

6th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
9-13 December December 2013

Remarks by Ambassador Dr. Palitha Kohona, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations on behalf of India-Pakistan-Sri Lanka Troika:

"Partnerships and Means of Implementation for achieving Sustainable Development"

10th December 2013

Mr. Co-chair

I have the honour to deliver the following remarks on behalf of India, Pakistan and my own country, Sri Lanka. We associate ourselves with the remarks made by the Permanent Representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We would also like to express our thanks to the Panel for their presentations.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Partnerships and Means of Implementation (MoI) are central to the implementation of the SDG agenda, especially taking into account the implementation of MDG No. 8. We also recall the focus of world leaders in the Rio+20 Outcome Document in this area.

We would like to focus our remarks on some key issues which should guide our deliberations and would also like to share some concrete suggestions which we hope will be reflected in the conclusions.

But before that, I would like to preface my remarks with two comments:

First and foremost, we take the view that global partnerships and means of implementation are key parts of the SDG package. The challenge in our view is to translate these words into meaningful action. The global partnership we are seeking to craft under the SDGs must be a strengthened one and must be able to go beyond rhetoric.

Secondly, we are concerned with the 'ambition mismatch' in the international community's deliberation over the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda so far. While we are all looking to craft an ambitious and integrated development agenda – one that seems to go well beyond the human development template of the MDGs - this ambition in the substance of the agenda does not seem to be matched by our ambition in the means for achieving the objectives. An ambitious agenda requires equally ambitious means of implementation and a global partnership.

Moving on to substantive issues and suggestions, we would like the OWG to focus on: (a) drawing lessons (ii) building principles and (iii) institutionalization of the Global Partnership.

First, the starting point for forging a revamped Global Partnership implies drawing lessons from the implementation of MDG 8, under which we would like to highlight: (i) the lack of integration and synergy between the goals and the Global Partnership framework i.e. There are no cross cutting indicators and a separate GAP Assessment report on MDG; (ii) the absence of overall targets and absence of measurability and quantification against any benchmarks, or indicators; (iii) the absence of inter-governmental oversight; (iv) the loose integration of other development partners such as the Multilateral Development Banks, the World Trade Organization and private sector; and (v) the excessive reliance on donor/ recipient framework to the detriment of systemic issues to promote economic development. Unless we overcome these failure in establishing a sound global partnership, we risk jeopardizing the success of any new development agenda right from the beginning.

The absence of tangible targets in particular in MDG 8 didn't help in the realization of the MDGs. Therefore, we emphasize that the MoI under the SDG agenda must have clear tangible and measurable targets and practical identification of partnerships. Embedding the means of implementation in each of the SDGs in an appropriate manner is essential. Means of implementation in the SDG framework must have the same level of monitoring and accountability as the other goals.

Secondly, the revamped global partnership must be built on fundamental principles such as special and differentiated treatment for developing countries, common but differentiated responsibilities, and special focus on countries in special situations. The integration of these principles would be critical in addressing the newer challenges such as climate change, energy, transport etc. We believe that level of responsibility both in terms of actions at home and the provision of development finance must be consistent with these principles.

Third, much of the recent discourse on partnerships has focused on the insufficiency and declining role of ODA. Even though ODA levels have regrettably declined, this does not diminish their relevance. ODA will remain relevant and important in the post-2015 period. In fact the broader agenda that we are contemplating requires that ODA levels must be enhanced and scaled up.

Fourthly, the revamped global partnership must be institutionalized both at the national and international levels. In our view, it is critical that we establish both international and national level mechanisms for effective implementation and monitoring of the Global Partnership. At the international level, we could look at an intergovernmental setup including key institutions such as the HLPF, the PGA, the UN Secretary-General, World Bank, WTO, ILO, IMF and other international agencies to monitor and review progress.

Similarly multi-stakeholder platforms at the national level can be promoted; bringing together government, business, NGOs and international agencies to build trust and co-generate innovative ideas; and building capacity to partner and directly support the development of new partnerships.

Mr. Co-chair,

On the thematic level, we believe that the overarching objective of this Global partnership must remain the reduction of Multi-dimensional deprivation. Ensuring additional resources to

empower people who currently exist in vulnerable conditions should continue to command our attention.

Science and technology, knowledge-sharing and capacity building must be key aspects of MoI. They are interrelated.

While the global debate on transferring technology is relevant, we must now focus on concrete solutions. The early operationalization of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the UN would be a clear deliverable in this regard.

A wide range of international constraints related to intellectual property rights, trade, and investments need to be addressed in appropriate multilateral fora, keeping in mind our exercise in this Open Working Group. Access to markets will remain vital for many developing countries as they seek to advance economically. Many Trust Funds still remain unreplenished.

Mr Co-Chair,

During our discussions on the Macro-Economic issues, our Troika had highlighted the need for giving enhanced attention to some innovative ideas. Some of the ideas we had focused on include (i) removing barriers to migration and other forms of productive immigration which could yield significant global gains; (ii) utilizing more than US \$ 100 billion worth of idle SDRs and making use of this financing to generate additional development finance and (iii) promoting more effective retention of FDI in developing countries to provide enhanced fiscal space to countries in undertaking sustainable development actions.

In today's globalized context, we have many possibilities to consider with regard to such partnerships and cross border impacts. Our challenge is to identify those that are useful as we develop the sustainable development agenda. Solid multilateral partnerships are essential. We believe that bilateral partnerships too must be optimally used to support the priorities of MoI, assisted by periodic needs assessments on sustainable development.

Mr Co-chair,

Increasing importance is being attached to the role the private sector. However, the limitations of this sector must be acknowledged. Private sector financing is usually profit- and short term oriented. Private sector charity is largely driven by economic motives. Public financing will remain the lynchpin of a sustainable development financing strategy. The key principle for private and innovative sources of finance should be additionality, not substitution.

Mr Co-chair,

In the current economic scenario, issues of market access, trade, capacity building and debt sustainability remain as relevant as ever. We must build on the template of MDG-8, even as we take steps to scale up commitments, enhance effectiveness and address systemic issues.

We also see much potential in South-South and triangular cooperation. However, it is our consistent position that South-South co-operation is only a supplement and not a substitute to North-South cooperation. The commitment of Financing for Development cannot be

transferred to South-South cooperation which must be allowed to grow under its own impetus. Moreover, it is important that South-South Cooperation is not strait-jacketed in terms of rigid rules or policy prescriptions derived from North-South Aid.

LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS must be given special attention in all these partnerships. Therefore, we welcome the initiative for the establishment of a Technology Bank and Science, Technology and Innovation Supporting Mechanism for the LDCs.

We also welcome successful efforts in the UN such as the NEPAD that helped African states in advancing their development priorities.

I thank you Mr. Co-chair.