

## REPUBLIC OF MALTA



Statement by Mr. Bernard Charles Mifsud

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Co-Chairs,

At the outset we would like to thank you for your continued hard work and able leadership in this Open Working Group, as well as for your revised document dated 18 March 2014. We would like to make the following comments on a number of focus areas identified in your document which are a priority for my delegation.

### **Migration**

We are pleased that in the document under focus areas 12 and 19, the document includes separate references to migration in an appropriate format. As we have stated in the 9<sup>th</sup> session of this Open Working Group, while we recognize the importance of migration as a multi-faceted issue, we emphasize the fact that migration should be accurately reflected in any document. We therefore strongly support the reference to planned, well-managed and legal migration; and improving planned and managed migration policies within the two respective focus areas.

### **Education**

Education is one of the most important keys to success for sustainable development, and thus for the whole post-2015 process. We had highlighted our views on this topic during the last meeting, and we thus welcome the inclusion of universal, free primary and secondary education for girls and boys, among the other areas identified in the document. Such universal access to education for everyone is essential, not only as a basic human right, but also as one of the main vehicles for eradication of poverty and development in all countries. We see all issues in focus area 4 as a solid basis on which we could build SDGs.

### **Health and Population Dynamics**

Focus area 3 includes a variety of areas which are important in realizing the right to the highest standard of physical and mental health. We are pleased that ideas presented by my delegation during the last meeting are also reflected under focus area 3.

### **Gender equality and women's empowerment**

Focus area 5 is an essential area for the success of future SDGs. We all recognize that there is still much to do in ensuring women's empowerment and gender equality. We would like to once again point out however that point (i) in focus area 5 is unacceptable to my delegation in its current form. We urge the co-chairs to focus, in their next revision, on what point (i) would actually mean in reality rather than to include non-consensual terms. We believe that all UNMS can agree to specific areas that are clearly defined, quantifiable and doable, rather than to include specific language which has proven difficult and highly controversial in similar discussions.

I thank you.