



SUMMARY OF THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: 3-7 FEBRUARY 2014

The eighth session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) took place from 3-7 February 2014, at UN Headquarters in New York. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, and Csaba Körösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, continued in their roles as Co-Chairs of the meeting, which brought together OWG members and other Member States, observers and representatives from UN agencies, and Major Groups for the final session in the OWG's "stocktaking" phase, which has been the focus of its first eight meetings.

Delegates addressed the thematic issues of: oceans and seas, forests, and biodiversity; promoting equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment; and conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and the promotion of durable peace, rule of law and governance. In a closing summary of the week's discussions, Co-Chair Körösi highlighted, *inter alia*: the role of oceans, seas, and forests as life-support systems; concerns about widening inequalities in the world; and the importance of peace, rule of law, and governance as enablers of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Delegates also considered the way forward for the five scheduled "decision-making" sessions, between March and July 2014. In this context, an informal consultation was held on the evening of 4 February 2014, during which Member States were informed that the Co-Chairs will formulate a stock-taking document, taking into account everything that has been discussed over the past year, to be released on 14 February. They will then present a document around which a conversation of SDGs and targets can begin, listing "priority areas" that Member States may wish to discuss, by 21 February.

The agenda for the week-long OWG-8 meeting could not have been more full. Delegates emphasized that oceans, seas and forests account for a large percentage of global biodiversity, and noted the importance of each of these topics for poverty alleviation, food security, water quality and other development objectives. Discussions on equity and gender equality, and conflict and rule of law were highlighted by many to be integral components of sustainable development. Past, unresolved debates over these issues and their underlying implications

for sovereignty, the international structure, and resource flows revealed that the Group's task over the upcoming five decision-making meetings will be complex and will require careful navigation to maintain the spirit of what Co-Chair Kamau called, in closing OWG-8 on Friday evening, "our lovely OWG."

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE OWG

During the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012, governments agreed to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs. They called for establishing an OWG comprised of 30 representatives from the five UN regional groups, nominated by UN Member States, to elaborate a proposal for SDGs to be submitted to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) for consideration and appropriate action during its 68th session.

The Rio+20 outcome document outlines, *inter alia*:

- the importance of remaining firmly committed to the full and timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and of respecting all Rio Principles, taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and priorities;
- the SDGs should be action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global

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in nature and universally applicable to all countries, and focused on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development;

- the need to ensure coordination and coherence with the processes considering the post-2015 development agenda, and to receive initial input to the OWG's work from the UN Secretary-General in consultation with national governments;
- the need to assess progress towards the achievement of the goals, accompanied by targets and indicators, while taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and levels of development; and
- the importance of global, integrated and scientifically-based information on sustainable development and of supporting regional economic commissions in collecting and compiling national inputs to inform this global effort.

The UNGA endorsed the outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*, in resolution 66/288 on 30 November 2012.

UNGA RESOLUTION 67/203: On 21 December 2012, the UNGA adopted resolution 67/203, which calls for the OWG to report to the Assembly in the early part of its 68th session, preferably before the first meeting of the high-level political forum (HLPF). It also calls for the OWG to report regularly on its progress, taking into account the convening of the first HLPF and the UNGA Special Event to follow-up on efforts made towards achieving the MDGs.

UNGA DECISION ESTABLISHING THE OWG (67/555): On 22 January 2013, the UNGA adopted a decision establishing the membership of the OWG as allocated to the five UN regional groups. According to the annex to the decision, six seats are held by single countries: Benin, Congo, Ghana, Hungary, Kenya and Tanzania. Nine seats are held by pairs of countries, as follows: Bahamas/Barbados; Belarus/Serbia; Brazil/Nicaragua; Bulgaria/Croatia; Colombia/Guatemala; Mexico/Peru; Montenegro/Slovenia; Poland/Romania; and Zambia/Zimbabwe. Fourteen seats are held by trios of countries, as follows: Argentina/Bolivia/Ecuador; Australia/Netherlands/UK; Bangladesh/Republic of Korea/Saudi Arabia; Bhutan/Thailand/Viet Nam; Canada/Israel/US; Denmark/Ireland/Norway; France/Germany/Switzerland; Italy/Spain/Turkey; China/Indonesia/Kazakhstan; Cyprus/Singapore/United Arab Emirates; Guyana/Haiti/Trinidad and Tobago; India/Pakistan/Sri Lanka; Iran/Japan/Nepal; and Nauru/Palau/Papua New Guinea. One seat is shared by four countries: Algeria/Egypt/Morocco/Tunisia.

FIRST SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-1 took place on 14-15 March 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. During the meeting, which included statements and an interactive discussion on "Conceptualizing the SDGs," participants shared their initial views on both the process and substance of the SDG framework.

SECOND SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-2 took place on 17-19 April 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. Discussions addressed conceptualizing the SDGs and the SDG process. Delegates focused on the overarching framework of poverty eradication and sustainable development, and cross-sectoral issues including: governance; gender equality and women's empowerment; human rights and rights-based approaches; and means of implementation. Delegates also discussed the Programme of Work for 2013-2014.

THIRD SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-3 took place from 22-24 May 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting

addressed the thematic issues of: (a) food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation and drought, and (b) water and sanitation.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-4 took place from 17-19 June 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting was devoted to addressing the thematic issues of: (a) employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth, education and culture, and (b) health and population dynamics. The session also included a presentation from the lead author for the UN High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

FIRST MEETING OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The inaugural meeting of the HLPF, under the auspices of the UNGA, convened on 24 September 2013. Heads of State and Government, Ministers and other leaders articulated a number of proposals on the role of the HLPF: it should include stakeholders; it should emphasize accountability; it should review the post-2015 development agenda and the implementation of the SDGs; and it should examine issues from scientific and local perspectives.

UNGA SPECIAL EVENT TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MDGS: The High-Level Special Event took place on 25 September 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. The Outcome Document of the event determined that the work of the OWG will feed into international negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, beginning in September 2014, and that a Global Summit will be held in September 2015 to agree on a new UN development agenda.

FIFTH SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-5 took place from 25-27 November 2013, at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting focused on the thematic issues of: (a) sustained and inclusive economic growth, macroeconomic policy questions (including international trade, international financial system and external debt sustainability), infrastructure development and industrialization, and (b) energy.

SIXTH SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-6 took place from 9-13 December 2013, at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting focused on the thematic issues of: (a) means of implementation (science and technology, knowledge-sharing and capacity building); (b) global partnership for achieving sustainable development; (c) needs of countries in special situations, African countries, least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS) as well as specific challenges facing middle-income countries; and (d) human rights, the right to development, and global governance. Also during this session, the Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, Pertti Majanen, reviewed the Committee's work thus far, noting that the OWG and the Committee are "sister processes."

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE OWG: OWG-7 took place from 6-10 January 2014, in New York. The meeting focused on the thematic issues of: (a) sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable transport; (b) sustainable consumption and production (including chemicals and wastes); and (c) climate change and disaster risk reduction. Delegates also began to think about the "way forward" in the next phase of the OWG's work, for which Co-Chair Kamau reviewed options for how the OWG might work to devise a set of SDGs and their targets.

OWG-8 REPORT

OWG Co-Chair Kamau opened the meeting on Monday, 3 February 2014, and highlighted that the Group, now in the “eighth and final session of its stocktaking journey,” would address some of the most complex, intransigent issues in sustainable development. He said the agenda items for OWG-8 are essential for life as we know it on earth, as well as the social order as we know it. It is impossible to conceive of development, he added, if we cannot contain conflict, build on peace, and ingrain the rule of law and effective government systems. He also called on participants to begin indicating how to structure the responses of governments, societies and communities to these issues.

OCEANS AND SEAS, FORESTS, AND BIODIVERSITY

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS: Jane Lubchenco, Oregon State University, said governments should choose goals that bring benefits across economic, social and environmental dimensions. She noted that healthy oceans offer social and economic benefits, including: eradicating hunger; reducing risk of coastal disasters; reducing pest and pathogen outbreaks; providing jobs; and sequestering “blue carbon” and regulating climate. Lubchenco called for a stand-alone SDG on “achieving healthy, productive and resilient oceans and coasts,” which she said should address food security, disaster risk reduction, human health, climate regulation, marine biodiversity and ecosystem health, and governance.

Sylvia Earle, National Geographic, highlighted the need to account for blue carbon, the diversity of ocean life, the depletion of coral reefs and fisheries, and economic values of fish other than their consumption, such as tourism. She said there is a place for fish in our diet, but we have to rethink “how much, what kind and taken from where.” She called for SDGs that include action on governance of the high seas, oceans and biodiversity, and a clear link between illicit wildlife trafficking and wildlife crime.

In response to questions on getting out of silos and mainstreaming oceans across different SDGs, Earle said the rate of new insights is accelerating faster than policy making, and we need to make policies based on the best knowledge available. She added that protected areas are good sustainable development investments. Lubchenco said we have to create incentives for something other than business as usual, connecting across silos. She described a project called “Fish Forever” that gives fishermen a right to fish in a particular place while also creating marine protected areas, and noted that it is a bottom-up project designed by fishermen.

Delegates asked how they could balance the priority of addressing poverty with preserving fisheries, how marine protected areas could be established legitimately in the absence of multilateral agreements to govern the high seas, and how to craft an SDG that would take into account the various ocean-related “bits and pieces” in agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Lubchenco highlighted that a number of targets have already been agreed, including on reducing fishing overcapacity, reducing harmful subsidies and reducing illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and suggested examining how these agreements overlap, the impediments to implementing them, and how underlying

incentives can be structured to remove the impediments. Earle emphasized that the current structure does not value live fish, said poverty eradication will come from understanding the living values of healthy oceans, and suggested that delegates should “hold up the mirror and come back with some answers” to their questions.

MONDAY’S PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND

DISCUSSION: Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, CBD Executive Secretary, explained that there is a widely agreed framework to address biodiversity and sustainable development—the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He suggested that biodiversity should be included as targets in goals on poverty eradication, food security and water security, as well as part of an SDG on healthy and effective ecosystems. He stressed the importance of good governance systems. Countries that fail to recognize the need to live in harmony with nature and opt for short-term economic gains at the expense of nature will suffer in the long run, he concluded.

Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, University of Ghana, highlighted that landscapes are constituted by biodiversity and ecosystem services, and said the SDGs should incorporate efforts to sustain the earth’s life support systems. He reviewed the work of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which aims to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services at the global and sub-global levels. He said the challenge is to keep unresolved issues from becoming urgent global issues.

Virgilio Viana, Amazonas Sustainable Foundation, suggested that we have failed to halt deforestation because we overlook its economic logic. Deforestation is driven largely by expanding agricultural frontiers in the context of food demand that will increase by 70% by 2015. Given this “big equation,” he said we must make forests “worth more standing than cut.” Viana proposed four targets for the SDGs: reduce deforestation and degradation; increase the value of sustainably managed forest products and services; eliminate extreme poverty in forest-dependent communities; and improve forest governance.

In the interactive dialogue that followed, Dias said the value added from an SDG goal on biodiversity would help address the lack of coherence in policies. In response to a question on the linkages between cities and biodiversity, he said the urban population will double at the cost of nature and crop production, and the quality of life in cities depends on how we deal with the environmental agenda. He added that landscapes are a good example of the integrated approach.

Oteng-Yeboah, in response to questions on value added and the integrated approach, said IPBES will engage all stakeholders since there cannot be good discussions based on silos. Viana said there is a need to improve data on biodiversity, and if we talk about services provided by natural ecosystems as a key concept in the SDGs, it will get the necessary attention.

Delegates also inquired whether the regular assessment on the global oceanic environment would be coordinated with IPBES assessments, why speakers had recommended “stand-alone” goals as the best outcome for various challenges, how a goal or target could address poaching and illegal trade in wildlife, especially elephants and rhinos, and how goals can be designed to bring transformative action. The presenters discussed the

need to identify ways to integrate action. Viana said one country had reduced taxes for all sectors except for forests, as a way to make forests “worth more standing than cut,” and emphasized the challenge to create incentives so that legal and managed activities are more profitable than the opposite, in the case of wildlife crime. Oteng-Yeboah highlighted that the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which has enforcement mechanisms, is addressing wildlife crime. Dias said adopting an integrated approach will be the best way forward, and that, while rule of law is one of the answers, it is necessary to convince people to change their consumption habits. Viana said governments should hear that protecting natural ecosystems is a good investment, with high returns in jobs and economic growth. Endangered species should not be saved because they are cute, but because they provide services that are essential to us. Dias said the Group should pay more attention to targets, to ensure we know how to deliver the goals.

TUESDAY'S PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION: Mark Smith, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), said “biodiversity is a development issue,” since human well-being cannot be improved without the benefits nature brings. Smith called for making nature-based solutions “part of the package for sustainable development,” and proposed a goal to enhance the benefits for all from biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Marie Haga, Global Crop Diversity Trust, said that, because global agriculture is facing “its greatest challenges ever” due to climate change and population growth, crop biodiversity is even more critical for ensuring food security. She said crops and agriculture must be made “climate ready” to be resilient to future challenges, and highlighted that diverse crop varieties are important in order to aid efforts to increase crops’ nutrition value, fight disease and increase yields. She said crop diversity is a “global common good” that must be reflected in the targets of the SDGs.

Daju Resosudarmo, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), said forests are fundamental to sustainable development and are relevant to every issue that the OWG has discussed so far, as they can: supplement diets; produce traditional medicines; help communities adapt to climate change; regulate water flows; mitigate against floods; and be used as household fuels. She emphasized lack of governance, sectoral fragmentation, and the undervaluation of land as causes of unsustainable use of forests. She clarified that forest and land tenure rights, integrated land-use planning, and participation in decision-making are important to allow forests to support the SDGs.

During the ensuing discussion, Smith said designing the SDGs without including biodiversity would be like “building a table with a missing leg.” Haga suggested integrating biodiversity under sectoral approaches, such as food security. On a question about making crops climate-ready, Haga said this does not detract from the need to address the cause of climate change, but we do need to feed the growing population. Responding to a question on how crop diversity fits into the biodiversity agenda, she said it is amazing how little attention there has been on this issue. Resosudarmo said education alone will not make people good forest stewards, as people also need to live and eat.

Resosudarmo also said uncertainty about land tenure undermines development activities and leads to conflicts. Finally, she added, transparency and accountability are necessary to create policies that address the needs of local communities, so these issues tie very well into the future development goals.

Haga said crop diversity is one of the most important natural resources the world has, as it relates to conserving options for the future. Smith said effective governance is made operational through effective, participatory, and adaptive negotiation processes. In final remarks, he stressed that biodiversity should be seen as a part of the “solution set,” and put into the SDG framework in recognizable ways.

INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS: Bolivia, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), said UNCLOS provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans. He stressed their importance for sustainable development including through poverty eradication, food security, decent work and responding to climate change. He also cautioned against the exploitation “by a few” of the ocean’s genetic resources, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. On forests, he expressed support for sustainable forest management (SFM), and said the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) is the main platform to deliberate on global forest issues. He reaffirmed biological diversity’s intrinsic value as well as essential services for human well-being. He said indigenous peoples are often most immediately affected by loss and degradation.

President Tommy Remengesau, Jr., Palau, for the Pacific Small Island Developing States as well as Nauru and Papua New Guinea, advocated for a stand-alone SDG to achieve healthy, productive and resilient oceans and seas. He said the goal should have targets on: a healthy and well-managed marine environment; restoring healthy fish stocks; and assisting LDCs, African countries and SIDS to realize the benefits of sustainably developed marine resources. Remengesau observed that “too often, we speak of our countries’ vulnerabilities. But we are not merely vulnerable.” Sustainable use of oceans and seas can unlock many countries’ tremendous development potential, he said.

The European Union (EU) said the conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity, forests, and oceans and seas is essential for sustainable development and poverty eradication. He stressed the linkages between issues, such as unsustainable fishing, food security and income generation. He called for establishment of marine protected areas, also in areas beyond national jurisdiction. On biodiversity, he called for: safeguarding ecosystems; preventing extinction; reducing wildlife trafficking; and integrating biodiversity values into poverty reduction strategies, national accounting and reporting. On forests, he called for eliminating illegal logging through improved governance and addressing the direct and indirect drivers of forest loss.

Italy, also for Spain and Turkey, noted the negative impacts that climate change, pollution, overfishing and invasive species have on the oceans, and the related threats to humans. He called for a global commitment to protect the oceans and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to levels that don’t threaten life on the planet. He stressed that SFM is a critical tool and consistent with the green economy approach. He called for an SDG to

deepen the relationship between biodiversity and poverty. The transition from MDGs to SDGs requires an adequate recognition of biodiversity and ecosystem services, he concluded.

Indonesia, also for China and Kazakhstan, identified several priorities, including: strengthening developing countries' ability to benefit from biodiversity; ensuring that local communities are the primary beneficiaries of biodiversity use; implementing SFM to secure the multiple uses of forests; and treating means of implementation as central components of each of the thematic issues.

Barbados, for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and also for the Bahamas, suggested, *inter alia*: addressing pollution from illegal or accidental dumping of hazardous wastes; adherence to the fisheries code of conduct developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); a focus on marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and how developing countries can derive benefits from these resources; the establishment of a global network to monitor ocean acidification; increased means and resources for research; assessment and management of small scale fisheries; and establishment of a regime for monitoring fishing vessels to prevent and deter IUU. She suggested there could be a cross-cutting, integrated goal on landscapes.

Slovenia, also for Montenegro, emphasized the need for integrated coastal management, SFM, and recognizing that ecosystems and natural resources are crucial for sustainable life on earth.

Pakistan, also for India and Sri Lanka, called for a holistic goal on ecosystem management. He said the MDGs had shown that "lone, singular and numerous" goals removed from their context will have limited results. On oceans, Pakistan noted that while UNCLOS was once considered the constitution of oceans, the challenges have grown more complex, and there is a need for goals on the long-term sustainability of oceans and seas. He said forests "must not be treated as a cost-free air purifier for those who have historically over-occupied the space in global commons," and said there must be an equitable sharing of the real costs of preserving globally important forests. He also said the SDGs should promote synergies with existing instruments, such as the CBD's Strategic Plan for 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets.

Australia, also for UK and Netherlands, suggested improving governance and management of oceans by supporting planning capacities at all levels. She also called for tackling the drivers of deforestation, and combining scientific and traditional knowledge. The post-2015 agenda should complement but not duplicate existing international agreements on these issues, she added.

Benin, for LDCs, noted that other countries have been able to "unduly draw the benefits" of their oceans' mineral resources, depriving LDCs of their legitimate endowments, and he deplored IUU fishing. On forests, he noted limited private sector investment, and stressed the importance of public financing for forests in LDCs. The SDGs, he said, must recognize the relationship between forests and other priority areas. He called for more research on biodiversity's importance in LDCs, and noted the particularly severe and immediate impacts of biodiversity loss on poor and vulnerable countries.

Zambia, also for the Southern African Group of Countries, said the importance of oceans, seas and forests cannot be overemphasized. He said the value of forests is most often underestimated or excluded, and many forest products do not return to the market economy. He also emphasized that means of implementation should be part of a cross-cutting goal on biodiversity issues.

Mexico, also for Peru, said UNCLOS is the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and seas and their resources, and SDGs should, *inter alia*: prioritize attention to ocean acidification, enhance access to fisheries markets, and eliminate subsidies and over-fishing; not duplicate objectives already approved such as the Aichi Targets, which apply in the context of the CBD; respect the UNGA's working group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction as the adequate forum for discussing this matter; and recognize that the call to establish protected marine areas beyond national jurisdiction does not enjoy universal support.

Bulgaria, also for Croatia, said oceans are the source of life "not just for fish but also for us," and are crucial for economic development. Sustainable forests translate to environmental sustainability since they: provide for mitigation and adaptation; combat desertification, land degradation and drought; and create green economies. These issues and biodiversity could be reflected in the post-2015 agenda as targets across multiple goals.

Norway, also for Denmark and Ireland, said allowing the natural base to deteriorate grinds prosperity to a halt. She called for consideration of the role of the private sector and partnerships in protecting biodiversity and ecosystems, and highlighted the importance of SFM and community ownership of forests. She said UNCLOS provides the legal framework for conservation and sustainable use of oceans, and stressed that IUU fishing must come to an end.

Belarus, also for Serbia, said the increased attention to biodiversity points to the need to reflect its critical role in the future development framework. Its integration will be facilitated by improved data and identifying sustainable metrics, indicators and targets to link biodiversity to various goals. She advocated for a stand-alone goal for forests, also expressing openness to a stand-alone goal on biodiversity.

Switzerland, also for France and Germany, said the post-2015 agenda should: address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss; reduce direct pressures on biodiversity and promote its sustainable use; improve access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits; and promote implementation of biodiversity conventions and strategies. On oceans, he highlighted acidification of oceans, suggested tackling piracy and limiting maritime navigation's impacts on ecosystems, and advocated sustainable management of mineral, extractable and marine genetic resources, among others.

Nauru, for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said SIDS are not the only ones affected by oceans and seas, which are crucial for: global food security, human health, regulating the climate, and providing water and oxygen. She highlighted coral reefs as important ecosystems and coral bleaching as a key threat.

Marshall Islands, for the Pacific Islands Forum, noted the uniquely global character of oceans and seas. For example, she said, as other regions have become overfished, the Pacific now supplies most of the world's tuna. She argued that the world must deliver coherent and confident action, including through a stand-alone goal on oceans and seas.

Finland highlighted conclusions reached at an expert meeting on "Forests and Sustainable Development Goals - A Regional View," which was organized by FAO and the UN Economic Commission for Europe on 22-23 January 2014, including: SFM is at the heart of tackling challenges within the forest sector, and a way to improve food security and water quality, among others; and the SDGs should acknowledge interconnectivity and multiple roles of forests. He said the meeting also identified illustrative targets, including on the income and employment forests and trees can provide.

Ghana, on behalf of the West African States, said poverty eradication, economic growth, food security, agriculture, water and climate change are all linked to the issues under discussion. The destruction of forests and biodiversity, she said, is due mainly to economic drivers, and land management and conservation solutions should be considered. She urged creation of incentives for sustainable land and forest management.

Colombia emphasized that the agenda will need to focus on health, education and jobs, but biodiversity and nature are part of the solution, as it is also an agenda of nature and life support systems. She encouraged delegates to consider how to integrate and mainstream targets into every goal.

Romania, also for Poland, said oceans and seas should have a stand-alone goal, and stressed reducing and eliminating marine pollution, including pollution from land-based sources and ships. She said other processes have recognized the need for sustaining the multiple roles of forests.

Congo asked how we can take into account the needs of coastal states, and how we can preserve the high seas. He proposed supporting capacity building, fixing major environmental disasters, and using the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, among others. He said measures should be taken to responsibly use resources and ensure that local actors benefit. He stressed the need for a cross-cutting plan for ecosystems.

Argentina, also for Ecuador and Bolivia, welcomed the focus on biodiversity, and said its incorporation should be based on the CBD's three objectives. He also said: resource mobilization, capacity building and technology transfer are critical; indigenous peoples and rural and local populations play a key role; indigenous populations should be involved in forest management; oceans and their resources are important, and UNCLOS refers to living and non-living resources in the sea; and a cross-cutting approach should be followed on climate change and oceans.

Brazil, also for Nicaragua, recalled that oceans and seas were a celebrated aspect of the Rio+20 outcome, which recognized UNCLOS as the legal framework. He said oceans and seas should be essential in the post-2015 development agenda, and he would like to see forests addressed appropriately in the SDGs. He added that we should not employ concepts that were not defined by Rio+20, such as "landscape approach" or "renewable resources," and forests should not be addressed in a basket of

natural resources. He also emphasized financing, technology transfer and capacity building, taking into account common but differentiated responsibilities.

Bhutan emphasized the importance of including forests and biodiversity in the SDGs, noted the threat that melting glaciers present to her country, and explained that Bhutan's constitution mandates the country to maintain 60% forest coverage at all times. She supported including and integrating forests and biodiversity into the SDGs, noted that goals and targets under existing mechanisms could help in this endeavor, and suggested putting these interrelated goals and targets together into a holistic package for consideration in the SDGs.

Canada, also for the US and Israel, said these issues must be integrated in order to respond to their connections to each other. He said his troika is flexible on the specific architecture within which the issues may be highlighted, but should be balanced by the desire for a limited number of goals. He also called for attention to be paid to both the conservation and sustainable use of forests, biodiversity, and oceans and seas.

FAO called for ensuring that the environmental services provided by oceans, forests, mountains, and biodiversity, and that their preservation is not "seen in isolation from human needs." He specifically highlighted the need to integrate mountain issues into the SDGs, noting that some of the world's poorest people live in mountain regions.

Mexico, also for Peru, highlighted the importance of existing, multilaterally-agreed targets, including the CBD's Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He emphasized the need to focus on the sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits from biodiversity, which is key to development, and should be integrated into a comprehensive framework for sustainable development.

Japan urged mindfulness of existing frameworks and conventions in order to avoid duplication and to ensure complementarity. He suggested including biodiversity as part of a possible goal on protecting ecosystems. He also highlighted the important role of education and science for sustainable development.

Bangladesh called for ocean governance that is effective, efficient and equitable, stressed the need for collaborative partnerships, and urged the equitable sharing of benefits from resources. He expressed an inclination for mainstreaming these issues across other goals. While also open to a broader goal on ecology, he said, an alternative may be to include these issues under a climate change goal.

Nepal said forests, oceans, seas and biodiversity present a great part of the solution to current challenges, and noted that water bodies in the mountains should also be considered. He stressed that the post-2015 agenda and SDGs should reflect the vulnerability, special needs, and special situation of LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS, and mountain developing communities.

The Republic of Korea said there is a need to change the conventional approach to these issues and to develop broader indicators of economic progress. He supported a goal on natural resources and ecosystem services.

Iran recalled that the issues under discussion have their own ongoing processes of negotiation, or already have agreement on global commitments, and wondered about the additional value of including them in the SDGs. He suggested that, in devising the

goals and targets, delegates should not set the bar higher or lower than existing commitments, and endeavor to strengthen and integrate existing commitments.

Egypt said: biodiversity intersects many sectors and should be addressed at the appropriate level; financing is a major impediment; and UNCLOS presents the legal framework for activities related to oceans.

Guinea, on behalf of the African Group, said the SDG framework should provide for addressing the pollution, acidification, and sustainable development of marine resources. He emphasized the centrality of fishing to the lives of Africans, stressed that means of implementation will be necessary to achieve any goals, and spoke of the need for community ownership of natural resources.

Singapore, also for Cyprus and the United Arab Emirates, said the issue of biodiversity would be best addressed by mainstreaming it into the targets of other SDGs. She emphasized the universal nature of oceans and seas, saying that a dedicated SDG on this issue should be considered.

Tanzania said environmental depletion and the destruction of resources is resulting in increased food and water stress. All projects, she said, should be evaluated in terms of environmental impacts and sustainability, in order to prevent excessive human pressure on biodiversity. The developing world, she stressed, has limited ability for implementation or to prepare for climate change vulnerabilities.

Uganda said biodiversity should be used in a sustainable way, given its contribution to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. With the livelihoods of over three billion people depending on marine and coastal resources, he said, their importance cannot be overemphasized. He stressed that the framework should build on the Aichi Targets, and that technology transfer and development will be critical.

The Maldives said the true forests of his country lie "below the waves," in the coral reefs that structure the marine environment. He stressed the economic and social importance of oceans and seas, and joined the call for a stand-alone goal on oceans. He called biodiversity and natural resources the "capital of the poor" and emphasized the need to phase out harmful subsidies and unsustainable consumption and production.

Monaco invited the Group to rethink the role of oceans from a cross-cutting perspective. She highlighted oceans' social aspect, their economic role and potential, and their environmental and biodiversity concerns, such as marine pollution. She said "we are all in the same boat," and we need to count on the private sector, civil society, business, and the academic and scientific worlds.

New Zealand said oceans are a global issue requiring global attention, and she favored a stand-alone goal that would: bring related challenges and commitments into one place to see how they interact and intersect; catalyze action and support to implement existing commitments; and enable measurement of progress.

Sweden emphasized valuation of ecosystem services and biodiversity, promoting fiscal policy measures for the sustainable use of natural resources, including elimination of harmful fossil fuel subsidies, and sustainable management of forests' services and resources. She called for both a stand-alone goal on sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems, and integration of the issues throughout the goal framework.

Cuba supported an SDG on oceans and seas, which should, *inter alia*: increase developing countries' capacity to benefit from conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and their resources; protect exotic species; reduce pollution of the seas; and improve resiliency of ocean communities and environments. Cuba also supported an SDG on forests. He said there is a need for a "trustworthy" financing mechanism to assist developing countries to implement forestry plans and programmes.

South Africa said benefits of biodiversity should be shared equitably with local communities. As gross domestic product (GDP) does not factor in biodiversity, he said, the economic value of resources must be taken into account in development decisions.

Gabon spoke of the importance of forests to her country, saying they serve as "depositories of cultural heritage and sources of life." Forests should be a priority goal and included in the agenda, she said, in order to increase support for the sustainable management of forests.

Senegal said forests present enormous potential for local economic growth and poverty eradication, but it is important to maintain an environmental balance and preserve biodiversity. He called for coherence and comprehensive strategies to provide for the needs of people while preventing the over-exploitation of forests.

Peru stressed the importance of forests, highlighted the need to balance between conservation efforts and economic growth, committed to working towards true social inclusion, and said goals should focus on the real value of forests and make more visible the role of forest dwellers.

The World Bank highlighted the challenges of ocean pollution. He also stressed the need to recognize: that biodiversity is a social safety net; the contribution of forests to wider landscapes; the need to use natural capital accounting; and the need to invest in robust and regular data regarding trends in natural capital and development of indicators.

Women supported a focus on ecosystem services and land use, and addressing governance including women's rights. She also called for fiscal reform and redirection of subsidies.

Indigenous Peoples supported a goal, within a rights-based approach, to address oceans, forests and biodiversity.

Local Authorities said cities are important because they have a disproportionate impact on biodiversity, and therefore great potential to be part of the solution, and because urban biodiversity is often very rich.

Business and Industry highlighted a new leadership alliance through which industry plans to engage with the SDGs in a cross-sectoral, integrated way.

The Scientific and Technological community highlighted the "Future Earth" programme, in which scientists across fields are collaborating on solutions to allow for the increased use of natural resources in a sustainable way. He supported a stand-alone goal on oceans and coasts, and related targets across other goals.

PROMOTING EQUALITY, INCLUDING SOCIAL EQUITY, GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS: Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women, said the realization of rights and well-being for all people, not only their economic development, is the hallmark of successful societies. As outlined

in a UN Women paper, she said three important elements for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment are: freedom from violence for women and girls; equal access to opportunities and resources, including education, land, finance, sexual and reproductive health and rights; and gender equality in decision-making. She said the sustainable development agenda depends on transforming gender relations, and noted that "these are problems for which solutions exist."

Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), described two possible paths for a young girl in his village in Nigeria. With her rights constrained and health and education denied, she is married at 10 years, becomes a mother at 11, develops fistula and is abandoned. Then, without credit or employment, she cannot look after her children and the cycle of poverty continues. We cannot make a difference in the world while this goes on, said Osotimehin. But what if instead, he asked, she goes to good schools and gets a job, and is allowed to decide with whom and when to marry, and how many children to have? The world will be a better place when this outcome is multiplied by the other 1.8 billion people in her situation. Osotimehin urged governments to "make sure access, rights and opportunities are available on an equal basis to women and girls."

Noting the applause for the morning's speakers, Co-Chair Körösi said they may have given the two most powerful statements in the history of the OWG. During the discussion, delegates highlighted the need to focus on violence against women and girls, and emphasized the need to address the root causes of the problem.

Mlambo-Ngcuka highlighted the need for better statistics and indicators to "learn what works." She said the MDGs did a lot for quantity, but not as much for quality, explaining that a goal on education, for example, should include targets for teacher training, engendering education itself, and addressing user fees in education. She emphasized the need to look at structural changes, saying the discussion of human rights addresses those issues. Osotimehin pointed out that we have created the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and UN Women and have made other changes, but men themselves have not changed. On the emphasis of rights, he said, "We have to leave this room convinced that there cannot be development without rights."

WEDNESDAY'S PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND

DISCUSSION: José Antonio Ocampo, Columbia University, stressed the importance of a specific goal on reducing inequalities. He explained that inequality exists among and within countries, and said official development assistance (ODA), which increased after the Monterrey Consensus in 2002, has started to decline. He said this is troublesome since international inequality is still high by historic levels. He said income inequalities are about economic policies as well as social policies.

Lenín Moreno, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disability and Accessibility, said persons with disabilities—being the most forgotten among the forgotten—can be a reference point on fostering inclusion of other groups. Moreno noted that some countries have not signed or ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, and that public policies often are not consistent with international

instruments. He urged the scientific and technical community to devise solutions so persons with disabilities can access health and work. Moreno also suggested disaggregating indicators to avoid excluding persons with disabilities.

Nicole Ameline, Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, said while women continue to be primary victims of suffering, violence and conflict, they are also primary actors in peace and democracy. She stressed the need to "change the paradigm" and ensure that equality is even more central to development as a precondition for achieving the SDGs. The MDG indicators were too narrow, she said, emphasizing that the post-2015 development agenda should be based on the current human rights framework. Ameline called for going further to attack the structural causes of gender inequality, and identifying the multiple forms of discrimination against women in different areas.

During the discussion, Bolivia encouraged consideration of eradicating spiritual poverty as well as material poverty. Other speakers supported putting humans at the center of the OWG's efforts, asked what the UN and SDGs can do to address inequality within a country, considered how economic policies can solve inequality within and among countries, and called for attention to gender equality.

The panelists discussed the interrelationship between rights and development, and Ocampo highlighted five social objectives to place at the center of economic policies: generate employment; institute fiscal systems such as progressive tax systems and progressive spending policies; manage economic risks and avoid crises; support small enterprises; and support education and housing.

INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS: Bolivia, for the G-77/China, highlighted: the discontent caused by widening inequalities, especially when compounded by poverty and unemployment; the need for greater labor mobility and regulation of financial markets; the strong case for an SDG on reducing inequality and adopting social protection policies; the fact that MDG 3 does not deal sufficiently with the challenges facing women; and targets on gender equality and women's empowerment should address access to productive resources, basic services and decision-making power.

The EU said the post-2015 framework should: ensure a rights-based approach; acknowledge that tackling inequality, marginalization and discrimination is indispensable for poverty eradication and sustainable development; and ensure that the benefits of growth are shared by all. He advocated that inclusive economic growth be underpinned by effective institutions and good governance, and called for social protection measures. He also suggested addressing child marriage, female genital mutilation, decision-making power, discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Ireland, also for Norway and Denmark, said the post-2015 agenda must do better on inequality than the MDGs, and women's and girls' rights are a prerequisite for poverty eradication, particularly in the areas of agriculture and food security. He also: highlighted universal access to contraceptives, post-abortion care, sexuality education, skilled birth care, and independent decision-making on family planning; called for an

ambitious goal on gender equality and mainstreaming across all other goals; and said indicators must show progress among the poorest and most marginal, relative to those better off.

Trinidad and Tobago, for CARICOM, said the SDGs and broader post-2015 development agenda must reflect the factors that perpetuate inequalities: social exclusion and lack of access. We also must assist states in meeting their objectives, he said, calling for an effective monitoring mechanism. He cautioned other governments against creating new rights that are not already part of the existing legal framework, and emphasized the role of the family. He expressed openness to a stand-alone goal on gender equality and empowering women.

Benin, on behalf of LDCs, said pictures of MDG achievement obscure the realities that large percentages of LDC populations still live in extreme poverty. Inequalities are mostly driven by structural factors, he said, such as international barriers and subsidies, volatile commodity prices and weakly regulated markets. “We must repair the social elevator” to allow for greater social mobility, he stressed. Benin also called for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and highlighted targets to end violence against women, allow for female economic and social empowerment, and focus on increasing the number of women in leadership positions.

Guinea, for the African Group, said uneven access to basic social services explains the region’s slow progress in attaining the MDGs, and highlighted disparities between rural and urban populations. On gender equality and women’s empowerment, he said the issues should be mainstreamed throughout the SDGs. He stressed that rural women—25% of the world’s population—play a critical role in poverty reduction, education, and food and nutrition security, and called for their full and equal role in decision-making.

Kuwait, on behalf of Gulf Cooperation Council, said the rights of women and girls must be guaranteed, and called for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action to allow women to benefit fully from development.

Indonesia, also for China and Kazakhstan, called for the framework to give “due weight to economic development” and support developing countries through sustained, inclusive and equitable access to economic and social development. She argued that the road to sustainability is through rising income. She also highlighted the continuing trend of poverty in middle income countries.

The UK, also for Australia and the Netherlands, said metrics should include information on jobs and services, highlighted a role for the private sector and NGOs in implementing and monitoring the Goals, said gender equality has been vital to the success of the MDGs, and suggested renewing and strengthening that commitment in the SDGs.

Slovenia, also for Montenegro, said the SDGs should be formulated through a human rights approach and gender equality should be included.

The International Trade Center said productive capacity is about jobs, jobs are about growth, and sustainable and inclusive growth is a prerequisite for sustainable development. She highlighted that a large part of the solution lies in small and medium-sized enterprises, female entrepreneurship is about jobs and poverty reduction, and women reinvest up to 90% of their earnings in their families.

Croatia, also for Bulgaria, said inequalities and barriers correlate with political marginalization, exclusion is contrary to legal obligations under international agreements, and achieving gender equality is an end in itself.

Peru, also for Mexico, said that continuing, significant challenges of gender gaps fundamentally affect sustainable development. He said the OWG must focus on mainstreaming gender approaches into public policies. A definition of gender equality in the agenda, he said, will be an essential mechanism for development.

Spain, also for Italy and Turkey, said “inequality is on the opposite pole to equal opportunity.” He said his troika favors addressing gender equality with a stand-alone goal, and a cross-cutting focus aimed at ending inequality. He specifically highlighted the importance of women’s sexual and reproductive rights, food security, access to water, and land tenure rights.

Zambia, for the Southern African Group, stressed that if gender inequalities and a lack of female empowerment continue to dominate the social fiber of societies, development will not be achieved. He spoke of the need to prevent human trafficking, sexual and emotional abuse, domestic violence, and sexual harassment. He said he will support the achievement of goals and policies that protect women from all forms of violence, and that it is important to decide how to identify progress.

Pakistan, also for India and Sri Lanka, suggested a holistic approach toward equality, including: moving a set number of countries out of the low- or middle-income category by 2030; increasing resilience to disasters and violence; reforming rules of international trade and finance; and enhancing access to vaccines. He called for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment, which will “reincarnate” MDGs 3 and 5, with more ambitious commitments including on access to credit, eliminating violence against women and girls, and ensuring equal pay for equal work. He also called for addressing the concerns of persons with disabilities across goals.

Ecuador, also for Bolivia and Argentina, observed a broad consensus in the Group on equality as an essential component in eradicating poverty. He called for a rights-based approach to enacting public policies explicitly aimed at reducing inequality in all its forms. On gender, he said economic growth is not enough, and advocated for gender justice. He also described a “liberating scenario” that addresses spiritual poverty as expressed in racism, sexism and consumerism, among others.

Switzerland, also for France and Germany, said structural causes of inequalities must be tackled according to human rights principles. He stressed that multi-dimensional inequalities are mutually reinforcing and intersecting, and data should be disaggregated by specific factors. He supported gender equality as a universal priority, including: promoting equal participation and leadership; promoting equal economic opportunities; eliminating and preventing all forms of violence against women and girls; and ensuring effective realization and enforcement of women’s rights.

Singapore, also for Cyprus and the United Arab Emirates, said inequality of income, gender, ethnicity, and location should be tackled, as they pose threats to sustainable development. He suggested streamlining gender equality across various SDGs and targets, as gender discrimination is pervasive across all regions.

Nicaragua, also on behalf of Brazil, said the concept of inequality has two dimensions: macroeconomic and macro-social differences, due to unequal wealth; and differences in access to opportunities and services. With adequate public policy, she said, it is possible to reduce inequality, and this public dimension should be included in the SDGs. A goal on women's empowerment should suggest policies rather than only goals and targets.

Viet Nam, also for Bhutan and Thailand, requested more transparent and equitable international trade and financial systems. Gender equality is not only a matter of social justice but central to sustainable development, he said, calling for eliminating violence against women and girls, equal access to resources and social services, and greater political and civic participation. He also noted that peace and security require all stakeholders to respect and abide by international law as the primary means for conflict prevention and resolution.

Colombia, also for Guatemala, said gender-related issues must be mainstreamed throughout the goals. She expressed concern over increasing levels of violence against women, called for empowering women as agents of change, and said, "Women are not a problem. We are the solution."

Nepal called for gender equality and the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by women and girls, who are agents of change. He cited the engagement of men and boys as important in breaking the cycle of violence against women. He also said the new agenda should prioritize the right to development.

Bangladesh called for a transformative shift in national development strategies to create opportunities for the poor, low-income and marginalized. Such policies will be resource-intensive and require support from donors, he said. He also advocated for equitable global systems of trade, investment and governance, as well as debt relief for developing countries. He favored a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment as well as embedding it in all other relevant goals, to ensure a truly universal agenda.

Egypt said equity is an important ingredient of social cohesion and development, and highlighted the need to address international inequality. He said the focus for the SDGs should be on issues that can bring us consensus, and said ideas not recognized in the UN Declaration on Human Rights and controversial issues should not be a part of the SDGs.

Peru, also for Mexico, said inequality should be examined multi-dimensionally, with a focus on social inclusion, and proposed: giving a voice to the most excluded people, including through an assessment of inequalities and development of disaggregated data; designing new development goals that incorporate targets and indicators; ensuring national capacities are taken into account in the development of SDGs; ensuring development and economic growth that is inclusive nationally and internationally, and reaches rural areas; and recognizing that equal opportunities for all are the best way to guarantee sustainable development.

The Republic of Korea said persons with disabilities should be taken into account, and supported three targets on gender equality: eliminate violence against women, enhance women's participation in economic activities, and enhance women's participation in decision-making.

Japan said growing inequality will destabilize society and the fruits of development will be lost. He said gender inequality needs to be addressed in the SDGs, especially freedom from violence and participation in economic activities and decision making. Japan also supported mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting issue as well as a stand-alone goal.

Poland, also for Romania, said the post-2015 agenda should: aspire to end to hunger, poverty and discrimination; focus on the poorest, most marginalized and vulnerable; and seek to end violence against women and girls, and ensure their access to: justice, decision-making at all levels, decent work, and quality education.

Uruguay said gender equality must be addressed from a human rights approach, and ensure a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health. Other key priorities included: strengthening spaces for equal participation in decision-making; prevention of sexual harassment; addressing violence in the workplace and in schools; and creating an independent mechanism to address women and their empowerment.

The Solomon Islands, also for Timor-Leste and the Pacific Small Island Development States, said it is critical to include clearly defined targets with measurable indicators on gender equality. Also stressed was the need to: connect the informal sector with the mainstream economy; deal with employment generation; and address gender-based violence.

Sweden said gender equality is a goal in itself, while also being a pre-condition for sustainable development. She stressed her country's "solid and increasing support" for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, while also mainstreaming the issue across all other goals. Men and boys must also be addressed and included in this work, she said, calling for data disaggregated by sex.

Maldives said gender equality is not achieved through development alone, but requires transformation of social norms, institutions and policies. He supported a stand-alone goal on gender parity. He urged breaking down stereotypes that hold women back from employment and public office, stressing that legal remedies are not enough.

Cuba underscored the importance of the rights to health services and free, quality education. She also highlighted the Cairo Programme of Action, saying its pending matters should become SDGs with specific indicators. On sexual and reproductive rights, she said currently some women "have to decide between death and prison" when they need to end a pregnancy. She called for solutions on social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment from a human rights perspective.

Israel, also for the US, supported including persons with disabilities in the SDGs and post-2015 agenda. He said he could not imagine a post-2015 development agenda without gender equality and women's empowerment as a central goal. He suggested possible targets on early and forced marriage, sexual and reproductive health, and women's right to decide on the number and timing of their children.

Estonia said the next generation of development goals will not be complete without gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. He stressed, *inter alia*, the need for: ending violence against women, including sexual violence in

conflict; education; promotion of decent work; and access to information and communication technologies as a tool for an inclusive society.

Palau called for eliminating discrimination against vulnerable groups through the SDGs, and said disaggregated data on vulnerable groups are needed to do this. He agreed with the UNFPA Executive Director that the best way to ensure women have human rights is to change the opinions of men.

Liechtenstein supported a gender goal based on the three targets suggested by UN Women, called for investment in adolescents and girls, and said there is a need for more male champions to boost gender equality. He also noted that the HLPF has a central role to play in reviewing the SDGs and stimulating implementation.

Rwanda said gender equality should be a core value of a progressive and inclusive development agenda, focusing on: increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, ensuring equal access to basic rights and education, and eliminating any form of violence.

Malta expressed support for ending inequalities and discrimination based on gender. Sexual and reproductive health and rights should fully represent the sensitivities of Member States, he said, and the “sensitive matter” of abortion should not be included.

Iceland expressed support for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and empowerment, as well as its mainstreaming throughout the agenda.

The Holy See emphasized that development benefits must be enjoyed by all members of the human family, and supported incorporating women’s equality across the development framework. He said there must be an approach that respects and enables women to choose and prioritize their actions within the context of the “family relationships that frame their lives.” He also called for support measures to accommodate the family work and needs of women, and civic participation designed to support the participation of all women with familial responsibilities.

Argentina gave a joint statement on behalf of 48 other governments (Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Montenegro, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK and Uruguay). She called for prioritizing gender equality and the human rights of women, girls, and all young people, especially those living in poverty or otherwise excluded. This improves the well-being of children and households, increases prosperity, and enhances environmental stewardship. She highlighted today’s youth population—the largest in history—noting that their place in the post-2015 framework will determine the future of humanity and the planet. She also urged the respect, protection and fulfillment of sexual and reproductive health and rights throughout the life cycle, including through universal access to information and services.

She concluded that the SDGs also must incorporate equal pay for equal work, maternity and paternity leave, and stronger efforts on data collection and analysis to support implementation.

Nigeria suggested avoiding controversial issues that lack universal consensus. He said lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights are against his country’s moral beliefs and cultural and religious values, and should be avoided in the Group’s discussions.

Senegal called for social protection measures such as family subsidies. He also recommended ensuring coordination in implementing gender policies, particularly protecting human rights and eradicating violence against women and girls, while ensuring their leadership and participation capacities.

The World Bank welcomed the broad recognition of a need to advance the gender agenda, and supported a stand-alone goal and mainstreaming gender across other aspects of the framework.

Women said a goal should seek to end all forms of violence against women and girls, guarantee women’s and girls’ sexual autonomy, and guarantee socio-economic equality.

Children and Youth said the SDGs must uphold the human rights of children and youth, and not view them as investments or commodities.

NGOs said the SDGs must be based on a human rights framework incorporating non-discrimination, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and highlighted the need to disaggregate data on persons with disabilities.

CONFLICT PREVENTION, POST-CONFLICT PEACEBUILDING AND THE PROMOTION OF DURABLE PEACE, RULE OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS: Mary Robinson, Chair, The Mary Robinson Foundation, emphasized the importance of a focus on peace and eliminating violence in the post-2015 development agenda. Calling the relationship between peace and development a “continuum,” she stressed that the nexus between peace, security, human rights, and development has never been clearer. The impacts of conflicts and disaster are universal, she said, advising against designing goals on peace and security only for fragile states. Robinson called for eliminating structural violence, especially against women and girls. On governance, she stressed the need to promote dialogues between the state, civil society, and the private sector, in order to increase transparency, accountability and coherence between efforts.

Cassam Uteem, former President of Mauritius, presented the idea of the “shared society,” a term used by the Club of Madrid to describe sensitive, inclusive governance that looks after and values all members of society. Achieving the SDGs depends on recognizing this element, he said, recommending a target on participation and consultation of identity groups. He added that “good governance needs good information” and recommended disaggregating data to show differential outcomes of policies, in order to know whether the SDGs are reaching the whole community.

THURSDAY’S PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION: Irene Khan, Director-General, International Development Law Organization, said the rule of law is essential for sustainable development. She emphasized that good laws and regulations that are fairly administered contribute to fair outcomes for all, and rule of law is a basis on which to set a

regulatory framework for natural resource governance. She highlighted possible targets that could address rule of law issues, such as access to health care and the rights of indigenous peoples. She said there are high expectations that the post-2015 agenda will be more transformative than the MDGs.

William O'Neill, Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum, gave an example of a school in Haiti that collapsed, not because of natural disasters or other factors, but because of a lack in governance and rule of law to ensure good building materials or code. He said development projects often focus on operationalizing, codifying, and supplying rule of law, but few activities try to address the norms, incentives, or operational cultures of institutions. Expressing a firm belief in the need for measurement, he presented the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI) Rule of Law Indicators as one example of governance indicators. O'Neill also stressed that governance reform will take time, and will be resisted by those who benefit from the lack of rule of law.

During the discussion, delegates asked the presenters to discuss the importance of rule of law at the international level, stressed that international intervention often leads to circumstances of insecurity, asked how to build capacities and empower the bottom, and noted that peacekeepers are performing development activities, among other questions.

Responding to questions on how to incorporate these issues into the SDGs, Robinson said peace itself is vital to development, and must be a core, universal goal because without it, countries “go backwards so quickly.” She echoed the suggested targets on decent governance, participation and the shared society approach put forward by Uteem. On a question about the availability of arms, Robinson said this is a failure of governance everywhere and a “terrible curse” in sustainable development.

Uteem urged a focus on eliminating extreme poverty, given its links to the injustices that cause conflict. He noted several commitments to help achieve a “shared society,” including: cohesion within governance structures, opportunities to consult minorities, ensuring the legal framework protects individual rights, and promoting respect for diversity. Uteem said peaceful, inclusive, shared societies are basic building blocks of social progress.

O'Neill responded about the example of OROLSI as an indicator, that this is just a suggested tool; his main concern is injecting more rigor into rule of law programming. On the suggestion that the school collapse in Haiti was due to poverty rather than governance failures, he cited the tiny percentage of Haitian children attending state schools, and argued that poor tax collection, rather than poverty, is to blame. He suggested also using oversight mechanisms and monitoring to reward good performance.

Khan said, regarding the international level, that justice is being privatized, and in a globalized world one cannot discuss economic and social development as if these issues do not cross borders. On the national level, she acknowledged legal pluralism, but said every country is a party to international agreements. Regarding applying these issues to developed countries, Khan said the lack of rule of law is not a monopoly of developing countries, citing unfair treatment due to race, migrant status, etc. in developed countries. Khan answered questions on the

international financial system, saying there are many aspects that are not being used properly by developing countries. She said devoting resources to the rule of law could make tremendous progress. O'Neill concluded that money should be spent on accountability and oversight of the national government, civil society, and the international community.

INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS: Benin, on behalf of West African States, said conflicts and crises have hindered MDG achievement, and observed that efforts have not accounted for the durability of development processes. He called for global attention to systemic causes of instability, welcomed the regional approach of the West African subregion and international community as reflected in the UN’s strategy for the Sahel launched in 2013, and called for greater discussion on the governance elements outlined in the Technical Support Team’s paper.

Iran, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said: attention to the rule of law needs greater attention at the international level; the principle of sovereignty implies that all countries have the right to participate at the international level; states should refrain from unlawful coercive measures, including sanctions; and no state has the right to deprive other states of their rights.

The EU called for the full and equal participation of women and civil society in conflict prevention and resolution, and said institutions must be strengthened, especially for fragile states. He emphasized the need to incorporate freedom from violence, accountable governance, and rule of law in the new framework.

Guyana, for CARICOM, said they are cautious about having the SDGs become a primary framework for peace and governance architecture. He called for collaboration for better and timely access to data, and said the SDGs should promote more effective management of the global commons, among others.

Austria delivered a statement on behalf of the Friends of Rule of Law group, which also includes Belgium, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland. He said rule of law and development are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, while being essential for sustained and inclusive growth. The interrelationship should be thoroughly discussed and considered in the post-2015 development agenda, he stressed.

Jamaica emphasized the importance of democratic self-governance and accountable local governments. He highlighted the development role of local governments, along the themes of inclusion, accountability, transparency, peace and dialogue. He called for a strong commitment to good governance.

Indonesia, also for Kazakhstan and China, said post-conflict peace-building, rule of law, and governance establish stable conditions for sustainable development to thrive. She emphasized, however, that the promotion of durable peace has been most effectively addressed through other avenues, and only the root causes of poverty and conflict should be addressed in the new development agenda.

Guatemala, also for Colombia, recognized the “controversial nature” of the concepts being discussed, but hoped that they wouldn’t overshadow the OWG’s ability to agree on a clear set of objectives for the post-2015 development agenda. It is crucial

to articulate the interrelationships between justice, peace, rule of law and development, he said, and this will require further debate.

Mexico, also for Peru, suggested the Group should take a general perspective that highlights the main areas of action needed to fulfill sustainable development. He recognized that the rule of law applies to all states equally, including in the UN and its main bodies. Suggesting indicators that are linked to fostering global governance, he called for better participation of developing countries.

Zambia, for the Southern African countries, said conflict prevention, post-conflict peace efforts, promotion of durable peace, and the pursuit of lasting peace are global imperatives. He expressed concern about a proliferation of weaponry, and said there is a need for conflict early-warning systems. He proposed that the SDGs ensure sufficient training and capacity building related to rule of law, and be cross-cutting in all the SDGs through targets that are realistic to country-specific challenges.

The US, also for Canada and Israel, said conflicts exacerbate existing challenges, impede development, create uncertainty about the future, and undermine the confidence necessary for growth. Thus, she said, safe and peaceful societies should be a paramount priority, including in the US, which has a higher homicide rate than half of the other UN countries. She said the public is demanding a new seriousness about honest, fair, and responsive governance, but this will only be achieved through access to institutions that give people the tools for their own empowerment.

Brazil, also for Nicaragua, said the Rio+20 outcome did not include a section on peace and security because it would remove the focus on sustainable development, and cautioned that including peace and security in the SDG framework would jeopardize a process that could be beneficial. He said the Technical Support Team's paper includes non-consensus concepts without caveats, and that, historically, the most militarily advanced countries have spread the most destruction. He said the impact on development of military expenditures and ill-conceived, unilateral interventions should be considered. He stressed the importance of respecting the Rio+20 agreed thematic selection as the centerpiece of the SDGs.

Romania, also for Poland, called for "goals and enablers" that recognize the interrelationship of peace, democratic governance, the rule of law, and sustainable development. She explained that there will be no post-2015 development agenda without sustainable peace and stable societies, and sustainable development cannot be achieved without strengthening the rule of law, which is the "glue that brings society together." She called for a stand-alone goal on democratic and effective institutions and targets on eliminating corruption.

The Netherlands, also for UK and Australia, recommended two separate goals: one on good governance with effective, open and accountable institutions; and another on building peaceful societies. He recalled that peace and violence are universal issues, highlighting personal safety, especially for girls and women. He also said the rule of law is essential for a stable investment environment, and underlined the feasibility of measuring progress in these areas.

Montenegro, also for Slovenia, said sustainable development will mean less conflict and more peace. He called for: prevention and early action, including through mediation; access to justice as an essential part of the rule of law, noting that barriers to justice reinforce poverty and exclusion; judicial independence; good governance including a human-rights based approach to development; and a larger role for civil society.

Singapore, also for Cyprus and the United Arab Emirates, said peace creates conditions to spur sustainable development. Some of the issues being discussed—which are "enablers for sustainable development"—could be cross-cutting targets, while others could be mainstreamed into goals. As much depends on what can be achieved at the national level, it may be difficult for the Group to reach broad consensus on this issue, he observed.

Turkey, also for Italy and Spain, said governments cannot ensure their people's well-being without peace, stability and good governance. He stressed the peace-development nexus must be made concrete in specific goals on peace, rule of law and good governance. He also: urged increased representativeness in UN decision-making mechanisms; called for transparency and public access to government data; and highlighted public administration as a critical element of democratic governance and economic and social development.

Croatia, also for Bulgaria, said: all development drivers should be placed at the top of the post-2015 agenda; without peace and the rule of law, we cannot expect sustainable development; and one of the most forward-looking mechanisms is public education systems.

Denmark, also for Ireland and Norway, said it is essential to ensure that all are protected from conflict, violence and weak governance, and emphasized that rule of law and development are strongly related and mutually reinforcing. He stressed the need for clear goals, targets and indicators to help each country track its progress on these issues.

Switzerland, also for Germany and France, noted that: these issues are linked with the Rio Principles; fragile and conflict-affected states are behind on the MDGs; and peace and governance have been identified as top priorities in many consultations and processes. He suggested targets on, *inter alia*: effective participation in public affairs; effective public and private institutions at all levels; participation and empowerment; reduction of violence; and attention to global governance challenges such as global crime and the proliferation of arms.

Pakistan, also for India and Sri Lanka, said the Group should differentiate between enablers and goals, as the OWG is not the place to discuss "hard-core" issues of conflict prevention. He noted that the Security Council works around the clock on this issue, and said the SDGs should be about development, prosperity and social stability. He said governance and rule of law are more relevant to the Group's work, and there should be a marked emphasis on national ownership.

Benin, on behalf of LDCs, said issues must be addressed to prevent the emergence of conflict and sustain peace. LDCs lack adequate governance capacity, he said, and efforts to increase efficiency, coherence, and the protection of human rights should be prioritized. The SDGs should build LDCs' national capacity for good governance and ability to deal with conflicts, as an integral part of sustainable development strategies, Benin stressed.

Nepal committed itself to understanding rule of law as an important basis of sustainable development, to be addressed in the agenda in a holistic manner. He stressed that the SDG framework should ensure that all its policies and projects are supportive of the needs and priorities of countries emerging from conflict.

Tanzania said the objective of conflict prevention is to eliminate impediments to achieving sustainable development, while stressing that there already are tools for preventing and resolving conflicts. As rule of law is an important enabler of inclusive growth and development, he said something must be done about the “four billion people that live outside the protection of the law.”

Japan recommended one stand-alone goal on peaceful societies and another on rule of law and governance, as proposed in the report of the UN High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (HLP). He said peace is crucial to developed countries as well as conflict-affected developing countries, highlighting freedom from fear as a fundamental human right, and personal safety is a priority from a human security viewpoint. He added that the rule of law is essential for inclusive economic growth, and expressed confidence about finding indicators to measure progress in these areas.

The UN Commission on International Trade Law said that while multinational corporations and the market economy have been blamed for many shortcomings, they create jobs, are the source of financing for state budgets, and can be more effective than governments in delivering basic services. He highlighted commercial law as a driving force for addressing sustainable development challenges and implementing national policies.

Guinea, on behalf of the African Group, said poverty eradication and better living conditions are the surest way to achieve durable peace. Regarding the rule of law, he cited the principles of non-interference, sovereignty and avoiding use of force. He supported the ability of each state to make choices based on its national, political and social values. He suggested including reform of the UN Security Council, other UN institutions, and international financial institutions. The SDGs could promote good governance, he said, through citizen participation in national development processes, and by addressing international trade, investment, debt relief and climate justice, among others.

Bangladesh said the current discussion on conflict and peace is “taking us too far away” from the spirit of Rio+20. Poverty, illiteracy, economic inequality and related issues are the main causes of conflict and war, so peace will only endure by addressing these factors, he said. He suggested incorporating international rule of law and global governance into the SDGs through: greater participation of developing countries in the global financial architecture; ethical standards in business; and an intellectual property regime that facilitates transfer of technology.

Timor-Leste said resilience is essential to poverty eradication and sustainable development. The greatest obstacle to MDG achievement has been the absence of peace, she said. She called for a goal on good governance and institutions, and another goal on stable and peaceful societies. According to her country’s experience, peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but a

condition that allows people to prosper socially, economically and environmentally. She also called for country leadership and ownership of the development agenda.

Moldova stressed the principles of national sovereignty and non-interference. Regional integration can support strong rule of law, which attracts more investment he said. He noted that rule of law and good governance are pre-conditions for better development, and he called for respect for human rights as essential for safety and security.

Palau noted that practically all of the issues addressed have treaties or platforms already, although their objectives have not all been achieved. He said the SDGs must be strong enough to promote them, and should address the root causes of poor governance, including greed for power. Sweden said the development agenda should address causes and drivers of violence and include, *inter alia*, freedom from violence, strengthened trust in security forces, equal access to justice, promotion of all forms of gender equality, free and universal identity such as birth registration, and transparent public institutions free of corruption. She said these are also the building blocks for attracting private sector investment, and emphasized the need for two goals: freedom from violence, and rule of law.

The Russian Federation said the formation of goals should not go beyond the agreement reached at Rio+20, and noted that the issues of post-conflict peace building and rule of law are not among them. He opposed “excessive” OWG attention to topics addressed by the Security Council. He said it would not be wise to develop a goal on the rule of law.

Finland emphasized peace and stability, respecting planetary boundaries and striving for solutions to allow humans to prosper.

Uganda noted that the returns on efforts to avoid conflict are greater than for peacekeeping, and suggested supporting efforts in post-conflict countries to address the root causes of conflict. He said an effective global partnership will require global governance reform, including the UN and international financial institutions.

The Republic of Korea welcomed an emerging consensus that peace, rule of law and governance are mutually reinforcing foundations of sustainable development. He said whether they are expressed in stand-alone goals or mainstreamed into other goals, these issues must be highlighted as core elements of the post-2015 agenda. He recommended governance targets on public access to government data, participation by various stakeholders in political processes, and reduced corruption.

Liechtenstein said the question is not “if” but “how” the rule of law will be part of the post-2015 development agenda, called for a goal as well as targets on rule of law, and cited existing tools for measuring it. As agreed in the 2012 High-level Declaration on the Rule of Law, he said the SDGs should include: good governance principles; equal access to justice; women’s public participation; support for transitional justice; intolerance for impunity for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity; and fighting corruption.

Senegal highlighted international terrorism, drug trafficking, illicit arms trafficking, and other issues facing his country. To build lasting peace, security and social cohesion, he urged: combatting corruption and repatriating illicit funds, promoting

citizens' access to information, and fulfilling international legal obligations. Senegal added that reform of the UN Security Council must remain on the UN's agenda.

Bolivia, also for Ecuador, said rule of law is strengthened by regional mechanisms such as agreements in Latin American integration groups, and multilateralism should be strengthened. He said indicators are a new topic and should be considered cautiously, as they could lead to approaches that reflect the views of only one part of the world.

Rwanda said preventing conflicts is possible, provided that leaders and stakeholders take responsibility.

Egypt noted the UNGA's consideration of the rule of law, and said diverse cultures and traditions need to be respected. While acknowledging the link between development and the rule of law, he said his country shares the view that the issues of this discussion fall outside the scope of the SDGs as agreed at Rio+20.

Nigeria called for preventative diplomacy, acknowledged the HLP report and supported the rule of law as a necessary tool to fight corruption. He said effective and responsive governance should guarantee human rights.

Lebanon called for a "more transformative agenda" that addresses the root causes of poverty. She said long-term development planning includes establishing all the foundations of a peaceful society, and that only a peaceful society can maintain development efforts. While peace is an enabler of development, it can also be an outcome of successful development efforts, she said.

South Africa said the rule of law must be promoted simultaneously at the national and international levels, but one must not be pursued at the expense of the other.

Jordan said indicators on governance and the rule of law should be cross-cutting and measure social, economic and other development aspects. She recommended enhancing the capacities of national statistics offices to collect and analyze data.

Syria expressed concern that the Group's discussions are not concentrated on sustainable development and poverty eradication. He said all international efforts on rule of law should be founded on sovereignty of states to choose their economic and social systems. He called for ending interventionist policies, guaranteeing the right to development for all, and justice, transparency and equality at the international level.

Palestine said foreign occupation and sustainable development are mutually exclusive, and that occupation threatens international peace and security.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union said good development requires democratic governance, which should be a stand-alone goal.

The World Health Organization said the framework should include health services in conflict areas, respect and protection of the neutrality of health workers and facilities, and investments in health services.

The International Committee of the Red Cross called for: ensuring respect for humanitarian law; better control of the transfer of weapons; full support for impartial humanitarian action; and ensuring continued functioning of critical services in time of conflict, such as water delivery. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance said democracy can facilitate equitable distribution, and democratic governance

facilitates responses to climate change and disasters. She noted that only decisions made with active engagement of affected people are socially and politically sustainable.

Local Authorities stressed the need to support local and regional governments so they can participate in service delivery and SDG implementation.

Business and Industry stressed that the rule of law is essential to ending poverty, as development is "held back" by the fact that the poor often do not have the rights to their possessions, such as their homes, lands, businesses, goods and citizenship.

Indigenous Peoples stressed the need for their engagement with legal and justice services, meaningful participation in decision-making, and the promotion of the rule of law.

Children and Youth told delegates, "This is not a world in which I would like to bring up my children." She called for an SDG framework that mainstreams the needs and rights of youth, who must also participate in the design and implementation of policy-making at all levels. Co-Chair Kamau offered her his applause.

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY

On Friday afternoon, OWG Co-Chair Körösi summarized the week's discussions, based on the Co-Chairs' summary bullet points for OWG-8 that were distributed during his presentation. He highlighted, *inter alia*: the role of oceans, seas, and forests as life-support systems; concerns about widening inequalities in the world; and the importance of peace, rule of law, and governance as enablers of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The "Co-Chairs' Summary bullet points for OWG-8" notes that, on "oceans and seas, forests, biodiversity," OWG-8 speakers mentioned the need to recognize the living value of species beyond their commodity values, as well as to recognize and respect the rights of indigenous peoples. Options for goals and targets include a goal combining these topics focused on ecosystems, and goals on the individual topics. Attention to poor and vulnerable groups, capacity building, technology transfer and financing, science-based policy making, and the existing agreements and instruments on these topics were also highlighted.

On "promoting equality, including social equity, gender equality and women's empowerment," the summary notes that options to address inequality include affordable access to quality education, health care, and policies that support entrepreneurship and small-scale enterprises. Many speakers affirmed gender equality as an end in itself, and called for a stand-alone goal on gender equality as well as cross-cutting targets under other goals. Others said gender equality issues should be aligned with existing agreements, such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Rio+20 outcome document. Many called for respect for sexual and reproductive health and rights of all individuals, while others said these references would need to be consistent with the International Conference on Population and Development agreement.

On "conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and the promotion of durable peace, rule of law and governance," speakers said tackling poverty will require addressing the full range of its causes, and many said peace, rule of law, and governance are both ends in themselves and critical enablers for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The summary indicates that speakers noted the importance of these issues,

while underlining that the OWG's discussions should be based on the Rio+20 outcome document. It notes that speakers said conflict prevention and the pursuit of durable peace should address structural drivers of conflicts, including through promoting participatory decision-making, inclusive economic governance, and equitable management of natural resources. Speakers also noted the need for open and effective institutions, curbing illicit financial flows, and birth registration and legal identity. National ownership of rule of law was emphasized. And while some called for goals related to peace, rule of law and governance, others said they should be dealt with in a cross-cutting manner.

A number of countries indicated they would submit comments on the summary.

Co-Chair Körösi noted that crafting the SDGs is an act of governance, and implementing it will depend on governance. He concluded his summary by encouraging delegates to "Keep talking, but more importantly, keep listening."

Co-Chair Kamau highlighted the symbolism of the fact that the OWG has been meeting in the UN's Trusteeship Council Chamber, and stressed that the OWG is entrusted with the task to "carve out a future for our children and the young." He noted that the SDGs would be aspirational and normative, and encouraged governments to set the bar high so they could hand over a better world to the next generation than we are all living in today. He closed the meeting at 6:09 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF OWG-8

GOALS, TARGETS AND INDICATORS

For eleven months, delegates to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals have abided by their Co-Chairs' advice to delay negotiations until they had completed a period of mutual learning and discussion. Their eight "stock-taking sessions," which involved the formal discussion of over 58 issues and were enhanced by presentations from 80 experts, have now concluded, leaving the Group's members informed about the challenges that the SDGs must address and the approaches that they may wish to take.

At the same time, the Group itself has grown, from its originally mandated "30 representatives nominated by Member States" to 70 members in a unique seat-sharing arrangement. Many of these states have been represented at a high level, including ambassadors, ministers and even one Head of State—President Tommy Remengesau of Palau. The Co-Chairs have invited statements from even more country and regional group representatives, not to mention participants from diverse areas of the UN System, international and regional development banks, and Major Group representatives, all of whom have consistently packed the room, signaling their interest in and offering their input into the OWG's proceedings.

If these figures serve as an indicator of the OWG's work to date, they demonstrate the opportunity that the international community sees in the SDGs, as a way to incorporate sustainable development into a broader development agenda. But these first eight meetings have only been the first, diagnostic stage. In March, the OWG will begin the next stage, and focus on crafting a set of sustainable development goals that realistically represents how these many issues interact in peoples' lives.

This brief analysis considers OWG-8's discussions and the implications for the next set of "decision-making" OWG sessions. Just as indicators are used to identify change over time and measure progress in meeting targets, this analysis considers the OWG's evolution to evaluate how far it has come in the past eleven months and to offer a signpost for how far it still has to go.

EVOLUTION OF DIMENSIONS

Through the variety of presentations, issues and participants, observers noted that it has become clear that OWG participants recognize that they are not only piecing together a set of goals and targets; they are also grappling with some of the most inter-linked challenges facing the world today. The wide-ranging, multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary discussions in the OWG have illuminated the shifting landscape of sustainable development, and the need to re-think traditional camps, sectors and the dreaded "silos." "Multi-dimensional" has become a frequent description of the OWG agenda items, as governments and stakeholders have explored new approaches to address these intricately connected issues.

The OWG-8 discussion of forests, biodiversity, and oceans and seas—all traditionally part of the environmental pillar of sustainable development—allowed governments to expound on their multi-dimensional contributions to development. The topics were not only considered as environmental challenges, but viewed through the lens of their economic, social and cultural contributions to both local and global communities. Some noted that this broader approach to addressing natural resources may have yielded new options for grouping issues together—from a natural resources cluster, to ecosystems or landscape approaches—although some supporters of each issue also continued to stress that forests, biodiversity, and oceans and seas each merit a "stand-alone" goal due to their individual contributions to economic, social and environmental well-being.

Although a focused discussion of inequality had to wait for OWG-8, the marginalization faced by women, persons with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities, youth and the ageing, and the extremely poor had already been referenced during the discussions on nearly every issue on the OWG's agenda. By OWG-8, delegations seemed empowered to suggest that gender equality should be a main feature of the entire sustainable development agenda, as well as expressing its importance in a stand-alone goal. Some even commented that the day spent on gender equality may have been the most energized of the OWG's entire work to date. Despite delays and travel difficulties due to a slushy snowstorm on the day that the gender discussion was scheduled, the Trusteeship Council Chamber was packed from top to bottom, with the crowd listening intently to the two powerful keynote speeches and reacting with rousing applause.

However, not everyone supported all of the issues on OWG-8's agenda and it became clear that the various pieces of the SDG puzzle will not fall into place easily. For example, some developing countries wanted inequality to include economic divisions among countries, while others wanted to focus on social inequalities within countries. Despite agreement on the importance of broad concepts like rule of law and good governance, some countries insisted that national sovereignty was paramount and focused on arguments for international rule of law. And while many speakers highlighted the connections

among peace, security and development, others expressed their firm position that these issues should not be addressed in the SDGs. Some speakers stressed that the greatest obstacle to achieving the MDGs has been the absence of peace, but others said the SDGs should focus on poverty, illiteracy, economic exploitation, and absence of decent work as the conditions that lead to conflicts and war in the first place. While the multidimensional nature of these issues may have been recognized, the OWG-8 discussion suggests that the effort to translate these issues into consensus goals, targets and indicators will especially call on the diplomatic skills within, and careful navigation by, the OWG.

EVOLUTION OF DESIGN

One result of the extensive, and often exhaustive, review of so many themes during the stocktaking process is what many pointed to as a shared understanding that there cannot be an SDG for each issue. Some suggested that, at OWG-8 especially, the role of targets and indicators in the SDG framework received increased attention, in recognition of their role in ultimate implementation efforts. The example of a target on legal identity was raised by many speakers to demonstrate the multidimensional impacts that implementation of a target could have in the lives of individuals. They noted that efforts to increase birth registration could also improve delivery of maternal health, and improve the education and employment options for individuals as well as their ability to own resources. Ideas for the grouping of targets, the creation of indicators at the national level, and concise narratives have come to the fore from thought leaders within the Group, all of which have pointed to a learning process about the structure as well as the substance of the SDGs.

The OWG-8 discussions in this regard also demonstrated that delegates had begun moving into the next series of “decision-making” sessions. Some asked presenters why they thought a stand-alone goal would be the best option for an issue, and whether the stated objectives could be achieved through targets rather than goals. They sought to dig deeper into suggestions to examine what incentives could be used to change behavior. And they inquired whether governments had the ability to bring about certain proposed changes. In a few cases, Member States said they did not believe a goal was necessary for a certain topic, and used terms like “enabler” or “cross-cutting” in their arguments against crafting stand-alone goals on certain issues. Many more such statements will be heard in the months ahead as governments and stakeholders start to elaborate their positions on which issues should, or should not, be included in the SDGs.

ON TARGET?

Few decision-making processes in the UN have benefited from as open and substantive an approach as that which has characterized the OWG’s first year. The exploration of issues, guided by expert presentations, impressed many of the participants, including many veteran UN negotiators. The 11-month dialogue has attempted to find coherence among the three dimensions of sustainable development, with each discussion weaving together issues in new ways and breaking down the traditional silos between them.

But the stock-taking and fact-finding phase has come to an end and everyone knows what comes next. Now that all the issues have been laid out in a rich, multi-dimensional display, they must be broken down, cobbled together, and structured into a functional sustainable development agenda. As Co-Chair Kamau’s closing remarks on “our lovely OWG” suggested, the stock-taking phase has been, for the most part, cordial and productive. But participants recognize that the stakes for the next phase of the OWG are much higher, as issues become more firmly understood to be a part of or outside the realm of consensus. At the beginning of March, governments are expected to decide on the negotiating modalities, and then at the end of March they will commence their work to devise a list of goals, targets and indicators. The evolution of the process indicates the past year has been time well spent, but now delegates’ ability to listen and learn from each other and achieve consensus is about to be put to the test.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

UNGA Thematic Debate: Water, sanitation and sustainable energy in the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 18-19 February 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

Second Set of OWG Meetings: The OWG will hold its next meeting from 3-5 March 2014 to determine the negotiating modalities for the next phase of its work. The OWG will also meet formally on the following dates 31 March - 4 April, 5-9 May, 16-20 June and 14-18 July. **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

Third Session of Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing: The third session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing is scheduled in March 2014. **dates:** 3-7 March 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1686>

UNGA High-level Event: Contributions of women, the young and civil society to the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 6-7 March 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

Third High-level Symposium for 2014 DCF: The Third Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) High-Level Symposium will take place in Germany in the first quarter of 2014, with a focus on “Accountable and effective development cooperation in a post-2015 era.” Participants will consider the strengthening

of accountability frameworks to ensure fulfillment of global commitments. The Symposium will feed into the fourth Development Cooperation Forum, which will take place in July 2014, in New York, US, and will seek to advance the global dialogue on the future of development cooperation in the post-2015 era. **dates:** 20-21 March 2014 **location:** Berlin, Germany **contact:** DCF Secretariat **email:** dcf@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/dcfgermany.shtml>; <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/dcf/>

UNGA Thematic Debate: Role of partnerships and their contributions to the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 8-9 April 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

First High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: The Global Partnership works with partners to complement existing efforts that impact on effective development cooperation. These include the UN Development Cooperation Forum, the Development Working Group of the G20 and the UN-led process of creating a global development agenda for after 2015. The Global Partnership builds on a range of international efforts, including those begun in the Monterrey Consensus (2002), the Rome Declaration on Harmonisation (2003), the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008). **dates:** 15-16 April 2014 **location:** Mexico City, Mexico **contact:** Derek Kilner, UNDP **phone:** +1-212-906-5742 **email:** derek.kilner@undp.org **www:** <http://effectivecooperation.org/>

UNGA Thematic Debate: Ensuring Peaceful and Stable Societies: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 24-25 April 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

Fourth Session of Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing: The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing is scheduled in May 2014. **dates:** 12-16 May 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1687>

UNGA High-level Event: Contributions of South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation and information and communication technologies for development to the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 20-21 May 2014 **location:**

UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

UNGA High-level Event: Human rights and the rule of law in the post-2015 development agenda: This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 17-18 June 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

2014 Substantive Session of ECOSOC: The 2014 substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will include a High-level Segment, as well as the second meeting of the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF). The HLPF meeting—taking place from 30 June-3 July—will include a three-day ministerial segment, and is expected to adopt a negotiated declaration. The ECOSOC High-level Segment will take place on 7-11 July and is expected to devote three days to the HLPF. **dates:** 23 June - 18 July 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** ECOSOC Secretariat **email:** ecosocinfo@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/> and <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1556>

Fifth Session of Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing: The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing is scheduled in August 2014. **dates:** 4-8 August 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1688>

For additional meetings, see <http://post2015.iisd.org/>

GLOSSARY

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
HLP	UN High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
LDCs	Least developed countries
LLDCs	Land-locked developing countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OWG	Open Working Group
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIDS	Small island developing states
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund