

**Statement by Counsellor Hanseung Kum  
of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea  
8th formal meeting of SDGs Open Working Group  
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Thank you Mr. Chair,

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to the UN Technical Support Team for its excellent issue briefs.

Equality both provides and enables an environment that can nurture sustainable development. In order to achieve inclusive growth and differentiate sustainable development from other growth agendas, the Republic of Korea believes that “social equity, gender equality, and women’s empowerment” should be thoroughly reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals framework.

To make advancement on this issue, we would like to emphasize the need for strong national policies aimed at eliminating discrimination against anyone based on gender, race, religion, disability, nationality, and social status. Korea also believes that it is necessary to develop various indicators in order to measure different forms of social inequality beyond economic inequality measured solely by income disparity.

Korea is of the view that equality, due to its cross-cutting nature, should be reflected in other potential SDGs goals such as human rights, access to natural resources, and employment. In the same vein, we agree that

relevant indicators should be disaggregated by multiple characteristics including gender and income levels for all goals, so that the issue of equality can be holistically mainstreamed in the SDGs framework.

Tolerance for social inequality differs across societies. However, in discussing goals and targets for equality within the SDGs framework, we should strive to set the most ambitious targets agreeable, rather than being satisfied with the lowest common denominator. Doing this now will lend a necessary hand to vulnerable societal segments around the world later down the road.

Korea would like to emphasize the universality of gender equality beyond cultural faith, as well as the need for women's empowerment in particular. Women's empowerment is directly related to economic growth, and it has additional demographic and health implications that extend across generations. In this sense, Korea supports the existing reports on the SDGs that include goals regarding gender equality.

Korea is pushing ahead for policies which guarantee fair entry and fair treatment for women in the labor market, prevent violence against women, and support a better work-life balance.

Given the measurability issue, Korea believes that (1) **eliminating violence against women**, including sexual and domestic violation, (2) **enhancing women's participation in economic activities**, as well as **closing the income gap** between men and women, and (3) **enhancing**

**women's representativeness in decision-making processes** should be included in the targets under a goal concerning gender equality. In addition, Korea is of the view that we should focus on setting targets that cannot be adequately reflected and mainstreamed under other stand-alone goals when we establish targets for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Finally, my delegation believes that disability should be incorporated in the SDGs as a cross-cutting issue. There are about 1 billion persons with disabilities. Unless we scale up our attention to this marginalized group, which accounts for 15% of the world population, we will not be able to achieve sustainable development. In this regard, disability should be explicitly taken into account in the elaboration of targets and indicators so as to enable persons with disabilities both as beneficiaries and as agents of sustainable development,

Thank you.