

Statement by Hiroshi Minami, Deputy Director General for Global Issues of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, at the 9th Session of SDGs OWG

Thank you very much.

I will make a statement on behalf of my country, Japan.

At the outset, Japan extends its deep appreciation to the co-chairs for the efforts to produce the progress report and the document on the focus areas. We believe that the document on the focus areas covers the extensive list of issues. We also believe that this is a good basis for the discussion.

We would like to stress that the SDGs should have people-centered approach, which we believe that many member states support, and the concept of the High Level Panel Report is important as we should leave no one behind. These concepts should be the fundamental thrusts for the SDGs.

Most of the member states share the view that the number of the SDGs should be limited and we have to avoid a Christmas tree. We understand that the current number of the focus areas, nineteen, is large as the number of goals.

More work should be done in the following manners:

1. the current focus areas should be clearly streamlined as goals or targets to distill the limited number of goals;
2. some related focus areas should be merged into one goal;
3. we should think about how to address the interlinkages and craft the nexus between focus areas so that we should avoid silo approach. And the interlinkages are a matter of attention which needs more brain work;
4. we should think about how to deal with cross cutting or overarching issues, such as poverty eradication, gender, means of implementation and global partnership.

On the substance of the focus areas, we have many detailed comments, but I would like to limit myself to seven important areas:

1. on the health sector, focus area 3, we are of the view that universal health coverage should have a goal, as suggested by the World Bank and WHO;

2. focus area 5, gender equality is an essential element for sustainable development, and it should be a stand alone goal and it should be mainstreamed into other related goals;
3. disaster risk reduction must given more importance and should be mainstreamed into related goals;
4. on climate change, focus area 15, we agree that it is a matter of vital importance for all, but it is premature to prejudge the result of the UNFCCC negotiations, especially the result of COP 21, and we should be very careful to treat the climate change in the work for the SDGs;
5. Means of Implementation, focus area 18, is an essential element, but we have to address the issues such as domestic resource mobilization, role of private resources, public private partnership, roles of various stakeholders and other forms of new partnership, and we prefer the title of global partnership. Furthermore, we should have a holistic approach for Means of Implementation, and we are not of the view that each goal should have separated and fragmented means of implementation;
6. on focus area 19, peaceful and non-violent societies, capable institutions, we support the view that the issues of peaceful and non-violent societies should have one stand alone goal, and that the issues of good governance and rule of law should have another;
7. on CBDR, we believe that CBDR is a principle related to environmental issues, because the Rio principle 7 states "In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, states have CBDR." We are not of the view that CBDR is an overarching principle of the SDGs.

Co chair,

We would like to reiterate our commitment for the work on the SDGs, and we should move forward under the guidance of the co chairs with a view to having ambitious and transformative SDGs.

Thank you.