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Ambassador
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Swedish statement at the Open Working Group on SDGs, "Sustained and Inclusive Economic Growth", 25 November, 2013

Mr. Co-chairs,

I associate myself with the statement by the European Union.

Economic growth is a prerequisite for ending poverty. But, as we know, growth is not sufficient. For growth to truly have an impact on poverty it has to be sustained, inclusive and sustainable. And to achieve sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth a number of requirements have to be fulfilled. In addition to macroeconomic stability and fiscally responsible policies and free trade the following needs to be in place:

First, a policy for sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth has to involve, build on and utilize all citizens. Countries cannot afford to just focus on half their populations as productive resources. This means that gender equality has to be integrated into national strategies for jobs and growth. And it also means that special measures will have to be implemented to promote women's economic empowerment and employment, including investing in women's skills development and ensuring women's equal access to productive resources like land and credit. Inclusivity also means that both women and men have to be given possibilities for voice and decision making.

Second, good governance and rule of law are basic requirements for sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth. State institutions need to be well functioning and effective, focused on serving their citizens. Democratic governance can ensure transparency and a free flow of information so that people's voices can be heard and they can hold decision makers to account. Well-functioning institutions, a clear, rules based regulatory environment and an effective judiciary are also fundamental requirements for enabling the private sector to operate and

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to attract external investment to help promote growth and job creation. A clear signal from government that corruption is not tolerated and actions to underpin that argument will also be necessary.

Third, in challenging environments, for instance in post conflict and fragile situations, the responsibility of governments is particularly important in providing security, safety, freedom from violence and access to justice for its citizens. In parallel, public investments need to be channeled to infrastructure and services to create job opportunities for women and men, especially young people. Extractive industries, which often dominate the economies of fragile countries, must be transparent to enable citizens to know how resources are being spent.

Fourth, environmental sustainability has to be mainstreamed through all policies to create jobs and growth. Green, inclusive growth offers an opportunity to create a new global model of growth that not only reverses negative environmental trends but can be a true driver for sustainable growth and job creation. The example of my own country shows that it is possible to make significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining solid economic growth. Eliminating harmful fossil fuel subsidies and using taxes incentives for green growth are practical ways of moving forward. By promoting resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production patterns, we can create win-win situations for all countries.

Fifth, improving health is important to sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth. Investing in health generates significant long term economic and social returns at both the individual income level and the wider societal level. By investing in health we improve people's physical ability to go to work and attend school and acquire knowledge. Also, together with effective public policies, a healthy population leads to larger supplies of domestic capital through more savings, it attracts more FDI and thereby generates a positive growth spiral.

Sixth, policies have to be in place to mitigate widening inequalities. Over time, growth will not be sustainable or sustained if it is accompanied by greater inequalities. Effective, well-coordinated social protection systems are one of the instruments that have proven to be effective in reducing disparities.

To sum up, economic growth is a necessary but not a sufficient requirement for achieving sustainable development and ending poverty. To ensure that growth is sustained over the long term, inclusive leaving no one behind and environmentally sustainable, determined policies have to be designed and implemented along all the dimensions just mentioned. When formulating goals to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth these dimensions need to be recognized.