

Open Working on Group Sustainable Development Goals

OWG session 9

3 – 5 March 2014

Australia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

Troika statement on the focus areas paper of the OWG co-chairs

4 March 2014

We thank both co-chairs for their efforts and guidance so far, as well as for their report. We look forward to their continued leadership.

SDGs should be based on the Millennium Declaration, the Rio +20 Outcome Document and the Outcome Document of the MDG Special Event. They should address all three dimensions of sustainable development.

We welcome the broad consensus that eradicating poverty in all its forms is the overarching priority. We need to complete the unfinished business of the MDGs and end extreme poverty, including a target to bring those living on less than \$1.25 a day to zero.

We have many comments on the focus areas, but we will confine ourselves to the following key points:

Gender equality and women's empowerment

Gender equality and women's empowerment are inextricably linked to the achievement of all goals. We support both a dedicated goal and integration across the framework. In addition to the issues raised in the co-chairs' summary, we would like to highlight the following areas:

- End all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, and Female Genital Mutilation
- End child, early and forced marriage
- Ensure equal access to, and control over, assets and resources, and the right of women to own and inherit property, sign a contract, register a business and open a bank account, and
- Ensure the protection and fulfillment of sexual and reproductive rights

Focus area 19: peaceful and non-violent societies, capable institutions

If one thing is clear from our experiences with the MDGs, it is that omitting separate goals on peaceful and stable societies, and on accountable and effective institutions will make any sustainable development agenda woefully incomplete and inadequate. There is an abundance of evidence to illustrate this point.

As well as outcomes, these goals are enablers, too, just like education is an enabler, or health, or means of implementation. They are key to an ambitious and transformative goal framework for sustainable development. That is why, Mr. co-chair, we call for two separate goals on peaceful and stable societies and on accountable and effective institutions.

Peaceful and Stable Societies

A goal on peaceful and stable societies would truly be universal. Personal safety for individuals is a priority for everyone around the world. Not only do 50% percent of the world's poor live in conflict affected and fragile situations, but of the half a million violent deaths every year, three quarters are in countries considered to be peaceful.¹ So this agenda is relevant to everyone. The findings of the Myworld survey confirm that 'freedom from crime and violence' is in the top seven priorities listed by people globally. We would like to suggest the following areas for consideration under this goal:

- Reduce the violent death rate
- Reduce the number of IDPs and refugees
- Reduce organized crime, including illicit arms transfers and trafficking
- Enhance the capacity, professionalism, accountability and legitimacy of security forces, the police and the judiciary
- Ensure universal access to justice

Accountable and Effective Institutions

Accountable and effective institutions are at the heart of the social contract between the state and its citizens, and both an outcome and enabler of development. Citizens want governments that are capable and responsive and able to deliver on their commitments. The Myworld survey found that 'an honest and responsive government' is among the top four priorities of ordinary people. We would like to suggest the following areas for consideration under a goal on accountable and effective institutions:

- Provide universal legal identity
- Guarantee the public's right to information, and access to government data

¹ Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011, Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development 2011.

- Ensure officials and institutions are held accountable, and reduce bribery and corruption
- Ensure people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest, and access to independent media and information
- Ensure participation in democratic politics and civic engagement

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

We would like to highlight again the call by 51 member states during OWG8 to ensure the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals, including universal access to sexual and reproductive health information, education, and services. The rights component of sexual and reproductive health is essential to realising a decent life for all. We call emphatically for the inclusion of SRHR in the post-2015 agenda.

Economic Growth

We welcome the focus on economic growth, which needs to be both inclusive and sustainable. As well as international markets that support economic growth, we need national enabling environments that create:

- Positive incentives for innovation and investment
- A fair and predictable environment for sustainable business growth
- Secure property and land rights
- Efficient and effective mechanisms for enforcing commercial agreements and resolving disputes

Health and Populations Dynamics

Regarding the focus area on health and population dynamics we emphasize the importance of universal access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable modern methods of family planning, and the health needs of youth and adolescents.

Environmental Degradation and Climate Change

We agree with many delegations that tackling environmental degradation and climate change and meeting the 2 degrees objective is essential to poverty eradication and sustainable development. We want to ensure that the SDGs integrate environmental sustainability and climate change throughout, especially in key sectors such as energy, agriculture, water, natural resources and infrastructure.

Disaster Risk Reduction

In addition, we join the many delegations who have said that disaster risk reduction is an essential element in achieving the post-2015 agenda.

Means of Implementation

We acknowledge the importance of Means of Implementation (MoI) to the achievement of the SDGs. While finance issues are being covered by the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, we are ready to engage in a discussion on the non-financial aspects of what a global partnership should cover.

We need to address MoI as a whole; trying to split it up across the SDGs is impractical. In addition to an overall discussion on MoI, we could, as the delegate from Colombia proposed, highlight the benefits of multi-stakeholder partnerships in specific areas that would make the realisation of the SDGs possible.

CBDR

We take note of the statements on CBDR. We underline that, as defined in Rio principle 7, CBDR applies specifically to global environmental degradation. It is not an overarching principle for the SDGs. We are committed to a universal agenda with shared responsibilities and contributions reflecting countries' evolving capabilities and circumstances.

Conclusion

In closing, we would like to highlight our commitment to an ambitious, transformative, universal post-2015 agenda. In this regard, we would like to emphasize that leaving no one behind means not discriminating against anyone regardless of their gender, age, race or ethnicity, religion of belief, disability status, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Thank you.