

Statement on Focus Area 8: Economic growth, Employment and Infrastructure

May 7, 2014 – To be read by Olimar Maisonet, MGCY

Thank you co-chair,

Although we welcome the proposals for economic growth, employment, and infrastructure, we are unsure whether this is the most appropriate consolidation of focus areas. Economic growth can contribute to sustainable development but also has the potential to undermine. We suggest that employment should have its own stand-alone goal, and for infrastructure to be merged with Focus Area 9. That said, if such a grouping remains we suggest the following wording: ***Inclusive economic growth, employment and decent work for all, and resilient infrastructure.***

On Economic Growth:

We could support target 8a) but only if language focused on equality is incorporated. As such it should read "sustain **differentially high** income growth at the bottom 40% of the income distribution of each country to reduce income inequalities by 2030".

This target won't be achieved unless there is an effort to guarantee that economic growth delivers adequate resources to state budgets. Consequently, we suggest developing macroeconomic policies that **ensure progressive taxes, including on high net worth individuals, paid where economic activity genuinely takes place and subject to tax policy that at all levels genuinely participatory of all countries and sections of society and enables all governments to effectively raise the revenues needed for sustainable development from all actors able to pay.**

We add that a minimum global corporate tax rate could be a transformative centre piece to the new development agenda. A minimum global tax would address capital flight, trade mispricing as well as generate revenue for universal basic incomes.

All countries have developed and implemented low carbon, climate resilient development strategies and action plans that keeps all nations, corporations and people individually living within their share of the maximum allowable footprint that would allow human life to be supported by the planet.

On Employment:

We would like to address a concern that was raised earlier this week under Focus Area 1. Contrary to what many delegations have said, "full employment" is an achievable goal. It has been recognized in several processes at international levels, including Rio+20 and the MDGs process. Technically, full employment is not 0 per cent unemployment, but a level of unemployment that does not undermine macroeconomic stability.

We strongly support the retention of all targets related to employment (8b, c, h, i, j) and throughout other focus areas—though we would appreciate consistency in language on employment and decent work with target 8b throughout the document. In particular, we strongly support 8b and 8h though on 8b we would propose to enumerate the four pillars of decent work.

We also propose the following targets on:

1. ***Social Security and Universal Social Protection: By 2030 extend social security and universal social protection, to those in need, including older persons, people with disabilities, unemployed, children, women and youth, in particular through the implementation of social protection floors in line with ILO convention 102 and recommendation 202***
2. ***Unpaid Carework: By 2030, Recognise and value paid and unpaid care work and address the negative impacts of the unpaid care economy on women's ability to fully enjoy their economic, social, cultural and political rights, women's access to education.***

3. **Traditional Livelihoods:** *By 2030, ensure official recognition of **traditional livelihoods** as an economic sector and traditional occupations as forms of employment as essential to achieving and sustaining Indigenous Peoples' and other communities' well-being.*
4. **Lifelong education and training particularly for older workers:** *By 2030 all workers, **particularly older workers**, are provided access to **life-long education**, vocational training, re-skilling or other means to retain their employability.*
5. **Minimum wage:** *All countries legislate for a minimum living wage covering all forms of employment and all workers. % of workers being paid less than 50% of median wage.*

On Infrastructure:

When thinking about sustainable infrastructure we need to consider the needs of the population and the uses for it. Consequently, new infrastructure development should be efficient, ensure accountability, minimize carbon footprint, and provide universal access to basic services for all people. We suggest that free access to information and communication technologies are considered basic service as well.

Furthermore, we are concerned that the reference to disaster risk reduction has been removed from the current version. The potential of this target has been weakened with only a reference to 'sustainable infrastructure'. In this light we suggest that target **8g** replace sustainable with **resilient**.

We would like to suggest the following targets:

By 2030, guarantee that all new infrastructure investment (including energy, telecommunication, transport, housing, public buildings, schools, health facilities) is implemented following social and environmental safeguards and

By 2030, ensure that public procurement follows effective sustainable development guidelines.

Thank you.