

Mr Co-Chairs,

1 On behalf of the troika of Cyprus, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, we would like to thank you for giving me the floor.

2 At the outset, we would like to thank the Technical Support Team for preparing the TST Issues Brief on 'Conceptual Issues'. The paper is indeed a useful document in giving us a detailed sketch of the issues surrounding the concept of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mr. Co-chairs,

3 Poverty eradication and sustainable development are the two overarching objectives of the SDGs which are fundamentally interlinked and mutually reinforcing. SDGs need to be comprehensive in all three dimensions of Sustainable Development in order to be effective. The SDGs we will elaborate must follow a clear road map for implementation with a clear set of commitments, timeliness and indicators and targets for progress, that go beyond the GDP to encompass the well being of people and the planet.

Mr Co-Chairs,

4 We see an emerging agreement already on the conceptual nature of the SDGs. At Rio many were asking whether SDGs complement MDGs by covering additional areas—in other words that the SDGs cover only a sub-set of our sustainable development challenges.

5 Our understanding now is that the SDGs, and therefore the work of our Open Working Group (OWG), in fact cover all of sustainable development, including economic, social and environmental issues. This means that our work covers all the issues addressed under the MDGs, as well as new issues we identify here.

6 In dealing with such a wide range of issues, we favour a thematic approach, with issues such as health or sectors such as energy and water worthy of careful consideration.

7 This is perhaps the clearest way of thinking through our issues, but of course leaves the risk of a very long list of thematic areas. In the interest of finishing this important work on time, we need to find ways to consider multiple thematic areas together.

8 This is where the concept of the nexus comes in. For example, we consider that human development outcomes and environmental sustainability should be considered together as a potential SDG, such as food, water and energy.

9 Water supply uses a large amount of energy, whether for pumping, treatment or desalination. Similarly, energy supplies often depend critically on water for hydroelectricity, cooling or irrigation for biomass. Food production and distribution requires both large inputs of energy and water.

10 It is thus in this context that while we have supported the co-chairs' previous drafts on the OWG's work plan, we have consistently advocated the issues of food, energy and water should to be discussed as a nexus in the OWG, as they intersect all three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environment. Based on the informal consultation meeting two weeks ago on the OWG's work programme, we understand that this view resonates with some delegations.

11 Other delegations are of the view that these issues should be discussed solely on their own merits, instead of linking them together, as they should be considered as potential stand-alone SDGs. However, in our view, the nexus equation does not exclude that possibility nor prejudice discussions on a potential 'food, energy and water' SDG. Neither does it exclude discussion of one theme in multiple equations like for example the theme of water which could also be discussed in "water and sanitation". Instead, it would widen our options and more importantly, enable us to identify and consider causal pathways and linkages.

12 Lastly, we would like to touch on the importance of the participation of civil society and other non-governmental actors in the process. We believe the intergovernmental process will greatly profit by their contribution and active engagement in all phases of the process and therefore

we should try and create the necessary space in order to have their voices heard.

13 Thank you.

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