



**Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Sweden**

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**Swedish statement at OWG 9 on co-chairs report on focus areas**

Mr. Co-chair,

**First**, I would like to associate myself with the statement made by the European Union, delivered yesterday.

**Second**, I want to thank you for the paper on focus areas as well as the paper summarizing the eight thematic sessions of the OWG. These form a good basis for our continued deliberations. The focus area paper is generally well balanced, taking a comprehensive approach to sustainable development. We welcome the integration of all the three sustainable development dimensions in most of the focus areas.

**Third**, we have a few general cross cutting remarks, also in response to what other delegations have mentioned;

- We strongly believe in the underlying principal of universality, meaning a sustainable development framework with universal goals and targets with differentiation based on capacities and capabilities in terms of pace of implementation reflected in differentiation in indicators.
- A rights based approach and the respect for all human rights should more clearly permeate all focus areas.
- Climate change should feature strongly as a cross-cutting issue throughout focus areas, supporting international and national measures to reach the 2 degree target through addressing the drivers of climate change and the need for adaptation, being supportive of the objective of the UNFCCC without interfering with the mandate of those negotiations.
- We appreciate the efforts to highlight inter-linkages in the paper, but these need to be further elaborated if we are to have a truly transformative agenda.
- And we agree with Colombia that we need to move from quantitative input targets, e.g. number of kids in school, to qualitative outcome targets, e.g. lifelong learning for all.

**Forth**, on specific focus areas we have the following comments;

**Focus area 8, Economic growth;** this area does not properly integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development. It needs to be reformulated to sustainable, inclusive, and sustained economic growth. Important elements for such growth are e.g. decent jobs and moving towards low-carbon, resource efficient economies. Unsustainable growth will not be sustained growth. Promotion of fiscal policy measures for sustainable use of natural resources, including investments in environmental technology and innovations are important. This focus area could be clustered with focus area 9 and/or 11, which better integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.

**Focus area 5; Gender equality and women's empowerment;** the language needs to be strengthened to reflect what most member states recognized, i.e. that gender inequality is the most pervasive form of inequality in the world today. In addition to calling for a standalone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment, most member states have requested mainstreaming gender targets and indicators across the goal framework. This also means that inter-linkages need to be shown to all other focus areas. In addition women's rights need to be emphasized, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. In this context let me recall the horrifying numbers on maternal mortality that still exist and the huge human and financial cost to society of SRHR not being fulfilled. We also need to focus on true economic and political empowerment of women. We gave many examples on how to do this at the last OWG and I refer to our statement from that session.

**Focus area 17: Ecosystems and biodiversity;** We welcome this focus area and would like to see the inclusion of valuation of ecosystem services and biodiversity into national accounting. Losing biodiversity erodes the basis for sustainable development by undermining ecosystems services and social and ecological resilience, which in turns reduces the capacity of societies to adapt to climate change and disasters. Sustainable land use in agriculture and forestry as well as long term sustainable fisheries are crucial to ensure food security and contribute to economic growth. Hence the inter-linkages to economic growth need to be highlighted.

**Focus area 19; Peaceful and non-violent societies and capable institutions.** As we said in the last OWG, this needs to be divided into two focus areas, peaceful societies and freedom from violence on the one hand and good governance and the rule of law on the other.

**On peace and freedom from violence,** we completely agree with Papua New Guinea (speaking on behalf of the Pacific Island States) that "without peace there will be no development and without development there will be no poverty eradication". We have clear evidence of the strong linkages between peace and development, not least the fact that conflict-affected and fragile states have had the greatest difficulties in

achieving the MDGs. Leaving no one behind means that we have to address the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. We need to be realistic; we will not have economic, social and environmental development when people are not safe/free from violence. If people do not dare to go to work, to school, to the hospital, or to the well to fetch water for fear of violence, what is the point of investing in new hospitals, schools, wells or in new technology? I also want to underline that violence is a universal problem and freedom from violence is therefore a universal concern.

**Rule of law and good governance** are also preconditions for sustainable development and goals in and of themselves. Challenges are universal, in both violent and non-violent contexts. Good governance and rule of law need to be mainstreamed across focus areas since they are fundamental requirements for sustainable management of natural and economic resources. We have already given examples of clearly measurable targets and indicators in this context. Inter-linkages to most other focus areas, including peace and freedom from violence need to be underlined.

**Means of implementation (MOI)** which has been mentioned by many delegations, is a focus area very different from the others, since it is an enabler rather than a goal. The non-financial aspects of MOI should be addressed by the OWG, such as technology transfer, transparency, ICT and not least migration, where a number of actions could be taken to capture the positive effects of migration.

We believe that MOI should be addressed as a generic cross-cutting principle in the sustainable development framework. It would not be constructive, conducive or practical to build different specific MOI models into each and every SDG, or every target. This would risk backfiring and would not be desirable. However, this would not preclude specific multistakeholder global partnerships being set up on an ad-hoc basis, where this adds value and there is stakeholder interest. On the contrary these should be encouraged.

**Finally**, Mr. co-chair, as we move forward towards the design of a transformative, integrated and coherent, universally applicable sustainable development agenda, we would suggest that the OWG devote adequate attention to the issue of methodology. We need a clear understanding of how potential goals and targets are interlinked and how they can be measured. And we need to take into account the need for timely, disaggregated indicators to measure progress, so that we can build a framework for follow-up of the new agenda based on accountability and transparency. We would appreciate your views, co-chairs, on how you propose to handle these methodological issues going forward.

Thank you.