

STATEMENT

delivered by

Mr. Valeri Yotov

to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
on behalf of Bulgaria and Croatia

I have the honor to deliver that statement on behalf of Croatia and my own country, Bulgaria.

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to focus today on some issues we consider of special relevance to the countries with special needs.

Least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS) include the most vulnerable member States of the UN. They made some progress towards achieving the MDGs, though less than other developing countries. The progress remains uneven, varying across and within countries. In addition, their economic structure has been mostly stagnant over the last three decades. Those countries remain highly dependent on aid, they are marginalized in the global economy because of their geographical disadvantages, including small size, vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise, remoteness or isolation from major international markets and prohibitive trade transaction costs, especially for LLDCs and SIDS. These groups of countries are disproportionately affected by the multiple crises, also by high and volatile food and energy prices and the effect of climate change and environmental degradation.

At the same time, the countries from the above mentioned groups have specific population dynamics, they have considerable share of young people in their societies. This reality underlines the priority to elaborate relevant policies and approaches towards issues like sexual and reproductive health and awareness, HIV-prevention, education, involvement of the young people in the decision making at all levels, tackling youth unemployment as well as empowerment of women and gender equality.

Often due to economic reasons young girls and women become victims of human trafficking, violence and sexual exploitation. We are of the view that the new set of human centered SDG should include targets and promote policies and cooperation to eliminate such intolerable forms of human rights violation that generate enormous illicit profits for the international criminal groups.

Having said that, we are of the view that the post 2015 development agenda should include a strong commitment to address the special needs of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS prioritizing measures for climate change adaptation and resilience. Their vulnerabilities should be considered as a cross-cutting issue, making specific reference to these groups in areas of high relevance to them. In this context, reference should also be made to the full and effective implementation of the Istanbul Program of Action, Almaty Program of Action and Mauritius Strategy.

Bulgaria and Croatia, as members of the EU, stand by their commitment to Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The international community should assist those countries to strengthen their policies in the field of good governance, social inclusion and human rights.

Thank you!