

UK STATEMENT, HLPF 3rd INFORMAL CONSULTATION

5 MAY 2025

General comments

Thank you, co-facilitators, for convening us to this consultation and for all your efforts in preparing this zero draft. The United Kingdom sees it as a good basis for us to build upon. We welcome the zero draft's commitment to the SDGs and multilateralism, and recognition of the interconnectedness of the Goals.

Section I (current trends)

In section I on current trends, we strongly support the language in paragraphs 2 and 3 on interconnectedness of challenges, eradication of poverty and the 2030 Agenda, and we suggest that paragraph 2 could also include the challenge and setback of nature loss. We also suggest that the text in paragraph 4 could be strengthened to underscore the urgency of narrowing the significant financing gap for the SDGs. Finally, we would like to include language summarising the positive progress which has been made on the SDGs, based on the Expert Working Group reports.

We look forward to engaging with all delegations for a concise and action-oriented declaration. We will be pleased to provide more comments on the following sections, and to submit written comments tomorrow.

Thank you.

Section II (priorities)

In section 2, we think it is important to have a reference to implementing the Pact for the Future and its annexes, including the Global Digital Compact; and alignment with key actions in these.

Moreover, we support the language in paragraphs 6 on SDG implementation human rights and gender equality, 12 on the role of science tech data and evidence-based solutions and 14 on climate change, Paris Agreement, and ambitious climate action for mitigation and adaptation. In this para 14, we would like to have a reference to the 1.5 °C target.

In paragraph 9, we would like to clarify if the referenced SDG Report 2025 will be the yet to be published follow up to the 2024 SDG Report?

In paragraph 10, we note that the Vienna Programme of Action is now complete, and this should be updated to the 2024-2034 Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries.

In paragraph 13, we would like to highlight the need to take action to bridge the data and digital divide to spread the benefits of the digital economy for all.

In paragraph 15, we welcome the commitment to the Sendai Framework and would like to include a reference to the interlinkage between climate change and biodiversity loss and the frequency and intensity of disasters. We would also like to highlight the need for innovative financing – such as pre-arranged financing – and replace the reference to developing countries with a focus on Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

In paragraph 16, important to recognise our collective commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and underscore the importance of its swift, *full* and *effective* implementation. We also note its goal in protecting, conserving and restoring coastal and freshwater ecosystems in addition to nature and terrestrial and marine ecosystems already referenced in the text.

To reflect on the intervention of **Belarus**, we will not accept the proposal made on sanctions.

SDG3

On SDG3, we welcome the focus on universal health coverage, links with climate, and pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. However, we would also like the declaration to include language on sexual and reproductive health and rights, maternal, newborn and child health, tackling communicable diseases, recognition of Gavi and Global Fund, and the importance of multisectoral approaches to drive progress on SDG3.

In paragraph 18, we need to have a reference to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including for family planning, information and education in line with SDG 3.7.

We also suggest that clean water is replaced with safe water in line with agreed language in SDG6's indicator, and that the text notes the importance of integrating nutrition services into primary healthcare systems.

In paragraph 19, we would like to add language on SDG 3.3 target concerning AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, Neglected Tropical Diseases and other communicable diseases.

In paragraph 20, the declaration should look to promote access to health *and nutrition services, and sexual and reproductive health services*, along with vaccinations and health education.

In paragraph 21, we would welcome reference to the One Health approach to make the text more solutions orientated and underscore the importance of multisectoral approaches.

In paragraph 22, we suggest that regional health responses and cross-border pandemic coordination could be further strengthened through application of the International Health Regulations.

In paragraph 23, we recommend that the text on maternal, newborn and child health and non-communicable and communicable diseases is separated out into standalone paragraphs.

We also need to recognise antimicrobial resistance as one of the most urgent global health threats and development challenges and the actions needed to safeguard our ability to treat human, animal, and plant diseases, and advance the SDGs.

We have language proposals in all these paragraphs and topics.

We support the comment made by the **EU** on technology transfer on inclusion of agreed terms ‘voluntary’ and ‘mutually agreed terms’.

SDG5

On SDG5, we believe this Goal is crucial to achieve all SDGs. We welcome reference to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 15th anniversary of UN Women. We also welcome the language on the interlinkages between gender equality and other SDGs, including poverty and the digital divide.

Moreover, we support the inclusion of social protection as a key enabler of gender equality.

In paragraph 28, we would like to amend the text to avoid misinterpretation. As text currently stands, with “achieving sustainable development is *impossible* if all women and girls are denied opportunities”, it could be read that it might be possible if *some* women and girls are denied opportunities. We suggest it is changed to “sustainable development is *only possible* if all women and girls are granted full and equal opportunities.

In paragraph 33, we would like to emphasise the need for social and financial structures to lift all women and girls out of poverty. We would also like to remove the reference to girls regarding labour market opportunities as children should not be in the labour market.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our concerns that the rollback of women and girls’ rights is hampering progress across all SDGs. We would like more language on women’s health and SRHR, girls’ education, and the role of women and girls in conflict, peacebuilding, humanitarian and climate action.

SDG8

In this section, we recognise that economic growth and creating better quality jobs at scale, for all, are impactful accelerators for the delivery of the SDGs. We welcome reference to alignment with the Second World Summit for Social Development.

In paragraph 37, we would like to have ambitious reference to gender responsive social protection systems and would seek to align this language with the HLPF ministerial declaration of 2022 that noted we will “*expand* gender-responsive social protection”.

We also welcome language on strengthening support for micro-, small and medium sized enterprises in paragraph 39, but would ask that additional language is included to set a threshold of economic growth potential for any finance to MSME to ensure finance is directed effectively and debt risks are avoided.

We also ask that we do not pledge to promote the transition to formal employment but rather shift the focus to supporting the *expansion* of formal employment. The evidence suggests that transitioning informal firms to become formal is difficult and not cost-effective.

In paragraph 41, we would like to include language that highlights the importance of collaborating with local work representatives to strengthen labour laws to protect labour rights.

Finally, we would like this section to include language recognising that digital skills are essential for young people’s productive participation.

SDG 14

On SDG14, we agree with others that this declaration should be informed by the Ministerial Declaration of the 3rd UN Ocean Conference that was just agreed last week. It is crucial to have reference to the BBNJ agreement, to the role of science, evidence and data, the biodiversity and climate nexus, and plastic pollution, with the process around the Plastics Treaty to address the full lifecycle of plastic.

In paragraph 42, we would like to include an additional reference on marine restoration to ensure this text considers all three elements of tackling biodiversity loss: conservation, restoration and sustainable use.

In paragraph 45, we would like the declaration to align with the language from the High-Level Ocean Panel which references that a sustainable ocean-based economy presents a crucial opportunity for all countries. Within this paragraph, we also suggest more acute focus is drawn to the opportunity for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

In line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Target 19, we would like paragraph 46 to note that financial mobilisation *from all sources* is needed to drive SDG14.

In paragraph 48, we would like the declaration to highlight that in addition to enhancing climate resilience, we should pledge to enhance ocean-based adaptation for marine and coastal areas to mitigate the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss.

In paragraph 49, we would strongly welcome the reference to the BBNJ Agreement, including the call to sign, ratify, approve and accept the Agreement, with early entry into force and effective implementation.

SDG17

As others have also said, the UK welcomes the SDG17 section being informed by the FfD4 outcome document and being grounded in the spirit of equal and genuine partnership. We welcome commitment to action on a more coherent, inclusive, effective use of available resources, alongside mobilising additional financing from all sources. We also support the call of urgent need for accelerating wider reform of the international financial system.

In paragraph 52, we ask that focus is placed on tackling the underlying drivers of unsustainable debt rather than providing debt relief.

We would like to further align paragraph 55 with the FfD4 first draft that places emphasis on national responsibilities first and foremost before focussing on international development cooperation.

In addition, the UK would like the declaration to highlight a commitment to the importance of the multilateral trading system and moving the WTO agenda forward.

In paragraph 62, we call for the text to reference the recommendations of the Independent Expert Advisory Panel that are aimed at improving the relevance, robustness and accessibility of the multidimensional vulnerability index.

Finally, the declaration should recognise the importance of civil society, including women's rights organisations, in delivering the SDGs.

Voluntary National Reviews

On Voluntary National Reviews, we would like to ask for some clarity on paragraph 67 to understand how the VNRs will be strengthened and by whom?

We would also like to include reference to reporting on development progress for more marginalised groups as part of leaving no one behind.

We will submit these comments in writing and look forward to engaging actively and constructively moving forward.

Thank you.