

EUROPEAN UNION - KEY MESSAGES FOR THEMATIC SESSIONS OF THE STOCKTAKING ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA, 19-21 JANUARY 2015, NEW YORK

Session 1: Integrating sustainable development goals and targets into the post-2015 development agenda

- The EU and its Member States welcome the proposal from the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, as agreed by the General Assembly.
- The work done together shows the importance of maintaining in the agenda the balanced and integrated approach of the OWG proposal for SDGs, which bring together the many interrelated challenges and opportunities. We need to maintain and strengthen synergies, coherence and inter-linkages throughout the goals and targets. The agenda should address the challenges and opportunities as set out in the OWG proposal.
- An important area for further work will be to ensure well-defined indicators, allowing for implementation and monitoring of a final set of targets that are specific, measurable, and achievable, preserving the important political balance that the OWG proposal represents.
- We also understand that the UN-system is already engaged in preparatory work required for the development of the necessary indicators, and the EU would welcome further clarity on the parameters and timing of this work.
- We believe the UN Statistical Commission work on indicators should include a broader set of UN actors, in particular the UN Task Team, and the scientific community. Their work should build on existing approaches on indicators.
- Targets should have a transformative impact, avoid duplication and be consistent with UN standards and agreements, and with international legal frameworks, such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- We consider that the UN Secretariat Task Team is best placed to conduct a "technical proofing" under the condition of clearly defined criteria. It will be important to preserve the political balance and breadth, including preserving the inter-linkages across the three dimensions, of the OWG's SDG proposal. The technical proofing should also not lead to any backsliding against existing international commitments. International treaties, agreements, conventions and covenants must be respected and nothing in the agenda should undermine commitments taken in them. It is also clear that the technical improvements that the Task

Team may suggest for our consideration will be retained only if they muster general support. This is an important element of our collective work, which could be usefully made available to us by the Task Team at the March Session with an update at the February Session.

Session 2: The Declaration

- To complement the EU's earlier intervention, we want to share the key following points:

We need to elaborate together a strong and inspiring political declaration for several reasons.

It will be important to communicate effectively our overarching vision and objectives. We will not achieve our aims only through governmental action. We need to mobilize and facilitate engagement by civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, and make them active partners in our quest. Local authorities also will have a key role in implementation. For this reason we believe that the Declaration should be a concise and accessible part of the agenda which conveys the transformative nature of the new agenda and the shared values and principles on which it is based. In this regard, we should agree on strong political key messages.

We have sound foundations to build on, including several UN leading documents, such as the Millennium Declaration, the Rio+20 outcome document, and other relevant outcome documents.

Recently, the UNSG synthesis report has provided useful orientations to pull together these overarching messages. It presents a vision for carrying forward a universal transformative agenda for the next 15 years and beyond, underpinned by human rights and aimed to end poverty, transform lives, and protect the planet. We welcome the innovative approach to use an integrated set of essential elements or key commitments to facilitate communication of the sustainable development agenda and look forward to further discussions on this. We also appreciate the emphasis in the report of addressing these essential elements together in an integrated fashion. The post-2015 agenda must reflect the complexity of sustainable development and poverty eradication. At the same time a clear and concise framework is also essential for ownership and effective implementation by all governments and all relevant stakeholders. A framework that can easily be communicated and understood is crucial to success and to ensuring public support for the agenda.

The Declaration must put upfront the objective to address the key interrelated challenges of eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions. This must be done in a coordinated and coherent manner, leaving no-one behind.

It must show our renewed determination to end extreme poverty in one generation, building on and completing the unfinished business of the MDGs. We note with concern that

conflict-affected and fragile states are still lagging behind. As emphasised in the OWG proposal, the declaration should promote the disaggregation of data by income, gender, age, and other factors; this will be essential to ensure that targets are met by all relevant groups and that no one is left behind.

It must also state an ambitious commitment for the transformation to global sustainable development and the respect of planetary boundaries to maintain the basis of life also for future generations.

The EU has already highlighted a series of guiding principles that need to be embedded and highlighted in the Declaration, including universality and mutual accountability.

The declaration should also highlight the concept on a new global partnership as overarching for the post-2015-agenda for sustainable development with universality, shared responsibility, monitoring and mutual accountability, multi-stake-holder-involvement as key elements.

The EU considers that business as usual is not an option, whether in terms of human dignity, equality or sustainability. Likewise, we stress the transformative and universal nature of the agenda to come in which all countries and stakeholders, including the private sector, should play their full part.

The new agenda must be people-centred, based on human rights, and combat discrimination, gender inequality and gender based violence.

It should address the structural causes of poverty, inequality and violence including by strengthening effective inclusive and democratic institutions, democratic governance and rule of law.

The agenda must also recognise that environmental sustainability is fundamental to ensuring the sustainable prosperity and well-being of all people within planetary boundaries. It must unlock the drivers of the green economy, make our economies and lifestyles more equitable and sustainable and more effective in reducing poverty.

The post-2015 agenda must all also effectively contribute towards addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

Only by addressing all these elements will the new agenda be transformative.

Finally, the Declaration should also convey a clear message on the importance of effective implementation of the new agenda by all stakeholders. The ongoing work to make the fragmented UN development system with overlapping mandates more effective, efficient and coherent, as often referred to "fit for purpose", at headquarters as well as at country level should be highlighted as an important element for achieving the agenda.

Session 3: Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

- To complement the EU's earlier intervention, we want to share the key following points:

General

- Effective implementation of the post-2015 agenda requires the full range of actions, financial and non-financial, public and private, domestic and international.
- We consider that preparations for the Third UN Financing for Development (FFD) Conference in Addis Ababa in July and the Post-2015 Summit in September should reinforce each other. The FFD Conference should address the broad range of means of implementation for the post-2015 agenda, including both enabling policy frameworks and mobilisation and effective use of financial resources thereby making a positive contribution to the Post-2015 Summit.
- It is therefore important that we work to ensure coherence between our discussions in this group, and those taking place in the FFD track. [We welcome the statements along these lines made by the Co-Facilitators of the FfD process today.] We also believe that a joint session between the two tracks will be useful for our discussions in April.
- As the post-2015 agenda is universal in nature, the new global partnership needs to be based on the principles of shared responsibility, mutual accountability and respective capacity. The global partnership should encompass necessary sub-national, national, regional and international efforts by all countries.
- The global partnership needs to be based on principles of sustainability, human rights, good governance, rule of law, support for democratic institutions, inclusiveness, non-discrimination and gender equality.
- Countries at all stages of development must shoulder their share of responsibility, with appropriate and ambitious commitments for all, taking account of levels of development, national contexts and capacities while respecting national policies and priorities. In this context the EU and its MS commit to playing their full part in all aspects of the agenda including means of implementation alongside other partners, including new and emerging actors.
- New sets of multi-stakeholder partnerships, operating at all levels and with the participation of the private sector and civil society, academia, foundations, knowledge institutions and local authorities, are required for implementation of the post-2015 agenda.
- While some countries have raised CBDR in this context, we are of the opinion that CBDR as set out in Rio Principle 7 in 1992 cannot apply as an overarching principle to a holistic

agenda. It does not integrate the idea of *dynamic differentiation* as stated in Rio 2012: depending on realities, capacities and levels of development of countries. Moreover, it is worth recalling that Rio principle 7 has a clear limitation to environmental degradation.

Non-financial

- Countries' domestic environments, in terms of policies, practices, institutions and resources, are central to successful implementation of the post-2015 agenda.
- In particular, countries must ensure policy environments conducive to the success of the framework. All countries should promote policy coherence for sustainable development at all levels and review and assess their policies, as appropriate, in order to support the successful implementation of the framework.
- We note in particular the importance of sound policies in areas including trade, science, migration, technology and innovation, regulatory frameworks, economic instruments, knowledge and expertise sharing. Countries need to promote effective and stable institutions, transparency of policies and systems and accountability to their citizens through democratic processes, based on the rule of law.
- All policies at national level need to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs both domestically and internationally. This requires systems for coordination, analysis, dialogue between stakeholders, monitoring and review.
- Sustainable use of natural resources is critical to supporting long term development and growth, and advancing the valuation of natural resources and ecosystem services will be important to this effort. We recognise that biodiversity is a critical foundation of the earth's life support system on which our present and future welfare depends as emphasised by the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- The EU will continue to support countries, including those in situations of fragility, to establish functioning and accountable institutions that deliver basic services and support poverty reduction and sustainable development.
- Trade, technology and capacity building are important elements of means of implementation which must be taken forward in the context of appropriate national, regional and international frameworks.
- Each country needs to maximise the potential of trade for inclusive and sustainable growth and development, to promote the private sector and investment and to integrate into global and regional value chains and markets.

- All countries should increase bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation on science, technology, innovation and solutions-oriented research.

Financial

- A comprehensive approach to tackling sustainable development challenges is important. All financial resources should underpin sustainable development in all its dimensions. Effective and results-oriented use of all domestic and international finance needs to be a key part of the debate. Mobilisation and effective use of resources needs to be an integral part of the systems for coordination, analysis, dialogue between stakeholders, monitoring and review of implementation.
- Development cooperation remains a key priority for the EU, which has formally undertaken to collectively commit 0.7% of GNI to official development assistance by 2015, thus making a decisive step towards achieving the MDGs, and by which the EU and its Member States reaffirmed all their individual and collective Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments, taking into account the exceptional budgetary circumstances.
- An efficient and transparent domestic public finance system, underpinned by sound policy and governance, is an indispensable precondition for sustainable growth and essential for a well-functioning state and the provision of public goods and services. Effective measures to counter illicit financial flows on both national and international level are essential to retain valuable resources, build trust and sound incentives in the economy.
- We also note the need for the gradual elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies that are incompatible with sustainable development, including for fossil fuels.
- International public finance is particularly important for the poorest and most vulnerable countries. All international providers - including high income countries and emerging economies- should contribute their fair share. Collectively, the EU is the largest donor, providing more than 50% of global ODA in recent years. The EU remains committed to playing its part.
- The key for maximising the effective contribution of the private sector to sustainable development is for governments to create a supportive business environment. In addition, all countries should together ensure an international policy environment of transparent and equitable rules including on trade and financial markets.
- Innovative financing instruments and policies can also help public finance leverage private finance. Private sector partners should be encouraged and enabled to pursue new opportunities arising from transformation towards a green economy, and also

commit to and implement the principles of good corporate social and environmental responsibility.

Session 4: Follow up and review.

To complement the EU's earlier intervention, we want to share the key following points:

Importance of review and monitoring

- The post-2015 agenda will set goals and targets that are global in aspiration, and universal in application. Progress will depend on countries and other actors working in partnership and upholding their commitments. The post-2015 agenda should be guided by the principle of accountability, the fundamental requirements of which are ownership of the whole agenda by all countries, transparency and effective and efficient monitoring and review of progress. It should also significantly increase people's ability to effectively and meaningfully participate in and contribute to the policy choices affecting them and to hold governments and other actors accountable for progress.
- Therefore, a solid, efficient and effective approach to the review, monitoring and accountability of the post-2015 agenda at national, regional and global level will be crucial in order to assess progress towards the achievement of goals and targets. The review should be based on a multi-stakeholder approach. All stakeholders should contribute to the implementation of the agenda
- The EU is committed to transparency and accountability, as demonstrated for example by the annual EU Accountability Reports on Financing for Development.

Principles for the review framework

- The monitoring, accountability and review framework for the post-2015 agenda should be science-based and support the effective and coordinated implementation of the post-2015 goals and targets; it should be based on effective multilateralism, openness, meaningful participation, transparency and mutual accountability, supporting the citizen-state relationship. It should be constructive and positive with lessons learned an integral part of the framework, including an element of peer review to share best practice and should enable an international call to action when progress is off track. It should benefit from the necessary support from an efficient and effective UN system as well as from other relevant institutions, and involve all partners and stakeholders including civil society, the scientific community, media and the private sector. It should be anchored in strong national ownership.
- An effective monitoring and accountability framework should be developed within the upcoming intergovernmental processes, including a key oversight role for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in the follow-up and review of progress of the post-2015 agenda

at global level. Existing mechanisms and processes should be used in a coordinated manner wherever possible to avoid duplication and limit administrative burden.

- Robust and measurable indicators, with a focus on results, will be essential for reporting and should if not yet available be developed taking account of experience, best practice and expert knowledge as well as citizen voices for accountability. It will be crucial to strengthen the use of existing data and ensure that higher quality data is collected in a coordinated manner, and to capitalise on new information technologies. In this regard the Friends of the Chair group on broader measures of progress and the Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for sustainable development have made a useful contribution.
- Indicators can also reinforce the transformative nature of the Post-2015 agenda by guiding and monitoring actions to achieve multiple targets. Therefore it would be valuable to consider indicators covering more than one target and thereby securing synergies between targets and goals and leading to fewer and more powerful indicators.
- As emphasised in the OWG proposal, disaggregation of data by income, gender, age, and other factors will be essential to ensure that targets are met by all relevant groups and that no one is left behind. We must recognise the need to look beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to broader measures of progress, including social, human and natural capital, to address a more comprehensive idea of sustainable livelihoods and well-being.
- We recognise the importance of developing statistical capacities, especially in developing countries, to enable effective accountability. We also note that Eurostat and Member State statistical offices will have a significant role to play in supporting the evolving process of sustainable development monitoring.

Need for strategic approach

- It is important that discussions on the review and monitoring arrangements take account of discussions on further technical proofing of targets, work on developing indicators, and also link with preparations for the HLPF session under ECOSOC in June/July.