



MALDIVES

Eleventh Session of the General Assembly
Open Working-Group on Sustainable Development Goals
Gender equality/ Water and sanitation

Intervention by:

His Excellency Mr Ahmed Sareer, Permanent Representative to the United Nations,
New York, 5 – 9 May 2014

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair,

Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in this 11th session of the OWG, I wish to congratulate you on your dedicated work in compiling and consolidating the text to this point and convey our appreciation to you for your efforts in mainstreaming the complex and diverse views expressed over the past deliberations into a clear document that is more focussed towards reaching targets for the SDG.

Mr. Co-Chair,

With regards to focus area 5 on gender, Maldives wishes to make few general comments. Sustainable Development must be equitable, including towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

Maldives believes that equity, equality and empowerment of women can only be achieved through a stand-alone goal on gender parity. Based on this belief, we are pleased with the Co-chair's text having a specific focus area on this subject. In order to achieve these targets, the cultural barriers to reaching gender equity must be identified and addressed.

My delegation is in general supportive of the targets listed. We support the listings aimed at making it universal, taking into account the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental aspects. We believe a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment can only be efficient if it is a transformative goal. It must ensure women the same rights, same access and same opportunities, while ending all forms of discrimination against women of all ages, with a clear target of achieving these essential objectives by 2030. Moreover, we support gender sensitive budgeting.

On focus area 6 on Water and sanitation:

Maldives welcomes the comprehensive list and thanks the co-chairs in particular for the integration of targets highlighted by both developed and developing countries.

My first comment relates to target (f) the phrase ‘significantly improve’ with regards to water quality is not quantitative or clear enough. There is no indication for what ‘significantly’ means in technical terms and therefore Maldives proposes to redraft this to read as follows “by 2030, improve water quality by a certain percentage. (x%...)”. Putting a value in this target provides it with weight and facilitates the process towards effective implementation to create lasting improvements in water and sanitation.

Secondly, we recognise target (g) as an incredibly important target which is highly relevant to countries like the Maldives and other SIDS that rely much on rainwater. However we wanted to question how this target could be applied to larger developed countries that have a well-established infrastructure in the provision of, and access to clean water through means other than rainwater.

As regards investment to harvesting and storage technologies, we must address the universal nature of this target via the provision of transfer of technology.

Under focus area 6, Maldives proposes an additional target on education for sanitation and hygiene. In addition to universal access which is captured in target (a), having a target on education for sanitation and hygiene will serve to ensure that vulnerable communities have the knowledge and capability to take ownership of their health in addition to the means of accessing them.

Finally, we support the focus on actionable targets and measures, and we must ensure the appropriate means of implementation are allocated, to ensure that action is taken, citizens are protected, and that no country gets left behind.

Thank you, Co-Chair.