

Statement delivered by His Excellency Álvaro Mendouça e Moura Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Portugal to the UN

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

4 March, 2014

At the outset, Mr. Co-Chairman, allow me, to congratulate you and your fellow Co-Chairman for your able stewardship of our work, and we look forward to working with you to ensure a successful outcome of this process.

Portugal welcomes the valuable discussions held over the course of the last eight sessions of Open Working Group and thank you for the compendium of 19 thematic areas.

Important work is still in front of us, namely the further rationalization and alignment of these thematic areas and their transformation into priorities and Goals. We feel that the synergies between different focus areas identified in the document can be a starting point for further work establishing which areas could be identified as specific goals or which themes can be better targeted if addressed in a clustered manner or eventually addressed as specific sub-targets or indicators.

We firmly believe that, as was just expressed by the UK on behalf of their troika, the sustainable development goals should integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development and have poverty eradication, and namely extreme poverty eradication, at its very core.

This being said, we strongly welcome the co-chairs proposal to include a focus area on peaceful and non-violent societies. Lessons learned reveal that security and sustainable development are closely

linked, with conflict affected countries and countries in fragile situations lagging clearly behind in development indicators, and that capable and effective institutions are of paramount importance for progress in all areas. Portugal considers that further reflection is still needed on how to better address these important challenges within the context of the SDGs. We see the proposals contained in the High Level's Panel Report concerning the establishment of two separate, although interlinked, goals for peaceful and stable societies and for good governance and effective institutions as better capturing the main issues to be addressed under those areas. It is also of paramount importance that the priorities to be established adequately address the specific needs of fragile states and countries affected by conflict or in a post-conflict situation, building on the International Dialogue for Peacebuilding and Statebuilding and the New Deal.

Portugal welcomes the inclusion in your paper of the focus area on Marine resources, oceans and seas. Here, we would like to highlight the importance of the establishment of marine protected areas, including beyond national jurisdiction as a possible area of specific action, as has already been mentioned by some in the discussion so far. We also welcome focus area on water and sanitation.

Before closing, Mr. Co-Chairman, we would like to emphasize that on CBDR, an issue that has been raised by several delegations, I wish to underline that principle 7 of the Rio Declaration, a very important principle related to global environmental degradation, cannot be construed as to exempt any country to fully play its part in support of countries lagging behind. The world has changed and the post-2015 development agenda has to reflect these changes.

To be transformative and relevant, the SDGs should aim to be truly rights based, placing human well-being, dignity and equality at the core of the agenda. For example, gender equality and access to reproductive health, among other relevant issues, should be seen both from a sustainable development

and a human rights perspective. We are of the view that this human rights perspective should be mainstreamed through the future SDGs.

Thank you.