Open Working Group, December 2013:

Needs of Countries in Special Situations (African countries, LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and MICs)

Needs of Countries in Special Situations

- The challenge for the post-2015 framework is to craft goals and targets that are universal in nature and relevant in immensely diverse national circumstances. It must be:
    - ambitious enough to lead to significant national and global progress
    - but flexible enough to be meaningful and useful in the preparation of national development plans.
- Each country has a unique context and set of development challenges
    - even among the groups discussed today there is wide variety: Africa includes both LDCs and MICs; SIDS include small and isolated Pacific island countries as well as those in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean
    - all countries should have a voice in setting the post-2015 agenda, and determining national development plans.
- We must learn from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – global goals did not adequately allow for the diversity of countries and undervalued the progress states made in challenging circumstances.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

- SIDS' small size, isolation and limited resources make them among the most vulnerable in the world.
- The new framework should take into account priorities identified by SIDS:
    - healthy, productive and resilient oceans
    - climate change and environmental/natural resource management;
    - governance, including peace and justice;
    - inclusive and sustainable economic growth;
    - health, especially non-communicable diseases; and
    - social development/poverty eradication.

Land Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

- Like the SIDS, LLDCs continue to face additional challenges due to isolation, lack of infrastructure and transport, and high transaction costs acting as barriers to growth.
- The post-2015 development agenda should take into account the priorities identified by LLDCs in the Almaty Programme of Action (2003):
    - infrastructure, enhancing and facilitating trade and economic transformation for resilient, growing economies.

Middle Income Countries (MICs)

- Growth in MICs has lifted millions out of poverty — but despite this success, MICs account for three quarters of the world's extreme poor.
- We need to ensure no one is left behind — inequality and pockets of extreme poverty are a barrier to sustainable and inclusive growth and can undermine political stability.
- The post-2015 agenda should emphasise activities which catalyse growth, and assist the poor to participate in and contribute to growth
    - such as investing in infrastructure and inclusive, accountable institutions; creating stable business environments and opening markets; promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as creating a healthy and educated workforce.

Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

- Many LDCs have made strong progress towards the MDGs, but none will have met all of the MDGs by 2015.
- The post-2015 agenda should take into account the eight priority areas of action identified by LDCs in the Istanbul Programme of Action (2011):
    - increasing productive capacity;
    - investing in agriculture, food security and rural development;
    - opening markets and increasing trade;
    - reducing commodity dependence;
    - investing in human and social development (including education and training, health services, youth, housing, water and sanitation and women's empowerment);
    - reducing vulnerability to economic shocks and environmental issues;
    - mobilising financial resources for development and capacity-building; and
    - ensuring good governance at all levels.

A global issue

- All regions around the world have countries in special situations, and within all regions there is a diversity of countries.

African States

- Recently, Africa has seen strong economic growth, often building on strong natural resource bases – but this has not translated into widespread poverty reduction
    - the post-2015 framework needs to support inclusive growth, including through investing in human capital.
- Growth in Africa is limited by conflict and fragility, lack of enabling institutions, gender and other inequalities, and vulnerability to climate change, drought and land degradation.

- We need to create an enabling environment for private sector investment; by improving domestic policies on macroeconomic management, public revenue and fiscal policy, and opening trade.

<u>*Indo–Pacific States*</u>

- More than two-thirds of the world's extreme poor live in the Indo-Pacific region. Impressive progress has been made in the region across a number of MDGs, particularly in Asia, but differentiation between and within countries is significant
  - growth in China and other Asian MICs has played a key role in achieving the global MDG target of halving extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015
  - but only two countries in the Pacific are on track to achieve the MDGs.
- Many countries in the Indo-Pacific region are fragile or conflict affected. Subnational conflict, including in generally stable MICs, affects more than 130 million people and presents the international community with an important set of challenges.

Conclusion

- While the groups of countries we have discussed today have specific challenges, we should recognise these are the same core issues we have discussed throughout the work of the OWG – for example sustainable and inclusive economic growth, environmental sustainability, gender equality, open and accountable institutions, stability and equality.

- These are universal issues, central to ensuring sustainable development in all countries. For example, tackling violent conflict, ensuring access to justice and the rule of law, open and accountable government, delivering public services – these are critical building blocks for peace and stability in conflict- affected states. But they are also central to what people, all over the world, tell us that they want to see in the next goals – as shown in the UN's Million Voices report. They represent the basic elements of the social contract between the citizen and the state – the foundation for sustainable development in all countries.

- The key lesson from this discussion is the need for the framework to be both ambitious in addressing these core issues and flexible enough to be useful in preparing national development plans, recognising that the priorities will be different across (and within) these groupings.