

**TENTH SESSION OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (OWG-SDGS)**

31st March to 4th April 2014, New York

**INTERVENTION ON
CLUSTER 1: POVERTY ERADICATION AND EQUALITY**

Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair for giving me the floor,

1. I have the honour to deliver these remarks on Cluster 1 on behalf of the troika consisting of Thailand, Vietnam and Bhutan. We fully support the statements delivered by Bolivia on behalf of G77 and China, Benin on behalf of the LDCs and Zambia on behalf of the LLDCs.
2. Eradication of poverty continues to remain a major obstacle to all aspects of development for all developing countries and an overriding priority in our national development efforts within the broader goal of improving the conditions for people to find happiness. We therefore support a stand-alone goal on eradicating poverty in all its forms. We reiterate the importance of building productive capacity, which remains a high priority for developing countries and particularly for LDCs to tackle issues surrounding poverty.

Mr. Co-Chair,

- We welcome the recognition of poverty in its multiple dimensional forms. The threshold for defining poverty must be meaningful. The target for eradicating poverty in the SDGs must be multidimensional so that poverty threshold is based both on minimum income for a minimum standard of living as well as setting minimum condition for attainment of other targets such as health and education. Evidence shows that empowerment of people cannot be materialized through just ensuring their rights but also through providing social safety nets such as equal access to quality education and health services. In this regard, we are pleased to see importance of inclusive economic growth being highlighted in the focus areas.
3. **Mr. Co-Chairs**, please allow me now to address this issue in Bhutan's national capacity,
 4. Evidence shows that people living in the mountains constitute among the world's poorest. The social and economic marginalization of mountain people combined with the hardship of living in difficult, remote environments tends to increase their rates of poverty, malnutrition and hunger. And yet, mountain people remain custodians of the rich natural resources, which provide a range of ecosystem services that are drivers of sustainable development. Therefore, if poverty eradication is to be addressed meaningfully, it must contain appropriate goals and targets aimed at reducing poverty in the mountain areas.
 5. Given the importance of looking at reducing poverty holistically, Bhutan has adopted a Multidimensional Poverty Index that comprises of thirteen indicators. OWG's recognition of the multidimensional aspect of poverty would certainly resonate with us.
 6. Thank you.