



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
27 October 2014  
English  
Original: English/French

---

## Sixty-eighth session

Agenda items 14, 19 (a) and 118

### **Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields**

### **Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**

### **Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit**

## **Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals**

### **Addendum**

## **Explanations of position and reservations on the report**

### **Introduction**

At the 108th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 10 September 2014, the President of the Assembly invited Member States and observer States to provide their statements to the Secretariat, including explanations of position and reservations on the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970). The present report is a compilation of the submissions received.

### **Joint statement<sup>1</sup>**

[Original: English]

We reaffirm our commitment to developing sustainable development goals and a post-2015 development agenda that leaves nobody behind, places people at the

---

<sup>1</sup> Delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Chile, Colombia, the Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Samoa, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay and Vanuatu.



centre of development and is rooted in human rights. The future agenda should aim at tackling the root causes of structural inequalities and discrimination for all members of humankind, and at achieving gender equality, empowering women and girls and ending gender-based violence, throughout their life cycle, with particular attention to those living in poverty, vulnerable groups, adolescents and youth.

In order to complete the “unfinished business” of the Millennium Development Goals, and building on the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and related agreements, the respect, promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all must be an essential foundation of a universally relevant, transformative, high-impact and cost-effective sustainable development agenda across its social, economic and environmental dimensions. They are key to addressing inequality; achieving poverty eradication, educational attainment and public health outcomes; fostering productivity, labour force participation and economic growth; reaping the rewards of demographic dividends; improving environmental management, energy, food security, water and sanitation; and easing pressures on limited resources and ecosystems.

As fundamental human rights and freedoms for all people are critical to the sustainable development of all nations, we consider that the following targets should form an integral part of the sustainable development goals and post-2015 development agenda to be achieved by 2030:

- Under the proposed goal on health: “Achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all, including quality, comprehensive, integrated and affordable sexual and reproductive health information, education and services that include modern methods of contraception”
- Under the proposed goal on gender equality: “Ensure the respect, promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all”
- Under the proposed goal on education: “Achieve universal access to comprehensive sexuality education for all young people, in and out of school, consistent with their evolving capacities”

**Statement received from Kuwait, as Chair of the Group of Arab States for July 2014**

[Original: English]

You would recall the statement by the Arab Group delivered during the eleventh session of the Open Working Group. The Arab Group acknowledged in the statement the intrinsic link between development, peace and security; however, the Group reiterated that a detailed discussion on that matter, which goes beyond reflecting the intrinsic link between development, peace and security in the preamble, should take place in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda, not the sustainable development goals, due to the lack of a mandate from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

Moreover, the Arab Group reaffirmed that, by all means, any discussion on peace and security should take into consideration and address Arab concerns in this regard, in particular those related to ending foreign occupation and fighting terrorism.

We reiterate our commitment, expressed in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals of 2010 and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, to take further effective measures and actions, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment, are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person, and must be combated and eliminated.

The Arab Group notices that, despite a lack of consensus, goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) remains in the working document. In this context, the Arab Group wishes to include under this goal the following targets, in line with the statement delivered by the Group on 9 May 2014:

1. Immediate end to all forms of colonial domination and foreign occupation in order to achieve sustainable development for all;
2. Strengthen adherence to international law by all stakeholders, including States, international organizations and financial institutions, to achieve an international law rule-based order;
3. Intensify international cooperation in the field of countering terrorism, in particular addressing its root causes as an obstacle to achieving sustainable development.

The Arab Group cannot accept a selective approach with regard to the relationship between development, peace and security.

**Statement received from Lebanon, as Chair of the Group of Arab States for August 2014**

[Original: English]

I would like to refer to your letter dated 4 August 2014, which included in attachment the letter from the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, the proposal of the Open Working Group and the record of proceedings of the Open Working Group.

I would like also to follow up on the letters addressed by the Arab Group to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group, dated 15 and 24 July 2014, respectively (A/68/990, annex, enclosures 1 and 2), as well as the letter from the Arab countries members of the Open Working Group addressed to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group, dated 25 July 2014 (ibid., enclosure 3).

In the above-mentioned correspondence, the Arab Group regretted that the proposed target of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination was not included under goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), where it naturally belongs. In this respect, the Group went along with the approval of sending the proposal on

sustainable development goals to the General Assembly, with the understanding that target 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere) applies to ending foreign occupation, as it is one of the most extreme forms of violence. The Group's understanding also is that target 16.3 (Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all) applies to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab occupied territories, through the full implementation of all General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions, to the occupied Arab territories.

The Arab Group would like also to express its great concern regarding the absence of any reference to the issue of "illegal unilateral economic sanctions", under goal 16, which was raised by Arab countries. This specific issue has been a major impediment that has severely affected the economy and development of many countries and has played a big role in undermining the sovereignty of States. As goal 16 calls for providing access to justice for all, this issue should be addressed and duly reflected in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Arab Group requested that this statement be registered as part of the official record and in the report of the Open Working Group. Nevertheless, neither the letter nor the Arab Group position and reservations were reflected in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Arab Group would like to reiterate its request to have its positions duly reflected, as well as that of its members, in the report of the Open Working Group. The Group reserves the right to take any appropriate measure, in case its positions are not duly reflected in the report.

**Statement received from Libya, as Chair of the Group of Arab States for September 2014**

[Original: English]

The Arab Group has engaged actively and constructively in all the meetings, deliberations and consultations of the Open Working Group.

With regard to the particular issues falling under goal 16 of the proposed sustainable development goals (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), the Group voiced its concerns at a very early stage regarding the potential risk of adopting a selective and reductionist approach when addressing these issues. The turn which the discussions and consultations took in this regard proved that the concerns of the Arab Group were valid and well-founded, as some Member States tried to impose their own vision regarding these issues, thus excluding the very valid concerns and critical interests of the Arab Group.

The Arab Group delivered statements during the tenth and eleventh sessions of the Open Working Group, whereby it acknowledged the intrinsic link between development, peace and security; however, the Arab Group reiterated that a detailed

discussion is needed and should take place in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda. Furthermore, the Arab Group reaffirmed that, by all means, any discussion on peaceful and stable societies should take into consideration and address Arab concerns in this regard, in particular those related to ending foreign occupation. Therefore, the Arab Group requested the inclusion under goal 16 of the following targets:

1. End all forms of colonial domination and foreign occupation in order to achieve sustainable development for all.
2. Strengthen adherence to international law by all stakeholders, including States, international organizations and financial institutions, to achieve an international law rule-based order.
3. Intensify international cooperation in the field of countering terrorism, in particular addressing its root causes as an obstacle to achieving sustainable development.

The Arab Group reaffirmed that it cannot accept a selective approach when addressing the issue of a peaceful and stable society in the context of sustainable development.

The Arab Group regretted that the proposed target of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination was not included under goal 16 where it naturally belongs. In this respect, the Group went along with the approval of sending the proposal on sustainable development goals to the General Assembly, with the understanding that target 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere) applies to ending foreign occupation, as it is one of the most extreme forms of violence. The Group's understanding also is that target 16.3 (Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all) applies to the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other Arab occupied territories, through the full implementation of all General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions, to the occupied Arab territories.

The Arab Group would like also to express its great concern regarding the absence of any reference to the issue of "illegal unilateral economic sanctions", under goal 16, which was raised by Arab countries. This specific issue has been a major impediment that has severely affected the economy and development of many countries and has played a big role in undermining the sovereignty of States. As goal 16 calls for providing access to justice for all, this issue should be addressed and duly reflected in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Arab Group requested that its statements and letters dated 24 July and 29 August 2014 addressed to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group and the President of the General Assembly, respectively, as well as the letter dated 25 July 2014 from the Arab countries members of the Open Working Group addressed to the Co-Chairs of the Open Working Group, be registered as part of the official record and in the report of the Open Working Group. Nevertheless, neither the letter nor the Arab

Group position and reservations have been reflected up to now in the report of the Open Working Group.

The Arab Group would like to reiterate its request to have its positions duly reflected, as well as that of its members, in the report of the Open Working Group.

**Statement received from Egypt, as Chair of Group of Arab States for October 2014**

[Original: English]

With respect to the proceedings of the conclusion of the last meeting, on 19 July 2014, the Arab members of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals regret the fact that the request made by Tunisia to take the floor on behalf of the Arab Group was denied. This prevented the Group from expressing its views on the final version of the proposed set of sustainable development goals before adoption.

We further regret that the issue of ending all forms of foreign occupation and colonial domination was not included under goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels), where it naturally belongs. In this context, our countries would like to refer to the letters addressed to you by the Arab Group on 15 and 24 July 2014, as well as to the Arab Group's interventions and comments in this regard during the last meeting of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, held from 14 to 19 July 2014, and reaffirm the Arab Group's position on this matter.

In this respect, our countries went along with the approval of sending the document to the General Assembly, with the understanding that target 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related deaths everywhere), applies to ending foreign occupation, as it is one of the most extreme forms of violence. Our understanding also is that target 16.3 (Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all) applies to the situation in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab territories, through the full implementation of all General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council resolutions on ending foreign occupation and colonial domination in the occupied territories in Palestine and other Arab occupied territories, as well as the application of the relevant provisions of international law and international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions, to the Arab occupied territories.

This is particularly relevant in view of the current tragic situation in the Gaza Strip, where hundreds of innocent civilians, mostly women, children and the elderly, are under an illegal blockade and brutally bombarded and killed by the occupation forces.

**Afghanistan**

[Original: English]

The delegation of Afghanistan supports in general all the goals and targets which have been reflected in the report. However, this delegation wishes to express its reservations and position regarding the following aspects of the report of the Open Working Group:

With regard to targets 3.7, 3.8 and 5.6: the delegation of Afghanistan supports them as long as they are in conformity with Islamic sharia law and are not in conflict with article 3 of the Afghanistan constitution. It also reiterates the reservations that it set forth in the report of the International Conference on Population and Development.

**Brazil (also on behalf of Nicaragua)**

[Original: English]

Nicaragua and Brazil are fully aligned with the statements by the Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

This is the result that we have achieved in the time given. The General Assembly must seriously consider and take into account the product of 13 Open Working Group sessions, fully respecting the integrity of the structure and number of goals, the “acquis” of agreed language on all targets and the introduction to the proposal of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals as an integral part of the package.

We today fulfil a central mandate from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to develop sustainable development goals that are aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries. Our delegations made a huge effort throughout the process to seek consensus and move forward.

Always together and speaking in one voice, Nicaragua and Brazil worked towards a new development paradigm, for a better world with happiness for all peoples and in harmony with Mother Earth. We strove to preserve the “spirit of Rio”, with our eyes set on the future as we acknowledge the realities of today.

There are many lessons to be learned from our experience in the Open Working Group. In fact, we will need to have a frank and open discussion about procedure and substance as we approach negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. We must at all costs intensify and improve our methods of work going forward, so that we can achieve more convergence and greater ambition.

Though we recognize and value what has been achieved, in large part thanks to the hard work, competence and diligence of the Co-Chairs, we must express a feeling of deep frustration in respect of the means of implementation.

We made good progress in formulating a new vision for development, but we failed to properly devise the means that will make it happen. In fact, there is a huge disparity between the level of ambition of the sustainable development goals and their respective, and missing, means of implementation.

We have witnessed the deliberate watering down of the means of implementation to their minimum expression, right up to the end of our debates. What we are currently left with can only be considered a work in progress, hopefully to be adequately enriched by outcomes from the conference on financing for development, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and the dialogues on options for a technology facilitation mechanism. Uniting these strands will probably be one of the issues that the General Assembly, in its wisdom, will have to act upon.

*Climate change*

On climate change, we must not confuse negotiations that are ongoing in another forum with our process here. The explicit reference to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as the primary forum for climate change negotiations is extremely important. We support those ongoing negotiations and have been actively engaged in them, trying to reach an agreement that is fair, equitable, balanced and effective. The process is complex and cannot be captured in a few lines of sustainable development goal text. We do not ignore the importance and seriousness of climate change. Our position was that it should have been mainstreamed across different goals.

We would have preferred not to have climate change as a stand-alone goal. The fact that it prevailed as such speaks to our tremendous flexibility in helping the Open Working Group to reach a successful conclusion. We hope that this will increase the political visibility of the issue, strengthen the political will of Member States and help to build the required trust for the next negotiations at the twentieth climate change conference, in 2014, and the twenty-first climate change conference, in 2015.

*Goal 16*

We conclude these negotiations in the Open Working Group with the certainty that several countries have tried to impose their interpretations and conditionalities related to the rule of law and matters pertaining to peace and security in the provision of development assistance.

We have made our best efforts to be flexible and constructive on this particularly challenging matter, which in our view must be firmly understood and anchored strictly under a sustainable development lens in goal 16, in accordance with the framework set out in “The future we want”.

Justice for us is the bigger and better concept, because everybody knows what it represents and means, especially when they are treated unfairly and discriminated against. On the other hand, not all law is necessarily just, and unjust laws should not rule.

**Cameroon**

[Original: English]

Cameroon enters an express reservation on target 5.6, which reads:

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Cameroon wishes to express a reservation on all terms and all possible interpretations in the document that are in contravention of our national laws. Target 5.6, its implementation or interpretation shall in no case refer to or imply the concepts of sexual orientation, gender identity, same-sex couples or abortion.

Therefore, Cameroon will not accept at any point any policies, monitoring, evaluation or reporting on target 5.6 which will include or tend to include, explicitly

or implicitly, the concepts of sexual orientation, gender identity, same-sex couples or abortion.

Cameroon is of the view that the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences are not intended to standardize the cultural values of peoples around the globe. Thus, Cameroon will deal with and address the concepts contained in target 5.6 in full accordance with our national legislation as well as the ethical, cultural and religious concepts and convictions of our society.

## **Canada**

[Original: English]

Canada appreciates the openness of the discussions and the significant efforts that went into the development of the Open Working Group outcome document. More work will be required in the year ahead to translate the 17 goals and 169 indicators of the Open Working Group outcome document into a clear set of priorities that will mobilize the international community and can be simply communicated to the general public.

While we appreciate the desire to create an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, it also needs to be achievable, measurable and focused on the poorest and most vulnerable. In practical terms, we believe that this means that the 17 goals will need to be reduced to 10 or fewer. Canada is also firmly of the view that means of implementation targets should have been addressed under a single means of implementation goal, rather than being spliced throughout the agenda.

Canada has the following additional reservations regarding the outcome document:

- A great deal remains to be done to achieve the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals related to maternal, newborn and child health. We owe it to the women and children of the world to ensure a strong focus on maternal, newborn and child health within the post-2015 agenda — a focus at the highest level. We believe that maternal, newborn and child health should have been present as a stand-alone goal.
- As women are an essential part of any country's development, we strongly believe that ending child, early and forced marriage should be included as a distinct target in the post-2015 agenda.
- We, like many countries, advocated the inclusion in goal 16 on governance and peace and security of a reference to rule of law. That concept is an essential component of this vital goal.
- We have strong reservations regarding the paragraph that contains the reference to foreign occupation. The inclusion of this issue in the introduction to the proposal serves only to politicize the agenda and undermines the very premise of cooperation and development on which this process is based.
- Climate change is an issue that is being negotiated through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. As such, we do not believe that it should have been included as a stand-alone goal. It would have been more

appropriate to address it by incorporating environmental sustainability as a cross-cutting theme.

- Recognizing that we must all live up to our commitments and obligations, discussion of development finance needs to take into account the new development landscape in which domestic resource bases and private sector flows are of increasing importance. We therefore believe that target 17.2 should refer to this broader context rather than to a 0.7 per cent target.

## **Chad**

[Original: French]

As regards target 3.7, in accordance with the laws of Chad, the reference to sexual health should not be construed as meaning systematic recourse to abortion for family planning. Concerning the reference to sexuality education, we believe that parents are responsible for the education of their children, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant international instruments, and that the paragraph in question must be read in the light of national legislation.

Concerning universal health coverage, referred to in target 3.8, we assume that it will be defined in accordance with national legislation.

Regarding target 5.6, Chad has reservations firstly concerning the procedure for inclusion of the point in the final document without negotiation and consensus, and does not consider itself bound by the reference to follow-up conferences, which add other elements not defined in international law. Chad believes that the entire paragraph must be read in the context of respect for domestic law and cultural and religious values.

In general, Chad understands household to mean a family, comprising a man and a woman.

Finally, Chad asks for the controversial paragraphs to be revised, especially 5.6, and also notes that there are paragraphs in the final document with unspecified percentages, and requests the pertinent corrections to be made during the session of the General Assembly.

Chad also hopes that the implementation mechanism will be strengthened, in particular through predictable and conditionality-free funding.

## **Cyprus (also on behalf of Singapore and the United Arab Emirates)**

[Original: English]

On behalf of our troika, Cyprus, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, we would like to point out that next fall, we expect the intergovernmental negotiations for the post-2015 agenda to start, and that today's outcome will be an important input in those negotiations. We are looking forward to constructively engaging when the time comes.

Allow me now, in my national capacity, to express a concern with regard to target 14.c on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Convention is the constitution of the oceans and seas. It enjoys near universal participation, with 164 States parties, and constitutes customary

international law. It is the framework governing all activities in the oceans and seas. That is why any reference undermining these notions is of concern to us.

Having said that, we, either in our national capacities or within our respective political groups, are ready to continue this work to bring it now, as China said, to the next level and to the General Assembly.

**Ecuador (also on behalf of Bolivia (Plurinational State of))**

[Original: English]

The Plurinational State of Bolivia and Ecuador have presented their legal reservations to paragraph 225 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, since this may be contrary to the provisions of the various articles of our constitutions and therefore our national laws, and have also stated that any assessment, monitoring, reporting and review of our national energy policies and measures, including our taxation structures, affect our national sovereignty and are not accepted.

We have made proposals of texts in order to contribute to improving the text to be included in the sustainable development goals, reflecting our intention to accommodate different views and look for consensus, but it is not possible for our delegation to accept a target that from our perspective undermines our sovereignty in defining decisions related to structures of taxation and energy policies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Therefore, our delegations would like to express their disagreement with target 12.c and present their reservations to that target, in line with the reservation presented in reference to the above-mentioned paragraph of the outcome document entitled “The future we want”.

Finally, and in my national capacity as the representative of Ecuador, I would like to express the view that my delegation interprets the language of target 5.6 in accordance with the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development, with our Constitution and with our national legislation.

**Ghana**

[Original: English]

The use of the terms “sexual and reproductive health” and “reproductive rights” in targets 3.7 and 5.6 cannot be understood or used to imply or presume any obligation on Member States to permit the destruction of innocent human life in the womb through induced abortion or other methods.

**Greece**

[Original: English]

I would like to note that Greece cannot support the reference to States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as reflected in target 14.c of the final text of the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (“... for States parties thereto ...”).

The Convention has universal character and almost universal participation, and its provisions either embody or reflect customary international law. We believe that

the aforementioned proposed language undermines the importance of the Convention, especially this year, when we are celebrating the twentieth anniversary of its entering into force. To our understanding, the language in this target does not reflect consensus.

## **Guatemala**

[Original: English]

It should be highlighted that the outcome of the Open Working Group was developed under a process that was open, transparent and somewhat different from the traditional format of negotiations that we know so well in the United Nations. At the beginning, we all expected that negotiations would be carried out behind closed doors, only with the designated members; however, this process included every delegation of the United Nations and it also received contributions from civil society. Now, we have a proposal that emerged from a universal process and the goals are also universally applicable.

Our delegation recognizes that the document is not perfect; we would have liked a more limited set of goals and targets. However, we believe that the document should be considered in its entirety, and in this regard we believe that the outcome of the Open Working Group should be the basis for integrating the sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda.

We also welcome that the outcome of the Open Working Group includes global priorities that had previously remained on the sidelines of the development agenda, such as goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts) and goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels).

The links between the rule of law and sustainable development are undeniable. It is a priority to strengthen the rule of law in order to create an enabling environment for sustainable development, and for this reason target 16.3 is of special interest.

## **Honduras**

[Original: English]

With regard to goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) and goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls), and specifically pertaining to targets 3.7 and 5.6 as presented in the final draft, my delegation finds the need to clearly state that, for Honduras, concepts such as sexual health, reproductive health, sexual rights, reproductive rights and family planning do not include or contemplate abortion or termination of pregnancy, nor do we accept them as a way of controlling fertility or regulating population. This is based on our Constitution and relevant legislation, as well as on internationally recognized human rights, which state that the right to life is inviolable, including for the unborn child, and that life starts from the moment of conception.

**Iran (Islamic Republic of)**

[Original: English]

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, with reference to the adoption of resolution 68/309 of the General Assembly, entitled “Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/288”, as well as to paragraph 13 of the report (A/68/970), has the honour to reiterate that the content of the report should be interpreted in a manner consistent with the national legislation and development priorities of countries, as well as cultural and ethical values and religious background, and in line with internationally recognized human rights.

Additionally, the Islamic Republic of Iran would like to express its observations and reservations in this regard, as follows:

- The documents of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform of Action recall the sovereign rights of countries to implement the provisions in a manner consistent with their national legislation and development priorities, as well as cultural and ethical values, religious background, and in line with internationally recognized human rights. Therefore, the term “reproductive right”, in its general terms, is not agreed language, and the proper terminology in this regard would be “sexual and reproductive health”. Regrettably, the report even encroaches on the agreed language of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in this regard.
- Furthermore, the outcomes of the regional review conferences of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform of Action are not always globally agreed ones. Therefore, certain elements in these documents might be against national policies, legislation, and religious and cultural values, and should not be referred to as agreed language.
- Contrary to the agreed language in paragraph 9 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development for the mentioning of “sex” in relation to disaggregated data, in the report of the Open Working Group the term “gender” is used in the chapeau and some other parts of the text, which the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that, in any way, should strictly mean “male” or “female”.
- The reference to “household” in the report should also be construed only as the “family”, which is a union, founded on the marriage of one man and one woman, as the natural bond, which constitute the “household” as the building block of a society.
- Sex education, mentioned in target 3.7, should also be age-appropriate and interpreted as to ensure the religious and moral education of the children in conformity with their own convictions. This right is clearly recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and must be respected.
- Goal 16 of the report does not enjoy broad consensus. The Islamic Republic of Iran therefore believes that it is biased, politicized and discriminatory, and should have not been included in the report from the beginning. Different references to either general or non-internationally agreed themes or

terminologies under this goal are a point of concern and regret. Additionally and unfortunately, a reference to the root causes of instability and non-peaceful societies, such as illegal unilateral economic sanctions, the existence of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, foreign occupation and colonialism, is lacking in the text.

## **Israel**

[Original: English]

The outcome of the Open Working Group is a strong foundation for the next stage — one that truly integrates social, economic and environmental issues, builds on the Millennium Development Goals and reflects the substantial common ground that we have found.

However, there are several issues in the text that raise concerns for my delegation.

Israel regrets that the language in targets 5.4 and 5.a is considerably weaker than the text agreed upon in Rio de Janeiro and that women's right to own, inherit and control land and other forms of property is not properly recognized in the report.

We would like to make a strong reservation concerning the reference to foreign occupation in the chapeau. The introduction of this text was nothing more than the result of undue political pressure by certain delegations. We reaffirm our strong view that the sustainable development goals are far from being the appropriate place to address issues of this nature.

While we do not agree with some specific elements in the report, we support the proposal going forward to the General Assembly for appropriate consideration and action.

## **Libya**

[Original: English]

Libya wishes to express its position and interpretation and to lodge the following formal reservations regarding the following aspects of the report of the Open Working Group:

1. With respect to paragraph 17 of the report, which refers to “data and statistics disaggregated by ... gender”, Libya understands this to refer to sex-disaggregated data, reflecting the two biological sexes, male and female.

2. With respect to target 3.7, Libya does not join consensus, and:

- (a) As for “sexual and reproductive health-care services”, “family planning” and “reproductive health”, Libya reiterates the reservations that it set forth more fully in the report of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action, and states that under no circumstances are these terms to be understood to include recourse to abortion. In particular, the International Conference on Population and Development rejects recourse to abortion for family planning, denies that it creates any new rights in this regard and recognizes that this matter may be determined only through national legislation. Abortion is always

gravely illicit and can never be called “safe” for the child who is killed or the mother who is brutalized;

(b) As for “information and education”, Libya denies that such a reference may be defined to include “comprehensive sexuality education”, and reaffirms that the “prior right” of parents to choose the kind of education given to their children, a right recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, must be respected. Libya also recognizes such education programmes as subject to the binding legal obligation of States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to “undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents ... to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions”.

3. With respect to target 3.8, Libya understands “universal health coverage” to be defined always in accordance with national law.

4. With respect to target 5.4, Libya understands “within the household” only as defined in reference to “the family.” The family, founded on the marriage of one man and one woman, is the natural and fundamental group unit, which comprises the household and is the basic building block of society.

5. With respect to target 5.6, Libya does not join consensus and reaffirms all reservations asserted more fully within its reservations to the report of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and in 2(a) above. With respect to “reproductive rights”, Libya expresses a grave objection to the attempted inclusion of abortion aspects under a framework advancing women’s rights, and reaffirms in this regard that no right to abortion exists under international law. The *jus cogens* norm of the right to life is chief among international human rights, as a non-derogable human right applicable without distinction of birth. The right of children to their lives is recognized as a *jus cogens* norm under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which guarantees that “every child has the inherent right to life”. The fact of legal status and entitlement to legal protection of children before birth is recognized expressly in this Convention, which holds that “the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”. Libya also interprets this target’s language as strictly limited by the specific sovereign commitments and reservations undertaken by States to respective documents.

6. Libya understands “gender” to mean “male or female” only, and to have no meaning other than the customary and general usage of the term.

## **Liechtenstein**

[Original: English]

As others, we have serious concerns with the text overall. We think in particular that, in the area of gender, the text is certainly not a step forward — and indeed we are afraid in some respects even a step back. This is not only the case in 5.a, in particular, but also in 10.2, where we do deviate from established terminology. Also, we do not think that the rule of law is reflected properly in this text. In 16.a, we are of the opinion that, clearly, something needs to be fixed at the end. Moreover, the high-level political forum and the review mechanism do not have their rightful place in this text. It will be one of the most important elements in the implementation of this agenda,

and we would have liked to see something better, in particular more in line with the General Assembly resolution establishing the high-level political forum. Finally, we are seriously concerned about the repeated references to national legislation and circumstances in the text, which are simply not necessary given that this is addressed in the chapeau.

We look forward to finalizing everything, with a view to having a very good text in 2015.

## **Mauritania**

[Original: English]

The Permanent Mission of Mauritania to the United Nations has the honour to request to express its position and interpretation and to lodge the following formal reservations regarding the following aspects of the report of the Open Working Group:

1. With respect to paragraph 17, “data and statistics disaggregated by ... gender”: Mauritania understands this to refer to sex-disaggregated data, reflecting the two biological sexes, male and female.
2. With respect to target 3.8, Mauritania understands “universal health coverage” to be defined always in accordance with national law.
3. With respect to target 5.4, Mauritania understands “within the household” only as defined in reference to “the family”. The family, founded on the marriage of a man and a woman, is the natural and fundamental group unit, which comprises the household and is the basic building block of society.
4. With respect to “reproductive rights,” Mauritania expresses a grave objection to the attempted inclusion of abortion aspects under a framework advancing women’s rights, and reaffirms in this regard that no right to abortion exists under international law. The *jus cogens* norm of the right to life is chief among international human rights, as a non-derogable human right applicable without distinction of birth.
5. Mauritania understands “gender” to mean “male or female” only, and to have no meaning other than the customary and general usage of the term.

## **Mexico**

[Original: English]

The delegation of Mexico has presented in written form the reservations orally stated during the thirteenth session of the Open Working Group on paragraph 14.c:

14.c. Ensure the full implementation of international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea for States parties thereto, including, where applicable, existing regional and international regimes for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by their parties.

Specifically, the delegation of Mexico expresses its reservation regarding the text “for States parties thereto” in the above-mentioned paragraph, since it is our position that it limits the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which should not be limited to parties thereto, given the fact that it

also reflects principles of customary international law. Therefore, to limit its application to parties to it weakens the universal regime of the Convention.

### **Nauru, as Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States**

[Original: English]

This reservation is specific to goal 13.b in the climate change section of the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

Nauru, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, interprets this paragraph to include, for the purposes of capacity-building support, all countries that are vulnerable to climate change, including the small island developing States.

### **Nepal**

[Original: English]

One issue which deserves to be included in the revised zero draft is missing.

My delegation has been consistently highlighting, in various interventions under this group, the importance of sustainable mountain development and also why it is important to be included in a sustainable development framework, at least as a stand-alone target under a goal.

But, every time when the summary and reports of the Co-Chairs, especially the “working document” and “zero draft”, have come out, sustainable mountain development has not been included. We made our point every time in the hope of getting it into the upcoming reports, but it never happened.

Now we all see that it is still not there in the current updated draft either, despite the requests by various delegations in this session. I have looked back and tried to raise some questions and also tried to have answers to the same. But after seeing all those answers, I am not convinced myself.

Now let me try to describe those questions and the answers I have developed in brief.

1. Doesn't sustainable mountain development deserve to be included in the sustainable development framework as a target under a goal?

Yes, because:

- 12 per cent of the global population lives in mountainous regions
- Almost 50 per cent of the global population depends upon mountains for fresh water and ecosystem services
- Mountains are the home to 25 per cent of terrestrial biodiversity
- They are an important source of renewable energy
- Mountain peoples are among the worlds' poorest. 40 per cent of the mountain population in developing and transition countries is vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition
- Land degradation, landslides, glacial lake outburst and floods have become recurrent phenomena in mountainous countries, thereby making mountain people some of the most vulnerable to climate change

- The benefits derived from mountain ecosystems are essential for sustainable development

2. Are there not enough voices in its favour in the Open Working Group?

Several troikas and countries, including my delegation, have been consistently speaking in its favour. My delegation has been speaking about it as a priority issue in all relevant sessions.

3. Is there any opposition to it?

No delegation has spoken against it in any meeting of Open Working Group so far in their interventions.

4. Is it missing because there are already too many targets under goal 15?

That is also not the case, as other goals have many more targets than goal 15.

As I am not convinced myself with the exclusion of mountain issues from the latest report, now, I am requesting you, as the Co-Chairs, to give me the answer as to why sustainable mountain development does not deserve due place in the sustainable development goal process, which I can give as your respectable logic to my Government and people and also to all people of the world who are living in mountain regions, no matter whether they are in Asia or Europe or America or elsewhere. I am not only speaking for my country and people, but all those people who are living in mountain regions. Therefore, I need either a convincing answer from you or a stand-alone target under goal 15.

**Netherlands (also on behalf of Australia and the United Kingdom)**

[Original: English]

We welcome the focus on eradicating poverty and completing the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, the stand-alone gender goal and the carefully crafted goal to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. We welcome the fact that the proposal covers the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way.

We see this report as a useful reflection of the discussions that we have had. There are a range of issues here with which we are content. There are others on which, to be frank, we have serious concerns. In the chapeau our mandate is misquoted. Our role is not to develop sustainable development goals — that is for the intergovernmental process — our role is to make a proposal. We have concerns about paragraph 5 of the chapeau. We have issues on gender, where a woman's right to own, inherit and control land and other forms of property is not properly recognized. There is a similar problem in the poverty goal, target 1.4. Our attitude towards unpaid care and domestic work is inadequate. We regret the absence of a target on ending open defecation in goal 6. The goal on economic growth does not properly address the drivers of economic growth, with the absence of issues like a sound macroeconomic policy framework, the importance of trade and an enabling environment for growth — issues that our troika has consistently raised. We regret the absence of the rule of law in goal 16, and are puzzled about the absence of the language on illicit arms, which commands strong support. Goal 17 is unbalanced, prejudices decisions that lie within other processes and lacks the key issue of development effectiveness. In addition, the

way that means of implementation actions are handled in goals 1 to 16 is unbalanced and repeats issues properly covered in goal 17.

Looking forward, we believe that as Member States we will need to reflect whether 17 goals and 170 targets provide the inspiring, actionable vision of the future we want. Will line ministries in our capitals be able to take and implement that vision? Will they enable political leaders to build support for sustainable development? Will teachers and parents be able to use them to enthuse our children about the world we want? Do they reflect the state of the art in international technical discussion?

With all this in mind, we are prepared for the report to go forward to the intergovernmental process for consideration, while stressing that there remains substantial work to do.

### **Nigeria**

[Original: English]

Nigeria wishes to reiterate its reservations on targets 3.7 and 5.6 of the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, adopted on 19 July 2014.

We are concerned that target 5.6 has a reference to the outcome of regional conferences. We consider some elements in the outcome to be against our national legislation and religious and cultural values. On target 3.7, we believe that sex education should be the primary responsibility of parents.

### **Saudi Arabia**

[Original: English]

On target 1.4:

By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services including microfinance.

Saudi Arabia would like “inheritance” removed from this target. The issue of inheritance is based on sharia law, and we believe that this target, with the inclusion of inheritance, hinders our right to practice Islamic law within our borders.

On target 5.6:

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.

Saudi Arabia would like this target deleted, as the reference to “reproductive rights” contradicts tenets of Islamic law.

On goal 16:

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Saudi Arabia aligns itself with the statement made by Libya on behalf of the Arab Group with regard to the inclusion of “eliminating all foreign occupations”. We do not believe that a peaceful society can exist under foreign occupation.

## **Senegal**

[Original: English]

In paragraph 17 of the introduction to the report of the Open Working Group, the word “gender” used in the English version of the report gives rise to confusion and, for greater clarity, should be replaced by the word “sex”, an agreed term referring to men and women, in line with the French version of the report, which uses the appropriate word, “sexe”, in that same paragraph.

Senegal expresses reservations about this concept of “gender” and calls for a harmonization of the wording of the English and French versions of the report in this regard.

With regard to goal 3, target 7 (3.7) concerning reproductive rights and comprehensive sex education, Senegal believes that this goal should be implemented in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, which recognizes the religious and cultural values of individual countries and their sovereignty in this regard.

Accordingly, Senegal expresses reservations about target 3.7 in the event that its implementation conflicts with the laws in force on this matter, and with the cultural and religious values of individual countries.

With regard to goal 5, target 6 (5.6), Senegal believes that the reference to the outcome documents of the review conferences on the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development is inappropriate, since there are still widely divergent views on these documents as they contain concepts which have not yet achieved consensus at the intergovernmental level. Accordingly, Senegal wishes to express reservations on this target.

Furthermore, Senegal notes that the percentages mentioned in 4.4, 4.6, 4.b, 4.c, 6.3, 9.5, 11.5 and 11.b have not yet been specified and are still in brackets, and asks for them to be specified, for the sake of consistency.

## **Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**

[Original: English]

Our delegation would like to express its disagreement with two paragraphs and present its reservations to them.

With regard to the concept of “modern energy for all”, which is reflected in the title of goal 7 and in target 7.1, we reserve this concept as we did in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, because modern energy, in our view, involves the use of new

technologies without the necessary evaluation of its application in a national context and priorities and technological development.

In addition, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its reservation with regard to target 12.c. As pointed out at the Conference, for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on the basis of its 1999 Constitution, the reference to the removal of subsidies for fossil fuels has an interventionist character in the State's public policies and, therefore, we do not accept its relationship with any of the "sustainable development goals". The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela will not accept any kind of evaluation, monitoring, reporting and reviewing of our national energy policies and measures that involve an effect on our national sovereignty. That paragraph, in addition, distances itself from and substantially modifies the lines agreed upon in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of 2002.

We also want to support the position stated by the Arab countries on the matter of foreign occupation.

Finally, it is appropriate to recall once again that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is not a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and that the objection to the texts adopted in this document cannot be interpreted as a change of position on said Convention.

## **Yemen**

[Original: English]

The Permanent Mission of Yemen to the United Nations wishes to express its position and interpretation and to lodge the following formal reservations regarding the following aspects of the report of the Open Working Group:

1. With respect to the words in paragraph 17, "data and statistics disaggregated by ... gender", Yemen understands this to refer to sex-disaggregated data, reflecting the two biological sexes, male and female.

2. With respect to target 3.7, Yemen does not join consensus, and:

(a) As for "sexual and reproductive health-care services" and "reproductive health," Yemen reiterates the reservations that it set forth in the report of the International Conference on Population and Development, and states that under no circumstances are these terms to be understood to include recourse to abortion. In particular, the International Conference on Population and Development rejects recourse to abortion for family planning, denies that it creates any new rights in this regard and recognizes that this matter may be determined only through national legislation. Abortion is always gravely illicit and can never be called "safe" for the child who is killed or the mother who is brutalized;

(b) As for "information and education", Yemen denies that such a reference may be defined to include "comprehensive sexuality education", and reaffirms that the "prior right" of parents to choose the kind of education given to their children, a right recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, must be respected. Yemen also recognizes such educational programmes as subject to the binding legal obligation of States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to "undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents ... to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions".

3. With respect to target 5.4, Yemen understands “within the household” only as defined in reference to “the family”. The family, founded on the marriage of one man and one woman, is the natural and fundamental group unit which comprises the household and is the basic building block of society.

4. With respect to target 5.6, Yemen does not join consensus and reaffirms all reservations asserted more fully within its reservations to the report of the International Conference on Population and Development, and in 2(a) above. With respect to “reproductive rights”, Yemen expresses its grave objection to the attempted inclusion of abortion aspects under a framework advancing women’s rights, and reaffirms in this regard that no right to abortion exists under international law. The *jus cogens* norm of the right to life is chief among international human rights, as a non-derogable human right applicable without distinction of birth. The right of children to their lives is recognized as a *jus cogens* norm under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which guarantees that “every child has the inherent right to life”. The fact of legal status and entitlement to legal protection of children before birth is recognized expressly in this Convention, which holds that “the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”. Yemen also interprets this target’s language as strictly limited by the specific sovereign commitments and reservations undertaken by States to respective documents.

5. Yemen understands “gender” to mean “male or female” only, and to have no meaning other than the customary and general usage of the term.

### **Holy See**

[Original: English]

The document before us reflects a complex and, at times uneven, advancement towards an integral fabric for sustainable development, which we have explored together over the past 13 months.

Our delegation has worked hard, in a constructive way and in a spirit of good will, to make these draft goals more responsive to people.

My delegation would be remiss in its duty, however, if it did not indicate several critical areas where it strongly disagrees with the text. In this regard, it is with regret that we note in the text exaggerated efforts to include concepts exceeding the political mandate for development established by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Likewise, my delegation observes regretfully the challenges reflected in attempting to incorporate unagreed, perhaps even unagreeable, concepts in a consensus agenda. And yet the challenges to consensus were not limited to how much to accept but, at times, by also how much to give.

In the light of the above, my delegation’s participation in the consensus can be only partial because of several points in the document which are incompatible with what my delegation deems integral to development. These points are indicated in the following reservations:

- With reference to “sexual and reproductive health”, so-called “reproductive rights”, “family planning” and other language on which the Holy See has registered reservations in Cairo and Beijing, we reiterate these reservations as

set out more fully in the report of the International Conference on Population and Development and in the Beijing Platform for Action. In particular, the International Conference on Population and Development rejects recourse to abortion for family planning and denies that it creates any new rights in this regard.

- With respect to so-called “education” or “information” on “sexuality”, my delegation reaffirms the “primary responsibility” and the “prior rights” of parents, including their right to religious freedom, when it comes to the education and upbringing of their children, as enshrined, inter alia, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- My delegation understands “gender” to mean “male or female” only, and to have no meaning other than the customary and general usage of the term.

My delegation will continue, in collaboration with all actors of the international community, to make our specific contribution, and indeed to intensify our traditional concrete service of basic education and care, in complete respect for human life, towards the sustainable development of the human person in solidarity.

---