

**ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS, May 5-9, 2014**

Statement of Latvia

Discussion on Energy, Economic growth, Employment and Infrastructure

Latvia fully aligns itself with the general statement made earlier by the European Union and would like to convey the following observations in its national capacity.

We appreciate continued efforts to integrate the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. We particularly advocate the linkages between sustainable economic growth, inclusive social development and environmental protection, supported by public management reforms.

We welcome all targets outlined in the working document under **Focus area 7** on universal access to sustainable, environmentally sound and reliable modern energy services. We would favor seeing this Focus area either as a stand-alone goal or being merged with Focus area 8.

We support most targets proposed under **Focus area 8**, especially **targets (d), (e), (g) and (j)**. At the same time we see **strong linkage of this focus area with focus area 5** on gender equality and women's empowerment, and suggest that it should be appropriately reflected in the document, as we already indicated yesterday in our statement on Focus area 5.

Latvia fully supports elements mentioned in **target (e)** and proposes to include into this target **promotion of the creative economy** as a new source of growth. Small and medium scale enterprises and creative industries are a mayor driver for reducing unemployment and offering decent work opportunities. We suggest that setting proper conditions for creativity and innovation should also provide for legal framework to foster fair competition, participatory local development strategies, skills training and vocational education programmes, availability of innovative financial instruments and protection of intellectual property rights.

In **target (g)** we would like to put emphasis on sustainable connectivity aiming to **ensure sustainable transport, energy and ICT infrastructure development, taking due account of environmental and social impacts**.

We welcome a separate **target (j)** to encourage formalization of informal sector activities and employment. At the same time we would appreciate a stronger **linkage between the economic growth and Focus area 16** on good governance, rule of law and capable institutions. Therefore we propose to incorporate under this focus area a target on **strengthening national tax systems and domestic resource mobilization mechanisms**, which underpins the sustained economic growth and the availability of resources for social protection and investment.

Finally, we would like point out that we recognize a major overlap between targets under **Focus area 9 and Focus areas 8 and 11**. We suggest that targets (a), (b), (c) and (g) under **Focus area 9** should be rather included into **Focus area 8**, while target (h) under **Focus area 9** could be merged with **Focus area 7**, and targets (d), (e), (f) could be incorporated into **Focus area 11**.

I thank you.