



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

DIRECTORATE FOR GLOBAL ISSUES
AND MULTILATERAL POLITICAL RELATIONS

Global Challenges Department



MONTENEGRO

MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
AND TOURISM

Division for the Support to the National Council for Sustainable Development

Date: 3–5 March 2014

Comments on compendium of focus areas
SI–MNE speaking points for 9th meeting of OWG SDGs

I have the honor to speak on behalf of Montenegro and Slovenia.

Co-Chairs,

At the outset let me first commend you for your leadership role throughout the first phase of our deliberations. Especially we value your continued dedication to guide our work in a very open, transparent and inclusive manner.

In this vein I would like to thank for your document on focus areas, which reflects our rich discussion during the stock-taking phase and represents a good basis for our future work. We welcome its action-oriented nature and its direction towards strengthening our commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development. It is also very positive that each focus area tries to incorporate all three dimensions of sustainable development.

We welcome your approach to reflect inter-linkages in each of the focus areas. In the stock-taking phase we have addressed many of them and achieved better understanding of their complex nature. We believe that inter-linkages among different focus areas can be further strengthened and therefore should stay in the focus of our future deliberations, also in the view that at the later stage they will be also numerically-quantified.

We believe that sustainable development is not possible without respecting and fulfilling human rights as set by international human rights laws. The human right based approach allows us to place people at the center of the development process and to achieve that no person is left behind. This approach will also enable protection of vulnerable groups, ensure their equitable access to capacities, opportunities and basic services and strengthen fight against all form of discrimination and exclusion. We believe that human rights based approach should be further strengthened across all focus areas.

During our previous interventions we have pointed out that universal human rights, peace and security, good governance and rule of law are prerequisites of sustainable development. We welcome the elaboration of separate focus area for peaceful and non-violent societies

and capable institutions, but would support those who proposed that the issues of peaceful societies on the one hand and human rights, good governance and rule of law on the other, should be considered as two distinct focus areas.

We very much support your approach towards the issue of water and sanitation. We believe that the focus area on water and sanitation properly captures the multidimensional nature and cross-cutting importance of water and sanitation for achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development. It also appropriately recognizes that the water is an important element of international cooperation.

On education we would support stronger reference to continued education for teachers to improve their subject knowledge, teaching methods and other skill and competencies. We believe that this is an important element in providing quality of education.

We welcome your approach to the focus area on gender equality and women's empowerment, especially the references to ending all form of discrimination against women of all ages, ensuring equal access to education at all levels, ensuring equal employment opportunities for women and ensuring equal participation of women in the decision-making. We also support the reference to ending violence against girls and women in all its forms, but however believe that focus should be at the same time also given to the prevention of violence against girls and women. In general we would also support stronger reference to ensuring women's access to health care, including their sexual and reproductive rights. Gender equality should be additionally strengthened across all focus areas.

With respect to the climate change we are pleased that the issue is reflected in your document, especially given the fact that the climate change is one of the greatest challenges to the sustainable development and poverty eradication. However, like many others, we share the view that the issue of climate change should be rather streamlined in several other goals then addressed through an individual priority area. That kind of approach would allow us to avoid any duplication with the UNFCCC process and at the same time guarantee us that the inclusion of climate change in the future framework of sustainable development goals and the UNFCCC process are mutually supportive. We believe that the same approach should be followed when addressing the issue of disaster risk reduction.

We noticed that the issue of mountains is included in the focus area on water and sanitation. Given the importance of mountains for providing essential environmental goods and services and their richness in biodiversity, we would support additional reference to mountains also in the focus area on energy and ecosystems and biodiversity.

We would support proposals for giving stronger attentions to forests and migration issues.

We understand the important role of means of implementation for the realization of the framework of sustainable development goals. In this regard we are satisfied to see the emphasis on partnerships as core component of the SDG process, but would support additional efforts in the context of strengthening national ownership over their future implementation. The role of all societal actors, including the private sector, will be indispensable for finding and achieving durable and sustainable solutions for many of the focus areas and for their implementation on long-term basis.

Co-Chairs,

At the end we wish to reiterate our support to your work and leadership of the process and we are looking forward to the continuation of our effective and inclusive work towards successful conclusion of our mandate.