

Remarks by Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski, Canada Permanent Representative to the United Nations, for the US/Canada/Israel Team, 2nd Session of the SDG Open Working Group, on Poverty Eradication

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Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to take the floor on behalf of our team comprised of the United States, Canada and Israel.

Further to the team's intervention at the initial session, Mr. Co-Chair, we would like to underscore that we see poverty eradication as the overarching core and an essential starting point for this group's work. As such, we think that it is an important and a welcome signal that this is one of the first thematic issues to be addressed by the group. We believe that the eradication of poverty has to be essential to the integrated post-2015 development agenda. And we have before us a historic opportunity to make a decisive push against poverty and its worse deprivations.

As many noted yesterday, poverty is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. We need to understand the drivers and trends in order to craft solutions. We found yesterday's panel and the subsequent discussions very informative and productive as they injected some new thoughts and ideas into our discussions and gave us all some important food for thought. This was true not only of the presentations by the experts but also the very thought provoking questions that came from the floor. And we heard a number of interesting ideas on which our team intends to reflect as we move forward and we would like to underline some of those issues that we will be considering.

First, as many have emphasized yesterday and today, the importance of ensuring that poverty eradication is central to the working of this group is a welcome development. Our challenge will be in determining the most effective approach to addressing poverty eradication within the next generation goals. As Mr. Kjørven asked yesterday, "is it better to have a standalone poverty eradication goal or to address poverty eradication as an overarching issue for our subcomponent of all these goals?" This is something we will need to consider carefully. There also seems to be agreement on the multidimensional nature of poverty and Dr. Alkire's presentation challenged us to think about how we would want to

capture this multidimensionality in a goal indicator framework through a single indicator, a composite index, or a combination of both.

With respect to interlinkages, Mr. Sundaram argued that we should retain the poverty–hunger link, while others suggested the poverty–hunger link within the MDG framework meant that there wasn't sufficient focus on the hunger element. While many have stressed the importance of interlinkages, we will have to be mindful of some of these challenges and potential tradeoffs as our discussions move forward.

Some very valuable national experiences were also highlighted of which we would like to make note of.

Our colleague from Tanzania stressed that many countries already have goals and visions for 2020 and 2030 or beyond and it will be important that we are thinking about a framework that will support and catalyze the work already underway in many countries.

Again, as we said in our initial intervention, we believe that the unfinished MDG business also has to be fully reflected in our future agenda.

And we were very interested in the proposal from Egypt on Wednesday about how we might try to carry forward the MDG agenda into post–2015 and believe that this proposal merits consideration in greater detail.

We also take note of the importance of partnerships, which has been underlined by many interventions and has come through loud and clear. And a major element of poverty alleviation is know–how and we need to foster the sharing of this know–how among all countries.

Even in these few short days Mr. Co–Chair, it has been interesting to hear about examples of work already underway in different countries. The Brazilian Zero Hunger campaign was held up as a successful example of a national effort to eradicate poverty. And Bolivia and Nepal and others have had success in reducing poverty among the poorest populations of their countries.

We think this open working group would benefit from learning more about these successes as we grapple with the complexities of the challenge ahead of us, but I think we've made a pretty decent start. I thank you.

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