

**9th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable
Development Goals**

2-5 March 2014

**Statement by Ambassador Masood Khan, Permanent
Representative of Pakistan on the Co-Chairs paper titled
“Focus Areas of Sustainable Development”**

Co-Chair,

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Bolivia, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We make this statement in our national capacity. We will provide the full text of the statement for circulation.

Co-Chair,

We commend you for producing a compact, distilled paper outlining the focus areas for sustainable development. Your approach is prudent and cautious as you bring about a smooth transition from discussions to analysis. We admire your strong leadership. The trust you have gained should help us unlock the real work ahead of us.

This blueprint that you have prepared gives us a glimpse of what the sustainable development goals should look like.

From now on, the challenges before us are daunting. We have to, with speed and precision, shape the global agenda for the next 15 years. In the coming months, we have to change a *vicious cycle* of

poverty, depleting natural resources, and climate change into a virtuous cycle of eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities and delivering universal access to water, food, education, health services, and energy, among others.

Co-Chairs,

The core mandate of this Open Working Group is to “submit a report to the 68th session of the UNGA containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action”. For Pakistan, fulfilling our mandate remains utmost priority because this is the first time that a genuinely inter-governmental process has been mandated to craft a proposal for development.

The focus areas paper is a starting point for the next phase.

In our view, the intervening period between stocktaking and active negotiations has allowed delegations to consult capitals and assess the document. The paper on ‘focus areas’ should now form the basis of drafting a set of sustainable development goals. OWG10 should not lead to yet another iteration of this paper but make a serious attempt to define specific goals and targets. If we need more consultations to refine the concepts of the paper, we should hold informal consultations prior to OWG10 possibly within the next week or so.

Co-Chairs,

I will now touch on our position on the focus areas.

Of the nineteen (19) thematic areas, we believe that ultimately all of these would be part of the Sustainable Development Goals

framework either in the form of goals, targets or associated indicators and monitoring mechanisms.

From our perspective, three simple criteria should guide our approach for the most apposite placement of each of these areas in goals and targets: (i) ability to promote economic growth and development; (ii) ability to eliminate poverty; and (iii) synchronization with the three pillars.

Co-Chair,

Pakistan supports establishing standalone SDGs on (i) poverty, (ii) education, (iii) health, (iv) gender equality, and women's empowerment, (v) water and sanitation, (vi) energy, (vii) industrialization, (viii) eco-system management, (ix) infrastructure development, (x) employment and decent work, and (xi) global partnership for development. We would also strongly support establishing a goal on sustainable agriculture and rural development, with a sharp focus on food security and nutrition.

Other areas are cross-cutting and transcend a single goal. Reducing inequality, economic growth, climate change, the rule of law, access to justice, and good governance, to name a few, create an obligation for us to ensure that they are integrated across all SDGs.

Co-Chair,

I would also like to highlight a few elements for the broader framework in which these SDG's should be conceived. These elements are drawn from our national experience in the implementation of the MDGs.

One, it is axiomatic that growth and development cannot be sustained without stability and security.

Two, we should create a holistic agenda that works for both quantitative output and qualitative outcomes.

Three, diversity of approaches must be clearly reflected in meeting common global goals. Pakistan, for instance, would focus on enhancing access. Other countries, especially those where access is less of a concern, could focus on transforming their infrastructure towards renewable energy.

Four, we should recognize country specific challenges. For instance, in case of Pakistan, for the past 12 years, we have been fighting a war on terrorism.

Five, there is a need to set targets which are aligned with the resources available to achieve them. Therefore pegging means of implementation to a robust, revamped and straightened global partnership to achieve these goals would be critical.

Six, it is necessary to establish medium-term goals and markers to ensure that the prospects of a 15 years horizon does not allow governments - who usually stay in office for five years - to relegate achieving these targets and implementation to the incoming governments. More importantly, instead of having stagnant end-point targets, short and medium term goals, as well as disaggregated targets at sub-national level and across gender and other divides, need to be identified

Seven, governments alone cannot meet goals and targets. It is therefore important that all stakeholders agree on fulfilling their respective roles to achieve the designated goals jointly.

Eight, a more effective monitoring mechanism would be critical for the new agenda. Whenever, the actual performance strays from the roadmap, there should be in-built mechanisms for course-correction.

Nine, There have been calls for localizing implementation. During the consultations on the MDGs framework, this message has come consistently from local governments, civil society and academia.

Ten, during the consultations conducted in Pakistan another, a very clear emphasis was laid on the reliability of the data. An important lesson for the post-2015 development agenda is that there should be adequate investment in developing the capacities of statistical machineries to generate, compile and analyze timely, reliable and accessible data.

Eleven, *enablers* are as important as goals. Regional and international peace and security, conflict resolution to address root causes, peace making, peacekeeping and peace building in conflict and post-conflict situations, and above all promotion and protection of human rights are crucial for creating a salutary environment for economic growth and development.

We also agree that the rule of law should be separated from the the peace and security cluster because it applies equally to non-conflict situations.

In terms of methodology, the Co-Chairs face the task of finding a *modus vivendi* for dealing with self-standing goals and cross-cutting issues. We should avoid a Silos approach in a manner that the focus on singular goals is not blurred.

I thank you Co-Chair