



Intervention by Sri Lanka at the Third Session (the session on SDGs, targets and indicators) of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda,

23rd March 2015

Distinguished co-facilitators,

At the outset, let me thank you for convening this session. I also wish to thank the Chair of the UN Statistical Commission for the presentation of the preliminary working draft of report on the process of the development of an indicator framework for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda, and the set of provisional indicators contained therein.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We wish to reiterate our position with regard to some of the issues pertaining to the development of indicators for the new global development agenda.

Distinguished co-facilitators,

We earnestly believe that the development of indicators for the post- 2015 development agenda is a technical process, and are pleased that the UN Statistical Commission has started working on the elaboration of indicators. In this regard, we welcome the decision to establish an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals. We also welcome the fact that the terms of reference of the said Group would be approved by the Statistical Commission.

It is of paramount importance that this Inter-Agency and Expert Group should be of an intergovernmental nature, led by National Statistical Offices. It is also important for the Group to work in an open and transparent manner.

As the indicators would not be negotiated by the member states under the intergovernmental negotiation process of the post-2015 development agenda, the Statistical Commission and other UN Agencies involved in the elaboration of indicators must be provided with a broad political guidance by the member states.

Distinguished co-facilitators,

We must not forget that the indicators developed under this process are only for global follow-up and review of the post- 2015 development agenda. Because of this global nature, the proposed list of indicators should be limited in number. The brevity of the list is achievable if indicators that can measure several targets could be developed. It must also be noted that the process is not warranted to develop national indicators as national indicators cannot be decided at global level.

Member states must be allowed to implement the new global development agenda according to their national circumstances and capabilities. Implementation should be done on a voluntary basis, and in that context each country will have the responsibility to develop and apply its own national indicators.

Co-facilitators,

The proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals is an outcome produced after a lengthy and arduous process of intergovernmental negotiations. The political balance achieved in that outcome is extremely important. The process of developing indicators must respect that political balance. Hence, indicators must be based on and respond directly to

the goals and targets contained in the Report of the Open Working Group, and by any means should not undermine or re-interpret the SDGs and targets. Similarly, all targets must be treated at the same level and given the same importance.

In the same vein, indicators must be developed in respect of all targets. Development of indicators by any means should not try to leave out any of the targets under the pretext that they are immeasurable, as the SDGs and their targets stand for a delicate balance of priorities and views of member states.

Co-facilitators,

Finally, we wish to state that the development of indicators must be done with a view to assisting developing countries with capacity building and technical support. It is imperative to enhance capacity building and technical support in developing states, particularly in LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and Middle Income Countries.

I thank you.