

**Statement by Thailand on behalf of the Troika of Bhutan, Thailand and Viet Nam
at the Eleventh Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
Focus Area 3. Health and population dynamics
5 May 2014**

Mr. Co-Chairs,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Troika consisting of Bhutan, Viet Nam, and my country, Thailand. We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

On Focus area 3: Health and population dynamics. Our troika is pleased that the unfinished MDGs will be carried forward with universal health coverage (UHC) as one of the important instrument to achieve this. UHC should have its place as a major health goal in the Sustainable Development Goals. This will also assist poverty eradication since UHC provides financial protection or risk reduction and avoids out-of-pocket expenses as well as contributes to equality and equity of health care access and services.

Our troika would also like to underline the importance of access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines at all stages of human life and in all stages of health care namely promotion, prevention, cure, rehabilitation and palliation. Access to essential medicines and vaccines is an important component of basic right to health.

Other unfinished MDGs which this Troika deems important and require continued commitment include reducing child and maternal mortality through elimination of preventable child and maternal deaths; preventing and treating communicable diseases, including reversing epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Importantly, addressing the issue of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through promotion of healthy diets and lifestyles is also key to maintaining a healthy population required for economic growth and development. Furthermore, we must combat neglected tropical disease as well as significantly reduce the risk of premature mortality from NCDs.

In this regard, we particularly support the following proposed targets of the Co-Chairs in the revised Working Document:

- **target a) on maternal mortality;**
- **target b) on HIV/AIDs, tuberculosis, and malaria. We should be ambitious but yet realistic in setting a goal to tackle their epidemics. We also are supportive of the eradication of neglected tropical diseases;**
- **target c) on pre-mature mortality from NCDs;**
- **target d) achievement of universal health coverage and;**
- **target e) ensuring universal access to affordable essential medicines**

Moreover, our troika is pleased that **universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health is highlighted as a separate target f)** under this focus area. However, we view that this target can be elaborated to include the importance of sexual and reproductive health information and services, which are accessible, acceptable, available, of good quality and age appropriate, and based on the universally recognized right to health.

In addition, our troika is of the view that target or strategies to address emotional/psychological or mental health should also be included. Conventional development efforts tend to focus on quantitative progress and cater only to physical health ignoring the psychological, emotional and mental side. Lack of initiatives and goals against them are indeed the causes of many physical illnesses.

We are also of the view that a target on reducing the burden of global road traffic accidents in accordance with the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 should be included under this focus area.

Thank you.
