



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY
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REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS AND CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL
PROCESS ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPEMENT AGENDA (New York,
23 March 2015)**

Co-facilitators,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset let me thank the Chairperson of the UN Statistical Commission for his presentation on the preliminary global indicators earlier this morning.

Co-facilitators,

As the Statistical Commission begins its work in earnest in the coming weeks the Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate that the Report of the Open Working Group on SDGs should not be re-opened for negotiations and must be entirely integrated into the post-2015 development agenda including the chapeau, SDGs and targets and reservations made by Member States.

The Group reaffirms its position as elaborated at the stock-taking session on the intergovernmental negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that it is opposed to "technical proofing of the goals and targets" as it would lead to re-opening the delicate political and substantive compromise reached at the OWG/SDGs. In the same vein the G77 and China remains averse to the re-arrangement or re-packaging of the SDGs. We believe that any attempt at clustering or repackaging of SDGs would militate against the interests of developing countries and risks backsliding towards silo approach which could easily threaten the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The Group maintains that the means of implementation identified under each and every SDG, in addition to SDG-17 on the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development are an essential component of the SDGs. The Group views the development of global indicators as a technical process for measuring progress and implementation of SDGs. Our view is that the indicators must be based on and respond directly to the goals and targets contained in the Report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals which is an outcome of a lengthy inter-governmental process that reflects a delicate political balance. For this reason the Group reiterates its view that the development of indicators should not undermine or re-interpret the agreed outcomes of the SDGs and their targets.

It is our view that the indicators being developed by the Statistical Commission are for global follow-up and review of the agenda, including the Means of Implementation under each SDG and SDG17. In this connection all targets should be accorded the same level of importance in the process of formulating indicators. In addition the Group is of the view that the list of the global indicators to be presented should be limited in number and should favour indicators that can measure several targets in the OWG/SDGs report. We maintain the view that global indicators should be developed for all targets contained in the report of the OWG-SDGs.

Co-facilitators,

The Group of 77 and China believes that the mandate to formulate indicators is confined to global indicators and should in no way delve into national indicators. National indicators cannot be decided at the global level. Governments should implement the post-2015 development agenda according to their national circumstances, capability and development stages, on a voluntary basis and it is for this reason that the Group insists on the need for respect of the national policy space of Member States.

As mentioned in the presentation by the Chairperson of the Statistical Commission this current session should take into consideration the on-going work for the elaboration of indicators and work programme decided by the Statistical Commission. It is the understanding of the Group of 77 and China that, according to the timetable decided by UN Statistical Commission, the indicator framework will be finalized at the 47th Session of the Statistical Commission in March 2016. While indicators will not be negotiated by Member States in the context of the intergovernmental process of the post-2015 development agenda it remains critically important for Member States to continuously provide broad political guidance to the Statistical Commission and UN Agencies participating in the elaboration of indicators. Accordingly, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the decision to establish an Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals to develop global indicators, supported by an array of UN Agencies.

It is our view that this Expert Group is of intergovernmental nature and its work will be undertaken in an open and transparent manner and should ensure broader participation though the provision financial assistance to developing countries for participation in its work. The Group of 77 and China wishes to emphasize that the Expert Group, which is mandated to work under the auspices of the Statistical Commission responsible for the global indicators, must be led by National Statistical Offices with the support of UN Regional Commissions and Agencies and relevant regional institutions, for it to assume intergovernmental character. It is the view of the Group of 77 and China that the composition of the Expert Group should ensure equitable regional representation and technical expertise.

The G77 and China maintains that the decision on the terms of reference for the intergovernmental Group should take into account the views expressed by the members of our Group during the Forty Sixth Session of the Statistical Commission held earlier this month and in other future sessions. It is of utmost importance to ensure that this technical track of elaborating global indicators receives clear political guidance from the Member States as the responsibility to implement the development agenda lies with Governments.

Co-facilitators,

The G77 takes this opportunity to underscore that capacity-building and technical support remain of critical importance to the Group and the whole undertaking of developing indicators should be viewed in this light. It remains of utmost importance to ensure that developing countries receive the necessary capacity-building to not only develop their own national indicators but also to effectively measure national progress in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda. In this regard the Group would like to stress that attention should be particularly given to LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and African countries. Middle income countries and countries and people under foreign occupation should also be assisted with capacity-building interventions to ensure ability to measure progress in the implementation of the agenda.

The Group of 77 and China looks forward to a productive debate in this session.

I thank you.