

Intervention by Mr. Md. Mustafizur Rahman, Deputy Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN at the 11th Session of the OWG on SDGs under Focus area 7: Energy & 8: Economic Growth, Employment and Decent Jobs
8 May 2014

Mr. Co-Chair,

Let me begin my intervention with aligning our position with Bolivia speaking on behalf of G 77 and China and Benin speaking on behalf of LDCs. On our national capacity, we support a stand-alone GOAL on energy titled as, 'Ensuring access to affordable, sustainable, and reliable energy for all'. 'Modern' to be deleted, the rationale has been explained by many before me.

As for our views on the targets, while proposed target (a) is in order, we must specify as to HOW do we plan to secure 'universal access', especially given the resource constraints of LDCs.

We support (b), but would repeat the same argument given earlier. We would suggest the action area (c) to be broad, so as to read as: 'Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency'. The specificities as to which sectors and how best those to be attained, that can be looked at through indicators. While attainment of economy-wide energy efficiency is in order, we must approach it in a balanced manner. In that context, we heard views of others including of Iran who proposed to change the word 'double' by substantial. We can go along with their proposal.

As an LDC, while we recognize that the proposed target (d) is hugely challenging one for us, we would be ready to live up to the challenge! But, we must specify in the MOIs as to how to realize such an ambitious target especially by the LDCs.

We understand that the action area (e) was discussed in Rio+20. We would underline that countries – at different levels of development – give energy 'subsidy' to different segments or sectors in an economy on various social and economic grounds. For example, as an LDC, we have to offer fuel subsidy to our small and marginal farmers. So, elimination of fossil fuel subsidy has to be looked at differently and can not be generalized.

Moreover, without robust global partnership as well as predictable, accessible, affordable provisions for related science, technologies and innovation, it would be extremely challenging for LDCs to accomplish such transformative targets. We therefore, support the suggestion to include targets (f) and (i) on energy in your earlier version of the document as dedicated MOI.

On Focus area 8, we did not like merger of economic growth, employment and infrastructure in one goal area. The reasons have been already explained by others. Nonetheless, we would suggest to change the word 'jobs' by 'work' as traditionally used in the UN as well as by ILO. The word 'sustainable' also have to be dropped; we are using randomly the word 'sustainable', although the whole agenda that we are dealing with is sustainable development.

As for action areas, we support (a) as is. As we said on FA 1, it would be appropriate to cover the proposed target under this Goal. We would only suggest to add "...and vulnerable segments, including migrants," and delete "...marginalised groups..."

With regard to action point (c), we support it as a target. However, we need to reflect if it is inconsistent with the action point (b), as Guatemala and few other delegates said. Moreover, in practical terms, if we are to suggest on 'halving' or substantial reduction of unemployed youth, we would suggest that it be left to national authorities to determine— given varied country to country circumstances.

The proposed target (d) will need to be aligned with the agreed provisions in Rio +20. To us, this also seems to be a sweeping generalisation, where it is not clear as to how countries at different levels of development, like LDCs, would strive to accomplish energy and resource productivity. Obviously, this would be unachievable without robust global support and partnerships.

We appreciate the intent of target (e). But, it would better read as: "augment contribution of entrepreneurship and innovation, including contribution of SMEs, in the developing countries, particularly in LDCs". Clearly, this would be dependent on support beyond national control. At the same time, this would be better left to national determination.

We support the action area (f) very strongly. Increase of productive capacity in LDCs will have multiplier effect on the attainment of entire development agenda that we are going to adopt.

We support action point (g) and (h). However, we would suggest for altering the later part of (h), to read as : "...in compliance with international human rights norms and labour standards."

As for (i), we do support the content. However, as Vietnam said, there are other appropriate bodies and mechanisms to deal with this issue.

As for (j), this is an objective that will need clarity before being considered as a target.

As regards Means of Implementation, we go along with the thrust of what the African group has forwarded. Moreover, we would re-emphasis for inclusion of a few elements which can be suitably incorporated within the MOI or in the action areas:

- Lower the overall costs in migration process.
- Minimize transaction costs of remittances.
- Facilitate collaborative arrangements for access to social security benefits as well as ensure migrants' social protection and portability of social security benefits.
- Ensure responsible business conduct of MNEs.

Thank you.
