the deliberations of the Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG SDG).

We extend our congratulation to the co-facilitators for the important role that they have played in the preparatory process, as well as to the Co- Chairpersons of the OWG SDG for their election.

My delegation aligns itself to the statement made by the PR of Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China and the PR of Chad on behalf of the African Group.

Mr President,

The Rio + 20 outcome document resolved to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on SDGs that is open to all stakeholders with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly at its 68th session. Therefore, it is vital for the success of this OWG that it maintains its inclusiveness, openness and transparency and presents its proposal for SDGs based on a consensus among its members.

The outcome document further states that the process leading to the SDGs needs to be coordinated and coherent with the processes considering the post-2015 development agenda. My delegation believes that in engaging in these new tracks, international community should remain firmly committed to the full and timely implementation of the MDGs. This is crucial for building confidence and maintaining trust in the UN system as well as among partners. The development of the SDGs should not therefore divert focus, effort or resources from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr president,

My delegation recognizes the importance and utility of sustainable development goals in focusing the priority action of the international community on certain areas of common interest, we consider, though, that a set of goals that are limited in numbers, if implemented, could only achieve some components of sustainable development. This is

being said, we recognize that there's an additional challenge in framing a set of SDGs that should address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their interlinkages. We nevertheless express our hope that the WG SDGs will succeed in clustering numerous related sectors and themes into concise goals that are action oriented, concrete and quantifiable.

We emphasize that the identification of SDGs should take into consideration national circumstances and specificities, capacities and national priorities and should be consistent, according to Rio+20 outcome, with international law.

Mr President,

We strongly believe that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development. Nevertheless, the implementation of SDGs at the global, regional and national level could not be achieved without active and positive involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including development partners. Indeed, International cooperation and means of implementation are crucial in implementing these goals. We reaffirm that the means of implementation identified in Agenda 21, rio+20 outcome document and other UN outcomes, in particular finance, technology, trade, international cooperation in science, capacity building and migration are essential for achieving the full and effective translation of sustainable development goals into tangible sustainable results.

We therefore believe that this exercise of identifying a set of SDGs, if to be effective, has to address means of implementation cluster, by providing countries with adequate policy space and enough instruments and resources to put into effect the appropriate policies and implement them.

In conclusion, my delegation expresses its readiness to play an effective and constructive role in the work of this Open Working Group on the SDGs.

Thank You