Summary of Stock taking meeting of Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Note: As informal summary of the discussions held from 19-21 January 2015, please find below the concluding remarks/observations made by the Co-Facilitators of the negotiations, Ambassador David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN, and Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN. These remarks/observations are meant to convey only selected highlights of the discussions and are by no means intended as an exhaustive record of the discussions.

Concluding remarks for the Stocktaking session of the negotiations on the post 2015 development agenda

21 January 2015

Remarks delivered by Ambassador David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN

- Ladies and gentlemen, my fellow co-facilitator Ambassador Kamau and I would like to make some concluding remarks on the extremely valuable and wide ranging discussions that we have had over the last three days.

- First we feel we have made an excellent start to negotiations with this stocktaking meeting. There is clearly very high interest in this process and the presence of our colleagues from civil society and major groups this afternoon and earlier this week in large numbers is positive and encouraging.

- The PGA, SG and President of ECOSOC provided us with a very clear picture as to the challenges ahead and the issues we must address.

    - The PGA reminded us that we have less than 250 days left to achieve the MDGs and he called for a final push to achieve these goals.
    - The SG noted the overall importance of this year with the three critical processes of Post 2015, FFD and Climate change which can usher in a new era of shared prosperity and a sustainable future for all.
    - The President of ECOSOC emphasised the role of the HLPF and ECOSOC in monitoring the implementation of this agenda, and the need for a renewed global partnership.

- We had some very interesting and helpful inputs from our initial speakers this week and we thank them for that. Their contributions will be available online.

- We also heard loudly and clearly the voices of member states. You have demonstrated, through high quality and focussed interventions from Monday onwards, your commitment to engaging constructively in this process so as to ensure the best possible outcome for your Heads of State to adopt next September. We thank you for doing so.

- Civil Society and major groups have also been with us. We just had a very valuable session which covered a lot of ground and we look forward to pursuing that dialogue.

- On the **different components of our negotiations**, we heard a wide range of views and proposals which will inform this process over the coming months.

- The Secretariat will circulate a short summary of these discussions, bearing in mind also that the statements delivered will be available in full online. What I am doing now on behalf of the co-facilitators is simply noting some of the key points which struck us in the exchanges.

I. Integrating sustainable development goals and targets into the post-2015 development agenda

- On **Goals and targets**, we feel that member states are united in recognising the OWG Proposal, which is of course the main basis for the integration of SDGs and targets in the post-2015 development agenda, is a far reaching and ambitious achievement, one which integrates the different dimensions of this agenda in a very effective and balanced way, and which has captured a very careful political balance. Many member states have stressed that the proposal of the OWG is the outcome of an open, transparent and inclusive intergovernmental process, one that also broadly engaged multiple stakeholders and thus enjoys broad legitimacy. It is clear that there is no support for re-opening the exhaustive negotiations we all had in the OWG.

- It is clear, however, that there are some divergences on what is being described as 'technical proofing'. Some fear that technical proofing risks undermining the delicate political and substantive balance struck by the OWG proposal and that we could end up re-opening the substance of the that proposal.

- Others feel that we should take up the UN Secretary General on his offer to have the UN Task team carry out a technical proofing of the goals and targets. They feel that, in the process of agreeing the OWG proposal last July, we may have slipped below existing international standards in relation to some targets, and that in the case of others, language was perhaps used which makes a common understanding difficult to achieve. Some member states have suggested criteria to guide a technical proofing while others propose strict parameters for that exercise.

- Linked to this is the issue of global indicators. Following the mandate we received from you at our last meeting in December, the co-facilitators made contact with the UN Statistical Commission who will present to us for our reflection in advance of the March meeting, a draft set of indicative global indicators which would accompany the SDGs and targets.

- These indicators will, of course not be negotiated in this intergovernmental process. Indeed, it will probably not be possible to complete the work on them in the time between now and September.

- The material we receive from the Statistical Commission will help us to address the issue of global indicators. In preparing this, the Commission will necessarily examine the targets contained in the OWG proposal. They will also be working with the UN Task Team and other stakeholders. It could be that they will draw attention to one or other point of a purely technical nature which will need consideration at our March meeting.

- Our expectation is that the Commission will check to see whether any targets fall below already existing agreements and international law; whether any targets duplicate others or are inconsistent with others; or whether the targets are specific, measurable and action orientated.

- That is all they will do. I should point out that member states will have plenty of time during the March session to respond to the points made by the Commission. In March, we will together consider the input from the Commission and we will together decide how to go forward.

II. Declaration

- Turning to the **Declaration**, this week's meeting was the first opportunity to hear the detailed views of member states in this regard. We heard a range of suggestions about how the Declaration might be prepared and about the substance it might cover.

- If member states agree, and taking into account what we have heard, the co-facilitators would envisage circulating in advance of the February meeting, a short paper proposing elements for our declaration.

- From the discussions this week, we have noted convergence on a number of issues related to the Declaration:

    - Many member states feel it could draw on some key documents such as the Millennium Declaration, the Rio+20 outcome document, the OWG report, the UNSG's Synthesis Report; and this list is not exhaustive.
    - Many would like to see the Declaration reflect the integrated nature of the sustainable development agenda, its focus on people and planet;
    - Many would like it to reaffirm core values and principles; a number of such principles were mentioned such as universality, mutual accountability, shared responsibility, common but differentiated responsibilities, sustainability, human equality and dignity, and respect for human rights. Again this list is not exhaustive.
    - Many would like the Declaration to reflect the universality of the agenda as well as the need for a differentiated approach to its implementation and for consideration to be given to the needs of countries in special situations;
    - Overall, the preference seems to be for a Declaration which is comprehensive in scope but which is concise, inspirational and visionary in its terms.

- These are simply initial impressions which we drew from the very rich and thought provoking discussions on that point.

III. Means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development

- On Means of Implementations and Global Partnerships, one overriding message we heard is that it will be impossible to deliver on the ambition of the SDGs without an even higher level of ambition in terms of means of implementation and global partnership.

- We were very grateful to hear from Ambassadors Talbot and Pederson, the co-facilitators of the FFD process, as well as Mr Homi Kharas.

- The presentation from the two Ambassadors, we felt, brought home the inherent interconnectedness of our two processes. The parallels between the topics covered in Goal 17 and the main chapters of the Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration were highlighted. It was helpful to hear about areas on which greater emphasis will be placed in the Addis track.

- It is clear that we must do everything possible to maximise coherence between these two processes, and this is something to which we will be returning.

IV. Follow-up and review

- Today was the first time when member states had the opportunity to share their thoughts on follow up and review in some detail.

- There were interesting presentations from three distinguished speakers. Among the points we noted from today's discussions were the following:

    - Many member states reiterated the importance of an open, transparent and inclusive follow up and review framework for the delivery of the post-2015 development agenda;

    - Many emphasised that, for the agenda to have legitimacy, multiple stakeholders must be involved in the review process.

    - Some were cautious about the use of terms such as accountability, monitoring etc.

    - Some emphasised that no target should be considered met unless met by all relevant income and other groupings.

    - Many suggested that the framework for reviewing post 2015 commitments must be universal, voluntary and non-selective. It should be built upon existing review mechanisms and processes.

    - And many highlighted the role of the UN System in following up on the Agenda. The HLPF has an important role to play in that regard.

<u>On process</u>

- Finally, on process, we heard very clearly that you would like sufficient notice of the programme for each of our sessions and that you want the programme to allow sufficient time for member states to provide their inputs.

- We also noted the request that developing countries, especially LDCs, be provided with resources to support their participation in these negotiations and the Secretariat referred to that issue earlier today.

- We heard also your emphasis on the need for coherence with other processes including FFD and Climate Change. Unfortunately it was not possible for Minister Vidal of Peru to brief us on the Lima Conference, but we will however seek to arrange updates on that process for later sessions.

- We will shortly circulate for your consideration a very short and simple decision which will address the budgetary implications relating to the production of the outcome document for September's summit.

- We would ask you to submit to the Secretariat your statements which you delivered over the course of the three days.

- Finally, on behalf of the co-facilitators, I would like to thank the interpreters, the Secretariat, the speakers and all of you most sincerely for your engagement. I look forward to seeing you all again in February.

Remarks delivered by Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN

I would like to join Ambassador Donoghue in thanking you all. I would like to touch on a few other points.

- The role of experts and the need to find a balance between those who want to receive expert contributions and those who want to focus directly on the negotiations. We appreciate the concern of member states to allow ample time for dialogue among yourselves. We have also heard some suggest that you may wish to have the benefit of expert views on specific topics. Please inform us of any experts who you think may be able to enrich our work.
- The role of civil society and major groups. This was a good exercise and signals the way to go for the future. We were especially encouraged to see so many member states in the room listening to and dialoguing with these stakeholders. The co-facilitators are concerned about the level of public awareness about the SDGs and civil society has a role to play in raising awareness prior to the Summit in September.
- The need for flexibility in preparing and planning these negotiations. It is difficult to predict when we will need to make adjustments to our roadmap, to change course. That depends on how the negotiations unfold, so we count on your indulgence if and when adjustments may be needed. We shall of course keep in mind your strong request for adequate time for preparation and consultation with capitals in advance of all meetings.