

**10th Session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
March 31, 2014**

**Remarks by Ambassador Asoke K Mukerji,
Permanent Representative of India to the UN**

Thank you Co-Chair for giving me the floor.

I would like to share some views on the work of this session and the revised Focus Areas document in my national capacity. We of course align ourselves fully with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Co-Chair,

We welcome the revised version of the Focus Areas document that you have presented. During this session we should focus on refining the bullets within each of the Focus Areas. We do not see the need for merging or reducing the Focus Areas themselves at this stage.

The document on Clusters that you have presented is a useful tool for facilitating discussions, even though we are not necessarily in agreement with the rationale behind some of the proposed clusters. We also do not necessarily see the proposed clusters as prototype goals.

On process, we would like to reiterate that the Focus Areas document remains the basis of our work going forward and changes in it should be captured in a way that could facilitate consultations with our respective capitals. It is critically important that enough time is provided between release of documents and the negotiations to enable effective consultations.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

The process and outcome of this OWG is organically linked to the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference and the high level mandate emanating out of this landmark event. It behooves us therefore to adhere scrupulously to this mandate in all aspects of our work.

The proposed clustering of Focus Areas must also reflect the agreed template of Rio+20. We do not see for example issues of peace, security, rule of law and governance as a separate cluster, much less a separate goal. These are enablers of development and need to be treated as such. Similarly, terms such as ‘industrialized societies and economies’ used in the document must be replaced with ‘developed countries’.

The Rio principles including in particular the principle of CBDR remain the basis of our work. We expect these principles to be unequivocally reaffirmed in the narrative that will accompany the goals and targets in the final report of the OWG.

Mr. Co-Chair,

As we engage in a discussion on how to craft specific deliverables under each Focus Area, ‘universality’ is another key principle we need to invoke. In our view, unlike the MDGs, the SDGs need to be truly universal. SDGs cannot merely be policy prescriptions for only one set of countries. Therefore, they must include specific commitments for developed countries. We would therefore seek to evaluate each possible goal in terms of specific deliverables for developed countries.

To take one example, how does a poverty goal also meaningfully apply to the North? To be truly universal, a target of ending basic income poverty, let’s say at 1.25 dollars a day would need to be accompanied with a target on relative poverty on the basis of respective national poverty lines in developed countries as well. Developed countries would also need to partner the efforts of developing countries in eradicating the worst forms of poverty. A recommitment to enhanced ODA along with other means of implementation and global systemic issues is therefore an important component of universality.

On issues such as climate change and sustainable consumption and lifestyles of course, the developed countries would have to take the lead in line with their historical responsibilities. In our view, universality is complementary to differentiation. Differentiation, as embodied in the principle of CBDR, would be the basis of crafting targets under the universally relevant goals.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

We are happy that you have provided place-holders under each Focus Area for means of implementation. We hope we would be able to collectively enumerate meaningful means of implementation under each Focus Area as part of a revamped and strengthened global partnership for development.

We look forward to a productive exchange of ideas. We would provide our specific views as we discuss each of the clusters.

I thank you Co-Chairs.