



**Meeting of the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
United Nations - New York - 17-19 April 2013**

**European Union and its Member States - Speaking Points on “conceptualizing the SDGs and the
SDG process”**

[These address the themes of 17/18 April sessions as well as the issues raised in the background brief]

The EU and its Member States are currently elaborating their position on the post-2015 agenda, including on SDGs. As regards Means of Implementation, the EU and its Member States will examine a comprehensive proposal on finance for development, including post-2015 aspects, as from June/July. The following are therefore preliminary ideas that will be further elaborated by the EU and its Member States and presented to partners in due course.

A. Principles for the SDGs.

1. One overarching framework post-2015 with a single set of goals. SDGs to be coherent with and integrated in the UN development agenda beyond 2015 with a view to an overarching framework for the post 2015 period. The fundamental link between ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future while respecting planetary boundaries to be collectively addressed in years ahead.

2. Global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national circumstances, policies, priorities, capacities and levels of development, as well as the **specific needs of the most vulnerable countries or those in fragile situations.**

3. Integrating the 3 dimensions of sustainable development (Economic, Social, Environmental) in a balanced manner.

4. Limited in number, action-oriented, easy to communicate and linked to concrete targets and indicators. **Building on the successes and shortcomings of the MDGs and coherent with existing internationally agreed goals and targets.**

5. Mapping: Today's conceptual debate is an occasion to discuss how to possibly "structure" the SDGs and help the organisation of the proposed themes suggested in the draft work programme circulated by the co-chairs a few days ago. Let me be clear here: Within the EU we are still elaborating our thinking on these issues and the Council of the EU will determine the official EU position in due course. This being said, in a recent policy paper, the European Commission has for instance suggested that further work on SDGs could address the following issues:

i) **basic living standards** (covering for example among the themes suggested in the draft work programme issues such as food, water and sanitation, health, education, employment and social services)

ii) **drivers for inclusive and sustainable growth** (covering for example among the themes suggested in the draft work programme issues such as sustainable energy, sustainable consumption and production,

iii) **sustainable management of natural resources** (covering for example among the themes suggested in the draft work programme issues such as oceans, biodiversity and forests)

iv) **ensuring equality, equity and justice** (e.g. themes suggested in the draft work programme include gender equality and women empowerment; there is a need to address governance at different levels, human rights and human-rights-based approaches, etc. which we note is highlighted in the revised programme of work for today's meeting.

v) **peace and security**, as progress is not possible when there is physical insecurity.

These areas are of course **inter-related and should not be seen as stand alone areas** (e.g. the sustainable management of resources is itself a driver for a green economy and is necessary to address basic living standards, and so forth. Or actions towards a more "economic" target under one goal can also be of great support to reach a more "social" target under another goal, and so on).

6. **The supporting "Global partnership" will be an important element of the new framework** It will need to establish responsibilities for all partners (**mutual accountability**) and focus on actions both at global and national level that contribute most towards achieving the post-2015 objectives. While external support remains important for countries most in need, **"Means of Implementation" is about putting all resources to good and efficient use, whether from public or private, domestic or international sources.** *[This specifically addresses a missing element from point 4. of the background brief]*. As expressed by many, notably by the G77 in our first meeting, we need a new thinking of international cooperation, moving away from traditional 'donor-recipient' paradigm. In this respect we look forward to the results of the expert committee on financing for sustainable development.

B. Principles for the SDGs process:

1. **Not deviating from current efforts and attention to achieve the MDGs** (as regularly noted by the group of LDCs). The EU remains committed to the MDG framework and the unfinished business of the MDG-agenda.
2. Seek to **clearly integrate poverty eradication aspects** and all 3 dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner, as goals are discussed.
3. **Be coordinated** with the various strands of work contributing to defining the post-2015 development agenda and **avoid duplication** among them (including the SDG process, the work of the UNSG based on the report of the High Level Panel and the wide-ranging national, thematic and regional consultations that are being led by the UN system, the expert committee on financing for sustainable development, and other relevant international processes, etc.).
4. Be **inclusive and transparent**, with the input and support from the UN system and research-based evidence and scientific and expert analysis and inputs with an active and open dialogue with civil society and all relevant actors and to allow for the voice of the poorest to be heard.
5. Be **ambitious but flexible** (i.e. the programme of work can be adjusted as needed along the way.)
6. Be **timely**, to ensure the report of the Group to the General Assembly at its 68th session, **as one important input into the final preparation of the post 2015 framework.**