



## SUMMARY OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: 22-24 MAY 2013

The third session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) took place from 22-24 May 2013, at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting brought together OWG members, other member states, observers, representatives from UN agencies and Major Groups. The meeting was devoted to addressing the thematic issues of: (a) food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation and drought, and (b) water and sanitation. The OWG is co-chaired by Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, and Csaba Körösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary.

Co-Chair Kamau opened the session on Wednesday morning highlighting that the issues for discussion are fundamental to human survival. He said the new development agenda must carry over and complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), stressing the need to maintain momentum, engagement and enthusiasm. Over the three days, participants heard keynote addresses, panel presentations and had the opportunity to engage in a dynamic interactive exchange of views on the two issue clusters on the agenda.

After summarizing the session on Friday afternoon, Co-Chair Körösi stressed the need for a common vision going forward aiming for transformational change to address poverty eradication and human development. He noted a positive atmosphere with participants exploring challenges, jointly identifying inter-linkages, and collectively determining and prioritizing issues.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE OWG

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012. The UNCSD marked the 20th anniversary of the UN Conference on Environment and Development that took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Rio+20 was charged with securing renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing progress and implementation gaps in meeting previously agreed

commitments, and addressing new and emerging challenges. The conference and its associated meetings were held from 13-22 June 2012.

During their ten days in Rio, government delegations concluded negotiations on the Conference outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*. Among other initiatives, *The Future We Want* calls for the establishment of an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on SDGs, with a view to developing global SDGs to be adopted by the UN General Assembly (UNGA). It specifies that an OWG comprising 30 representatives should be nominated by Member States no later than the opening of the 67th session of the UNGA, and that these representatives should come from the five UN regional groups in order to achieve fair, equitable and balanced geographic representation. It notes that the OWG will decide on its method of work, including developing modalities to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society, the scientific community and the UN system, and will submit a report to the 68th session of the UNGA containing a proposal for SDGs for consideration and appropriate action. The outcome document outlines, *inter alia*:

- the importance of remaining firmly committed to the full and timely achievement of the MDGs and of respecting all Rio Principles, taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and priorities;

### IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the OWG . . . . .	1
OWG-3 Report. . . . .	2
Food Security and Nutrition, Sustainable Agriculture, Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought. . . . .	3
Water and Sanitation . . . . .	8
Summary of the Discussions and Concluding Remarks. . . . .	12
A Brief Analysis of OWG-3 . . . . .	12
Upcoming Meetings. . . . .	13
Glossary . . . . .	14

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Faye Leone, Kate Offerdahl and Hugh Wilkins, LL.M. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the European Commission (DG-ENV), the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), and the Government of Australia. General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2013 is provided by the Ministry of Environment of Sweden, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Funding for translation of the *Bulletin* into French has been provided by the Government of France, the Belgium Walloon Region, Québec, and the International Organization of the Francophone (OIF and IEPF). The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11D, New York, NY 10022 USA.



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- the SDGs should be action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global 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 toward 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 Future We Want* in resolution 66/288 on 30 November 2012.

**UNGA SPECIAL EVENT ON “CONCEPTUALIZING A SET OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS”:** On 16 October 2012, the UNGA Second Committee convened a special event on “Conceptualizing a Set of Sustainable Development Goals” at UN Headquarters in New York. The event served as an initial opportunity for participants to discuss how the SDGs can build on the MDGs, and possible elements of the characteristics and architecture of the SDGs.

**INITIAL INPUT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SDGs:** On 17 December 2012, the UN Secretary-General released his initial input to the OWG (A/67/634). The report offers a synthesis of the input received from a questionnaire sent to Member States in September 2012. It includes Member States' views on: SDG priority areas; balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development; key use of SDGs at the country level; defining national targets for global, universally applicable goals; incorporating existing goals and targets; ensuring coherence with the post-2015 development agenda; assessing progress; engaging all stakeholders; SDG principles; and a new global partnership for development.

**UNGA RESOLUTION 67/203:** On 21 December 2012 the UNGA adopted resolution 67/203 which calls for the SDG 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 on sustainable development (HLPF0, which will replace the Commission on Sustainable Development. 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 ON 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.

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS IN PREPARATION FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE OWG:** Informal consultations were conducted from 6-12 March 2013 on the Programme of Work, the possible arrangements and the draft methods of work of the OWG's first session.

**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 Member States' statements and an interactive discussion on “Conceptualizing the SDGs,” participants shared their initial views on both the process and substance of the SDG framework.

**EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON SCIENCE AND SDGs:** Organized jointly by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the International Council for Science and the International Social Science Council, the Expert Group Meeting on Science and SDGs took place from 20-21 March 2013, at UN Headquarters in New York. Participants discussed the need to make science more accessible to policy-makers and the general public, the importance of new forms of governance that can adequately address scientific evidence and phenomena, as well as scientific innovation and capacity building in developing countries.

**INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE OWG:** Informal consultations on the Programme of Work for the OWG were held on 5 April 2013. Delegates considered, *inter alia*, how to identify thematic issue areas and appropriately cluster them for discussion; the importance of poverty eradication as an overarching issue; and how to document each OWG meeting.

**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, as well as poverty eradication. 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 and for OWG-3 and OWG-4.

### OWG-3 REPORT

The third session of the OWG convened on Wednesday, 22 May 2013. OWG Co-Chair Macharia Kamau highlighted that the issues for discussion during this session are fundamental to human survival. He said the new development agenda must carry over and complete the unfinished business of the MDGs,

stressing the need to maintain momentum, engagement and enthusiasm. Stating that the issues under discussion provide learning opportunities, he said the group's work must build on existing goals and commitments, and the results must be coherent and complementary.

#### **FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, DESERTIFICATION, LAND DEGRADATION AND DROUGHT**

In her keynote address, Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) focused on three key messages: the ability to end global hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition sustainably by 2025; the need to build healthy and dynamic ecosystems that are better able to cope with disruptions and shocks; and the importance of investing in "critical agents of change," such as women, small-scale farmers, rural workers, and indigenous peoples. She stressed that achieving food security and nutrition must be at the heart of the SDGs, as these factors are prerequisites for sustainable development. To drive inclusive growth and poverty reduction in rural areas, Semedo highlighted the need to support small-scale farmers' investments. Recognizing the interconnected nature of these challenges, Semedo stated that they are too big for any single government or organization to tackle alone.

Amir Abdulla, World Food Programme (WFP), introduced the UN Technical Support Team's (TST) paper on Food Security and Nutrition. With the world producing more than enough food, he said, hunger can be ended within this generation. He called for improving nutrition during a person's "first 1,000 days" – the nine months in the womb and the first two years. He said women's empowerment is correlated with improved nutrition and other gains. Abdulla also highlighted the discrepancy in access, suggesting there is no point to producing more food if people cannot access it. Finally, he said the vision of the Secretary-General's Zero Hunger Challenge must be turned into a goal.

Carlos Seré, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), introduced the TST paper on Sustainable Agriculture. He outlined a possible agenda fostering a shift toward sustainable agriculture, which he said should lead to improvements in, *inter alia*: productivity and resource use; household income; healthy, sustainable and productive ecosystems; distribution and quality of food; post-harvest waste; and resiliency of food production systems. He said trade policies should address food security concerns, and called for removing policies that incentivize the unsustainable use of natural resources. Seré recommended that the SDG framework: recognize the role of sustainable agriculture as a driver of poverty eradication and sustainable development; provide a platform for stakeholders to define common goals around sustainable agriculture; articulate links between sustainable agriculture, hunger, food security and nutrition and other goals; and promote an integrated approach, possibly through a goal on sustainable agriculture with indicators on water and other issues.

UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja introduced the TST paper on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD). Stressing the correlation between poverty and land degradation

and other development priorities, he said the percentage of degraded land on the planet rose from 15% in 1991 to 24% in 2008, at a cost of 5% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Emphasizing the need for a land degradation neutral world, he proposed an SDG aiming to achieve: zero net land degradation by 2030; zero net forest degradation by 2030; and drought policies and preparedness measures put in place in all drought-prone countries by 2020. He said land stewardship must be front and center in the SDGs, stating "enhancing soil anywhere enhances life everywhere."

#### **GENERAL INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS:**

Fiji, on behalf of Group of 77 and China, stressed that agriculture is the most important sector in many developing countries, but that it is often harmed by subsidies and market distortions. He encouraged increased financing, technology transfer, capacity building, and improved market access for developing country farmers, as well as better regulated commodity markets to incentivize sustainable agriculture practices. He said the SDG on DLDD must address the drivers of these conditions and means to prevent them. On water and sanitation, he stated that access to water, sanitation, irrigation, and hydro-energy will lead to overall progress on the SDGs.

Cape Verde, on behalf of the African Group, said Africa should be given priority in the post-2015 framework, and that agriculture is at the heart of poverty eradication in Africa, given the predominance of small-scale farming systems. He said the SDGs should address food availability, access and adequacy. He also highlighted the need to reduce food waste, address market access barriers and price volatility, enhance targeted investment for sustainable agriculture, and address DLDD in order to continue Africa's ability to "grow what we eat." He called for shifting from quantitative to qualitative goals and for addressing specific means of implementation in each issue area.

The European Union (EU) called for: a focus on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as the countries "most in need"; coherence among UN entities; a rights-based approach; and attention to the land-food-energy nexus. He welcomed the Zero Hunger Challenge, noted the health-related impacts of food systems, and said over-consumption and food waste should be addressed. The EU also highlighted the need for agricultural research and innovation. On DLDD, he said sustainable use of land and soil are preconditions for poverty eradication and political stability, and that a "land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development" will need to be featured in the new framework.

Benin, on behalf of the LDCs, supported the Zero Hunger Challenge and recommended concretizing the goal in the 2011 Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA) to eradicate poverty by 2020, and including in the SDGs the establishment of a food bank for LDCs for humanitarian emergencies and price volatility. On sustainable agriculture, he recommended, *inter alia*: new investments in agriculture and fisheries research; enhanced financial and technical support to the agriculture sector; elimination of export subsidies by the end of 2013; support for

risk mitigation tools; and transfer of higher yield and resilient crop varieties to LDCs. On DLDD, he expressed support for an SDG aiming to achieve a “land degradation neutral world.”

Palau, on behalf of the Pacific small island developing states (PSIDS), stressed the need to include oceans issues in the SDGs. He discussed the nexus between the marine environment and sustainable development, highlighting the significant role of oceans in providing food security. He stressed the need for sustainable fishing practices, restoration of fish stocks, ending fishing subsidies, eliminating illegal fishing, and addressing climate change and its impacts on small island developing states (SIDS).

Guyana, on behalf of Caribbean Community (CARICOM), underlined the need to account for the inter-linkages among development priorities. Stating that food security and nutrition issues are at the heart of the sustainable development agenda and poverty and hunger challenges, he urged a holistic, comprehensive, and integrated approach with incentives and support at the regional and national levels to improve sustainable agriculture.

Ghana, on behalf of West African States, offered three possible SDGs and their targets for the OWG to consider. He said one goal, to promote sustainable agriculture and improve the livelihoods of small-holder farmers, could have possible targets of, *inter alia*: reducing agricultural subsidies, improving farmers’ access to credit, and technology transfer to developing countries. He stated that a second goal would call for sustainable land use for all, with sustainable land and forest management and the restoration of degraded lands as targets. Ghana also described a third goal to ensure global food security and nutrition by 2025, which would contain targets in line with those from the IPOA and the Secretary-General’s Zero Hunger Challenge.

Ireland, also on behalf of Denmark and Norway, welcomed the inputs from the global thematic consultations on the post-2015 development agenda that called for a world free of hunger and malnutrition. She urged clear, measurable goals that focused on: susceptibility to food and nutrition insecurity; the role of women in the agricultural sector; food production and the reduction of waste; and the linkages between these issues and other sectors.

Germany, also on behalf of France and Switzerland, stressed that food, nutrition, water, and sanitation access are broadly recognized as human rights, but are not realized by all. He called for the SDGs to address the management of natural resources, equal distribution of food, resource-efficient farming practices, and the right to adequate food. A goal for equitable and universal access to water and sanitation was also proposed, with an emphasis on sustainable management of water and wastewater treatment.

United Arab Emirates, also on behalf of Cyprus and Singapore, said goals should be mutually reinforcing and aim for “win-win” measures in each area. He said water and food each must be the subject of at least one SDG. On access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, he said an SDG is needed to build on this aspect of MDG 7. On food and nutrition, he said

the elimination of global malnutrition is the starting point, and that minimizing food waste should be another important area for goal-setting.

Mexico, also on behalf of Peru, urged continued agency coordination and joint efforts throughout the SDG and post-2015 processes. He underlined the need to define the narrative of an integrated sustainability agenda, while proposing concrete targets and indicators with inter-linkages between issue areas. Mexico agreed on the need for a target of zero net land degradation and proposed an integrated approach to addressing sustainable water management, rather than focusing on only access to water or sanitation.

Turkey, also on behalf of Italy and Spain, suggested integrating MDG 1 on eradication of extreme poverty and hunger into the SDGs, noting the Zero Hunger Challenge as a valuable input in this regard. He said DLDD are not only environmental problems but threaten world stability and drive economic stagnation, poverty and insecurity, and that countries should focus on effective management of water and forests. He called for urgent action to ensure food security and nutrition, improve citizens’ consumption behavior through awareness raising, and address the root causes of rising prices. He suggested framing the agenda around the human right to adequate food and the empowerment of people, especially youth, women and small producers.

Sri Lanka, also on behalf of India and Pakistan, emphasized the overall goal of alleviating global poverty, and highlighted the need to promote and accelerate rural development for this purpose. He stressed that these issues must be woven together, rather than treated as separate goals, and must use nationally driven and determined indicators. He also stated the need to recognize countries’ common but differentiated responsibilities, which were re-affirmed at Rio+20.

Zimbabwe, also on behalf of Zambia and other southern African states, said many African countries are not on track to meet the MDGs, stressing the need to revitalize the agriculture sector in developing countries through improved access to technology, capacity building and reduction in trade-distorting subsidies by developed countries. He emphasized the need to focus on means of implementation, to learn from experiences with the MDGs, and to address the links between agriculture, employment, economic growth and other development priorities.

Brazil, also on behalf of Nicaragua, pointed to Rio+20 outcomes for many of the solutions to the challenges of food security and nutrition. Stressing that food is a basic human right, he said it is no longer acceptable that one billion people still suffer from hunger and malnutrition. He focused on the need for small farmer support, access to technology and technical help, land tenure security, reduction in food waste, liberalization of international agriculture trade, equitable intellectual property rights, the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and balancing of the three pillars of sustainable development.

Colombia, also on behalf of Guatemala, said the agenda must go beyond the country level, since the drivers to be addressed are international, such as price volatility, subsidies and biofuels. Colombia suggested targets on: ensuring “access for everyone to

safe, sufficient, adequate, affordable, and appropriate nutritious food”; addressing waste in both consumption and production; adequate nutrition for children; and sustainable fisheries. In addition, Colombia voiced a request for the UN system to help identify targets focused on issue inter-linkages.

**PANEL PRESENTATIONS:** On Wednesday afternoon, Co-Chair Körösi moderated a panel consisting of Hans Herren, Millennium Institute and Biovision Foundation, and Dennis Garrity, UN Drylands Ambassador, focusing on food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and DLDD. The panel presentations were followed by an interactive discussion.

In his presentation, Hans Herren argued that sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition systems are “inevitably at the core of the SDGs.” He proposed an SDG called “Achieve Food and Nutrition Security through Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems,” with targets to: minimize food waste and harvest losses; increase productivity and income for small landholders and female farmers; shift to sustainable agriculture and food systems and reverse land degradation; and end malnutrition and ensure the right to food. He said necessary actions include mitigating and adapting to climate change, improving water and energy efficiency, reversing biodiversity loss and soil degradation, and implementing humane livestock systems. Herren recommended that independent bodies measure and monitor SDG progress.

In response to a question on independent measurement of the SDGs, Herren stressed the need for national roadmaps, including specific targets decided by people in each country through multi-stakeholder processes. In response to a question on the need for credible, realistic goals, he said we have the capacity to grow more food than people can eat, but this requires more investment in agricultural education, as transformation of agriculture is knowledge-intensive.

In response to a question on standards for national assessments, Herren said countries should decide which assessments apply to their needs. On another question, he urged the establishment of synergies to ensure the right people are working together, rather than in silos. In response to a question on where to begin in addressing hunger, malnutrition and food security, he said better nutrition needs attention right away, and this entails a more complex agricultural system. Gnacadja took the floor to note research findings on net land restoration and said that assessing zero degradation and net restoration, while “global in essence,” can be translated to any relevant local context, using different sub-targets and indicators.

Responding to the final round of comments from participants, Herren said he cannot imagine a system that does not include small land-holder farmers, family farms, governments, the private sector, civil society, development partners and other actors, in which everyone plays their part according to agreed rules. On the transformation of agriculture, he encouraged seeking clarity on specific needs, as determined through national assessment processes and supported by global and regional ones. He reiterated that planetary boundaries should be the main guide and urged the adoption of sustainable practices.

In his presentation, Dennis Garrity recognized OWG support for an SDG on a “land degradation neutral world.” Emphasizing that 40% of degraded lands are found in areas with high instances of poverty, he said land degradation directly affects 1.5 billion people, with disproportionate effects on women and children. For setting a target for a zero net rate of land degradation—and in this way achieving land degradation neutrality—he called for reducing the rate of degradation on currently non-degraded land, and increasing the rate of regeneration of that land that is already degraded. Presenting an example of community-based success regenerating land in Niger, Garrity stressed the need to align global goals with local communities. He discussed the recent trend of reduced land-based carbon emissions and the increased capture of carbon by trees. Seeing an “ecological consciousness” developing for the health of the land, Garrity said states are responding to the issue by recognizing land degradation as a global challenge and a critical part of the SDG agenda. He concluded that “we should ensure that we have the healthy land base we need to realize sustainable development.”

In response to a question on the nature of bottom-up efforts for local change, Garrity insisted that bureaucracies must recognize the need to work with communities and engage them in a participatory manner. Responding to a question on the need for a specific goal on land degradation, he stressed that such a goal is necessary to encourage the commitments and investments necessary for land regeneration. On a question from the Co-Chair on the costs of achieving zero net land degradation, Garrity pointed to an ongoing study by the UNCCD that has revealed costs to be lower than imagined and high internal rates of return on investments.

Garrity agreed with a participant’s statement on the need to include economic and trade aspects in the discussion of land degradation, and to prioritize family-based agriculture. He responded to a question about the nature of analysis and measurements by stating that most indicators of land degradation are quantitatively measurable. He also said the agricultural sector can be seen as part of the solution to climate change, due to the increasing ability of the land to absorb carbon dioxide emissions.

In response to a question on land absorption of carbon, Garrity referred delegates to the Global Carbon Project’s recent research on this issue. He agreed with Bolivia’s comment on the danger of transferring large-scale agricultural practices to Africa and added that such investments in land are generally speculative and do not focus on long-term land stewardship. On whether assisted natural regeneration can be applied in humid tropical areas, he said these approaches can indeed be applied in such regions, as they are currently in South-East Asia. He presented the national efforts in Ethiopia to launch a massive land regeneration programme as evidence of its expanding success, and he agreed with a statement on the need for broader ecosystem regeneration.

**INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS:** On Thursday morning, participants continued discussions on food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and DLDD.

Serbia, also on behalf of Belarus, said resource intensive growth cannot continue and a shift to sustainable development is needed. Stressing that DLDD and water issues are critical, he underlined the need for a clear vision on how to achieve the SDGs. He noted the consequences of climate change on food security and water goals, stressing the need to ensure growth in agricultural yields and production through the use of technology, public-private partnerships and international cooperation.

Argentina emphasized the link between food security and agriculture and poverty, noting the impacts of climate change and the need for resources for adaptation. She called for increased agricultural productivity through investment in technological innovation and infrastructure, and the creation of an international trade system that promotes rural and agricultural development in developing countries. Argentina underlined the need to support small-scale farmers, and improve agricultural productivity and food distribution.

Kazakhstan, also on behalf of China and Indonesia, stated that despite progress on reducing poverty, hunger and malnutrition continue. He noted problems caused by trade barriers and urged enhanced global partnerships. He said food security must be addressed by greater research, technology and investment and by tackling environmental challenges. He also called for support to small-scale farmers, preventing food loss and waste and the creation of proactive drought policies and risk management measures.

Croatia, also on behalf of Bulgaria, called for an inclusive, people-centered approach, underlining the firm basis for the right to a life free from hunger and malnutrition. Highlighting the importance of addressing nutrition issues, he said vulnerable people with specific nutritional needs must be addressed, and urged the creation of a consistent framework that addresses the interconnected nature of development, food security and nutrition issues.

The Netherlands, also on behalf of Australia and the UK, stressed the need for irreversible poverty eradication. She said this requires an integrated approach, with more attention to inter-linkages, not only by increasing production to eliminate hunger. Among issues to be considered in developing targets, goals and indicators, she recommended: addressing agriculture as a source of greenhouse gas emissions and as a user of natural resources; strengthening fisheries and marine resource management; addressing women's social and reproductive rights; and protecting small-scale farmers through access to markets, finance and credit services. On the role of the private sector, the Netherlands called for support to farmers, suppliers, retailers, transporters and others through property rights and a favorable business climate, and urged mutual accountability and reporting between the public and private sectors.

Romania, also on behalf of Poland, said food and nutritional security requires substantive political commitments with a basic human rights approach. She outlined needs to: shift from quantitative to qualitative nutrition, reduce waste along the food chain, increase yields to conserve biodiversity, and support small- and medium-scale farmers. On DLDD, she said achieving

a land degradation neutral world will require a paradigm shift involving enhanced sustainable forest management and soil conservation.

Montenegro, also on behalf of Slovenia, said food, land, energy and water issues should be integrated in one goal with links to climate change, both in the context of reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture sector and making the agriculture system more resilient to climate change and shocks. He also called for adapting the timeline for fulfilling goals according to national circumstances. He said women's empowerment must be central to agriculture-related goals, and that objective monitoring will be critical to implementation.

Haiti stressed that DLDD is essential in efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty and respond to climate change. She was supportive of the proposal to integrate zero net land degradation, zero forest degradation, and measures to combat desertification targets into the SDGs.

Nepal spoke of the adverse effects of climate change in his country, saying that agricultural production has been badly affected by droughts, land degradation, and erratic rainfall. He called for targets and indicators on the management of land and soil sustainability, and inclusion of food security, nutrition, and gender considerations.

The United States, also on behalf of Israel and Canada, highlighted broad agreement to address: ending hunger and food insecurity; nutritional issues broader than caloric-intake measurements; integrated solutions across the whole food chain; reducing food waste; managing risk and resilience; and issues of gender and land tenure.

Bangladesh stressed that food security and nutrition must be a stand-alone SDG with strong targets and indicators. He observed the irony that there is available food for everyone but many people go to bed hungry. Supporting the Zero Hunger Challenge, he underlined the need to address price volatility, food production and distribution, infrastructure, land quality, support for small-scale farmers, food waste and loss, the use of biofuels, and ending agricultural subsidies.

Egypt emphasized the need for a building block approach and noted the importance of food security and nutrition issues. Noting food security and land degradation challenges in Africa, he outlined future difficulties caused by climate change, increasing desertification, and lack of available water. He called for an end to agricultural subsidies and food price volatility and urged action and investment in sanitation.

Saudi Arabia outlined food security, nutrition and DLDD challenges, stressing that the SDGs can provide solutions that encourage the proper use of land and agriculture. He emphasized the need for drought policies and the sustainable use of land and water.

India stressed the need to address structural and systemic issues beyond hunger and malnutrition, and highlighted wasted food and unsustainable consumption and production as issues to be given high priority. He added that agricultural subsidies by developed countries "haunt the entire issue" of food security, and called for a stronger focus on investment and technological developments to ensure that food is distributed and available to

all. Pakistan cautioned that data presented by expert panelists may not be accepted by all Member States, and noted his preference for research from international bodies.

South Africa said investment in agriculture could mitigate price shocks and other risks, adding that investment must be aligned with local development strategies. He also noted that improving women's access to land, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs will promote food security. He asked the OWG to consider a target on zero net land degradation by 2030.

Thailand, also on behalf of Bhutan and Viet Nam, said that while the SDGs should build on the MDGs they must also incorporate: ensuring sustainability; building resilience; reducing inequality; enhancing effective international cooperation; and disaster risk reduction and preparation, especially related to water. He called for the SDGs to address both internal and international disparities, as well as those between generations, and to promote sustainable consumption.

The Dominican Republic stressed the need to analyze the impacts of price volatility on food security in developing countries. He said issues of volatility and the "financialization" of food markets are important to include in all deliberations on food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

Togo spoke of its efforts to prioritize agriculture and food security in national policies and the threat of deforestation, land degradation, and an increase in floods and droughts. She emphasized the need to support local communities to promote sustainable management of resources.

Uruguay said the SDGs discussion should include an analysis of adjusting current patterns of consumption and production, noting that the structural sources of hunger include price volatility and wealth distribution. She spoke of the need to increase food production to make it "affordable and accessible for all," through investments in technology innovation and infrastructure.

Germany, also on behalf of France and Switzerland, said it is important to increase agricultural production in a sustainable manner to achieve food and nutrition security and to offer opportunities to young people. He suggested that the OWG look at the entire chain of production in a holistic way.

Ethiopia emphasized that problems of international trade and subsidies have been harmful to small-scale farmers, and that the achievement of sustainable agriculture and food security in his country continues to be a major challenge. He stressed the need to reduce food waste in developed countries, increase agricultural productivity, improve environmental sustainability, and expand opportunities and social services for small-scale farmers.

Iceland stated the importance of highlighting elements for goals and targets in the OWG's discussion and stressed the need for a stand-alone goal on land degradation.

Stating that "agriculture is life for most Africans," Tanzania said sustained economic growth, development and the eradication of poverty are dependent on the revitalization of and investment in agriculture. He urged states to consider best practices in applying the MDGs and other development goals and to build on the gains already made. He said strategies for addressing poverty must be nutrition-sensitive. He also called

for action on water and sanitation issues, urging water supply enhancement, the reuse of wastewater, improved demand management and water conservation.

Japan said improving food security is key for the eradication of poverty and called for a stand-alone SDG on this issue. He stressed the need to take heed of lessons learned from the MDGs and the importance of addressing early childhood nutrition and the nutritional needs of small-scale farmers and women. He also underlined the need for investment in agriculture technology, mobilization of the private sector in addressing DLDD, and the undertaking of disaster risk reduction actions using a prevention-oriented approach.

Benin described food security and nutrition challenges in West Africa, especially for women and rural people. He called for a holistic approach to achieving sustainable agriculture and mastering drought with an SDG going beyond the MDGs on poverty, hunger and child mortality.

Republic of Korea made two proposals: the Zero Hunger Challenge and its five objectives should be at the center of the SDGs and the entire post-2015 development agenda; and the OWG should consider a target for a land degradation neutral world, with zero net land degradation as an indicator.

France stressed that these challenges affect all countries and will require a universal, collective response. He suggested as subjects for discussion: sustainable production modes and their impacts on resource use and DLDD; reducing waste; and security networks for the rural poor.

New Zealand expressed support for a separate SDG on sustainable agriculture and suggested a target on removing agricultural subsidies. On sustainable fisheries, she highlighted the need to rebuild fish stocks, address illegal fishing, and eliminate harmful subsidies.

Nigeria said the UN Development Programme's Human Development Report for Africa captured all the issues being discussed in this meeting. He said that no matter what is decided in the OWG, "we will have to resort to national policy," and noted the importance of government spending on agriculture.

The Holy See spoke of the one billion human beings who go to bed hungry each day, stressing that an SDG for the elimination of hunger is not only a necessity but a moral imperative. He said such a goal should take a rights-based approach.

On Friday morning, participants concluded discussions on food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and DLDD.

Liechtenstein said a possible water SDG should aim at universal water coverage within an ambitious timeframe. To tackle discrimination and other inequities, he urged the use of a human rights approach and a focus on the gender dimensions of access to water, sanitation and hygiene. On food security, he called for a holistic vision for eradicating hunger and malnutrition and noted the need for increased investment in inclusive rural growth and strengthened resilience to natural disasters.

Jamaica described the strengthening of food security and nutrition policies in her country, noting the challenges of decreasing food production levels and growing reliance on imported food. Emphasizing the need for ambitious targets,

she underlined the importance of learning from and going well beyond the MDGs' poverty targets by using a multi-faceted approach to food security, access and supply.

Niger emphasized the links between agriculture, food security and nutrition, and their ties to ecosystem health and the natural environment. Noting that development goals must be tailored to the specific needs and realities of individual countries, he said there should be no one preferred model. He said the SDGs must be obtainable and equitable among states.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) said that when discussing issues of food insecurity, core issues of equity, access, and power, and how these issues condition our economies, must be considered. He stressed the IPU's position on the need to move away from a growth-centric economic model of development that is dependent on consumption. Insisting that democracy and the rule of law be central to the SDGs, the IPU proposed a stand-alone goal on democratic governance, and its cross-cutting dimensions.

Côte d'Ivoire stressed that food security, sustainable agriculture and land degradation are critical concerns for addressing poverty. Emphasizing the importance of agriculture for food security, nutrition, employment and economic prosperity, she urged measures to address food price volatility and to increase production and household prosperity, and called for an SDG focusing on agriculture.

The Women's Major Group asked the OWG for specific targets in the area of finance, trade and fiscal policy to prevent the privatization of land, food, agriculture and water resources. She also emphasized the link between polluted food and non-communicable diseases such as cancer, calling for targets for food free of harmful pesticides and genetically modified organisms.

## **WATER AND SANITATION**

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND PANEL PRESENTATIONS:**

On Thursday afternoon, the OWG began consideration of water and sanitation issues and heard a keynote address from Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization, and Chair of UN-Water, via videolink. Jarraud was joined by Rabi Mohtar, Executive Director of Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute, and Letitia Obeng, International Water Management Institute Board Member, as panelists to discuss these issues.

In his address, Jarraud reaffirmed the recognition in the Rio+20 outcome document that water is at the core of sustainable development. Stating that the MDG target for improved access to drinking water is expected to be achieved, he said the human rights dimension of this target and the target on access to sanitation are not yet realized. Jarraud highlighted issues of inequalities in access to sanitation and water sources and the need to reach the groups who suffer the most from lack of access, including women and girls. He said the benefits of water-related investments have been shown to far outweigh the costs. Proposing movement from a sectoral approach to water issues to a nexus approach, he presented two options for the SDGs, either one stand-alone goal on water or the inclusion of water targets under multiple thematic goals. Jarraud highlighted four points

regarding the role of water in the SDGs: strong support for future action on water; actions must be bold and go beyond sectoral approaches; goals should be ambitious and inspired; and targets need to be realistic, achievable and measurable. He concluded his remarks stating "water issues should never be watered down."

Jarraud responded to a question about the possible need for two sets of targets, one for unfinished business of the MDGs and one for new challenges, by agreeing that business is not finished in some areas and stressing that goals must be broadly focused. In response to a question on the availability of water, he said freshwater supplies in many areas come from glaciers, which are disappearing. He emphasized the impacts of climate change on patterns of rainfall, the hydrological cycle, and water availability. In response to a question on climate change and water scarcity, he said both mitigation and adaptation have impacts on water availability and management. However, the scientific information needed by governments to take informed decisions in these two areas is not currently available in most countries. To this end, he said the UN system is launching a major initiative to make this information available. Jarraud brought delegates' attention to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientific report to be produced in September, which will prominently feature water issues and projections.

In response to a question about establishing intermediate targets, Jarraud said that such targets would help to keep track of progress. He also highlighted the need to include the environmental dimension of water issues in the discussion. Jarraud said, responding to a question on institutional arrangements, that UN-Water is addressing actions to be taken at the UN level and noted the "question of scale" in how government actions interact with actions by local communities.

Several participants raised concerns regarding the use of the term "water security." Jarraud said the term refers to ensuring, as a fundamental human right, access to safe drinking water and sanitation. He said UN-Water would learn from this discussion and work on a better formulation of the term.

In his presentation, Rabi Mohtar outlined the future "head-on crash" in which the world will require 40% more water and 40% additional energy by 2030, while facing reduced precipitation. He said the water-energy-food nexus can provide a solution and outlined his work on a "decision-support system" that allows policymakers to quantify the interconnected impacts of their decisions. His recommendations to the scientific community include: identify and quantify inter-linkages of the water-energy-food system; establish a Water Knowledge Hub to make data available; and establish "water value" as an economic, social and political good. He also made recommendations to policymakers, including that: there should be "no fuel from food;" the past is no longer a good indicator for the future, given climate change and "non-stationarity"; all stakeholders, including farmers, should be included in water discussions; intergovernmental structures for water management should be created; nexus-friendly technologies should be promoted; and water trade must be regulated.

Mohtar responded to a comment on multi-scale issues in the water-energy-food nexus, saying it is important that individuals and the private sector have greater awareness and acceptability of the nexus. In response to criticisms about his statement that there should be “no fuel from food,” he said while he was proposing that no food be turned into fuel, he is not against biofuels in general. He suggested that working together to convert waste into energy is a better path for water conservation than turning food into energy. In response to a question on future needs, he said a 40% increase in water will be necessary to satisfy food, industrial and domestic demands over the next 15 years.

Mohtar agreed with one delegate’s statement on the importance of local issues and knowledge. He emphasized that many assumptions and predictions coming from scientific models are not completely reliable, and that policies should be created that are risk-robust and can manage future changes. In response to a question on his “decision-support system,” Mohtar said it has identified arable land availability as a bottleneck for food security in Qatar, meaning there is a need to reclaim more land before food security can be increased.

In response to a comment on the meaning of “water value,” Mohtar said privatizing water can be disastrous, and that the “delicate social, political and economic problem” of balancing pricing with accessibility must be solved at the local level. He said privatization of water has been disastrous in several situations and also stressed the importance of balancing pricing with accessibility, calling this a “delicate social, political and economic problem.” Mohtar’s final message was a call for better linkages and dialogue between the scientific community and policy-makers, so that important scientific knowledge can be made more relevant to policy.

In her presentation, Letitia Obeng highlighted three themes: learning lessons from the MDG experience; describing challenges the world is facing going forward; and recommendations for a stand-alone SDG on water. She described the health impacts of poor sanitation, including the stunting of children, stressing the integral nature of water as a basis for achieving other development goals. She noted missed opportunities in achieving the MDGs due to the “siloe” approach that was taken and continual “re-inventing of the wheel” to address issues, which could have been avoided through coordinated efforts and leadership. She discussed future challenges of a growing global population, increasing urbanization, climate change, and leadership in addressing the multiplicity of water-related demands. Obeng underscored the need for a stand-alone SDG with targets focusing on: sanitation, water supply and hygiene; pollution and wastewater management; integrated management of water resources across basins; and water-related disasters.

Responding to questions on the nature of “water security,” Obeng said the term refers to: human security ensuring health, livelihoods, sanitation with safe, sufficient and affordable drinking water; protecting ecosystems; water for socio-economic development; and wastewater treatment and re-use.

On whether water is solely a developing country issue, she said the sustainable management of water resources is an issue for all states, especially with regard to water pollution and supply.

In response to a question on a possible stand-alone goal on sanitation, Obeng said it will not be practical long-term or from a broad water security perspective because sanitation will soon become more complicated than “just putting waste into a pit.” She agreed on the importance of pricing and other economic issues. Obeng said that the present discussion of SDGs with global indicators does not prescribe or preclude action at the global level or pose a challenge to national decision making. Obeng expressed her happiness that a stand-alone goal for water with targets for sanitation was being considered. However, she emphasized that the achievement of such goals and targets will depend on leadership and political will and urged national governments to prioritize these issues.

Participants also raised questions on the commodification of water, the role of ecosystems for maintaining the quantity and quality of water, integrated water resource management (IWRM), implementing the right to water, means of implementation, women’s sanitation and hygiene, regional and inter-sectoral trade-offs, and the use of economic tools. Questions were also asked about translating the water-food-energy-health nexus into the goal system and linking them to poverty, good governance and security, and national planning processes. They also posed questions on searching for new water and energy sources, possible targets for “water security,” and addressing water-related disasters.

**INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS:** On Friday morning and afternoon, participants engaged in a general interactive exchange of views on water and sanitation.

Cape Verde, on behalf of the African Group, said that in addition to having a global goal on water for the SDG framework, it is important to consider water’s inter-linkages to other areas. He suggested including the following issues in the formulation of the SDGs: water quantity, access, and quality; an improved governance framework for water; institutional capacity and financing; infrastructure and technology development; and coordination. Stressing the need to involve the private sector, he said investments in water and sanitation lack appropriate attention and that the SDG framework should rectify this shortcoming.

Benin, on behalf of the LDCs, said water and sanitation are basic human needs, but access to both in LDCs is well below global averages. He highlighted the need for better infrastructure for wastewater management, while stressing that future water demand will come from areas already suffering from water scarcity. He recommended, *inter alia*: aiming for the IPOA target of sanitation and water access for all by 2020; special development assistance for LDCs; investment targets for water and sanitation; technological support and transfer; South-South cooperation for management of water issues; and capacity building of local institutions for water service delivery.

Barbados, on behalf of CARICOM, said poverty reduction will not be possible without examining its interconnectivity with water and sanitation. In using water and sanitation to advance

economic growth, she stressed the need for balance with non-degradation of the environment. As SIDS, she said, many members of her group face particular strains on water resources, which she attributed to climate change and associated sea-level rise, coastal tourism, and waste management.

The EU said it is open to either one goal on water and sanitation with several targets, or the integration of such targets into broader goals. He called for considering water and sanitation from three angles: access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all; sustainable management of water resources; and equity, equality and justice. He noted the EU's commitment to the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, called for enhanced water cooperation across borders, and for creating an environment conducive to private sector investment.

Papua New Guinea, also on behalf of Nauru, Palau and other PSIDS, said the PSIDS as a group are not on track to meet many of the water and sanitation targets under the MDGs. The obstacles faced in these countries are increasingly a reality worldwide, he said, and serve as a stark reminder of the future. Papua New Guinea added that in PSIDS, water and sanitation are directly correlated to the health and productivity of the oceans. He said the SDGs should address the root causes of water insecurity through climate change mitigation and adaptation, technology transfer, good governance and rule of law, and sustainable consumption and production.

Finland, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Water, said an SDG on water must incorporate all aspects of sustainable development. He said we can no longer afford to focus only on aggregate outcomes, urging that goals, targets and indicators be framed to reduce inequalities and target the most disadvantaged. He added that the rights of women and children, who are most affected by water and sanitation issues, must be secured in the sustainable development agenda. He said data collection and monitoring will be crucial. Finland noted challenges with technology transfer, and said "we need a reality check" on the need for private sector involvement, as governments cannot solve these problems alone.

Benin, on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), said the water and sanitation situation remains alarming in West Africa. He argued that drinking water supply should be an SDG because while the number of people in Africa with access to improved drinking water has increased, it is not sufficient to achieve the MDG target. He also noted that water can be a source of life and income, as well as potential conflict.

Bulgaria, also on behalf of Croatia, stressed that water and sanitation are essential to sustainable development and deserve a separate SDG with targets. He discussed how water and sanitation issues are related to the economic, social development and environmental protection dimensions of sustainable development. Emphasizing the need for a rights-based approach, he said improving access to water and sanitation is needed to achieve health, education, poverty, hunger and maternal health goals. He urged an integrated approach and universal access to water and sanitation and strengthened resources management that respects the environment.

Germany stated that the achievement of water goals is integral to meeting development targets in all water-dependent sectors, and stressed that water and sanitation must be embedded in the SDGs. Noting that water cooperation contributes to peace and security, he recommended SDG targets aiming to achieve: equitable and universal access and respect for the human right to water and sanitation; an integrated approach that satisfies human needs while respecting ecosystem requirements; collection and treatment of all used water; and pollution prevention. He said linkages between water and sanitation, poverty, good governance, health, energy, and the environment should be recognized in the SDG architecture, and cooperation and partnerships are necessary.

Italy, also on behalf of Spain and Turkey, said access to basic water and sanitation is essential for lasting peace and necessary for human survival. Noting that availability of and access to water and sanitation should be considered as basic human rights, he said a fragmented approach is not viable and that a holistic, integrated multidisciplinary effort is needed. He stressed the need for: urgent action to prevent floods and drought and to adapt to climate change; IWRM; planning of water infrastructures and IWRM for urban development; policy and management reforms for the sustainable use of water in agriculture; improved transboundary water management; and a water agenda that is broad, integrated and human-centered.

Slovenia, also on behalf of Montenegro, outlined water's importance as an environmental factor, an economic resource, an influence on human health and well-being, and an element of international cooperation. He said the SDGs must also address root causes of water stress, including overuse, pollution, poor management and climate change. Stressing the need to leave behind a "silo approach" to considering water, he proposed creating a comprehensive SDG on water and incorporating water into other SDGs as well.

Poland, also on behalf of Romania, highlighted the need to enhance water productivity, take an integrated approach to water resources, adopt sustainable consumption and production, improve global freshwater quality, and adopt coordinated policies at all levels in order to achieve poverty eradication and universal human development. She said an SDG on water issues should address the access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and its development and human needs dimensions.

Kazakhstan, also on behalf of Indonesia and China, said the SDGs should set in place mechanisms to ensure efficient water management at all levels, and innovative, inclusive, and sustainable financing. He stated that SDGs should focus on: targets for safe drinking water and sanitation; water resource management and water efficiency; targets for water quality; and means of implementation, including finance, technology transfer, and capacity building.

Nicaragua, also on behalf of Brazil, highlighted the human right to water and sanitation, along with respect for national sovereignty and international law. He urged identification of concrete measures to benefit vulnerable groups, and said gender inequality must be addressed. He noted agriculture and renewable energy as other areas where water is essential, stating

that SDGs should stimulate the use of hydrological energy. He added that Nicaragua prefers the term “water cooperation” over “water security,” which is not internationally agreed. Finally, he said developing countries need financing to achieve agreed goals.

The Netherlands recalled that this year’s World Water Day and the High-level Consultation on Water in the Post-2015 Development Agenda had recommended an ambitious, self-standing goal on water security for all, with targets to address sanitation and other unfinished business, as well as future challenges. Illustrating the reality of scarce resources, she said if there is not enough water, then we do not have enough energy; and then there will not be enough growth and, in turn, we cannot eliminate poverty. She said we need to pursue equitable growth using less water.

Denmark proposed creating an ambitious goal and specific targets incorporating all three dimensions of sustainable development, with targets that are “SMART” (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) and address gaps in the MDGs. He also called for more work on inter-linkages, said the future framework should strengthen rights, urged better involvement of women in planning and infrastructure, and suggested widening the scope of water beyond water and sanitation to also include water management, quality, pollution and other aspects.

United Arab Emirates, also on behalf of Cyprus and Singapore, suggested three areas for possible goals, targets or indicators: access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation; IWRM, including groundwater management; and improved water use. He also suggested using the water-energy-food nexus moving forward. He called for building on MDG 7 and taking it further as an “absolute minimum.”

Bolivia, also on behalf of Ecuador and Argentina, said poor service coverage of potable water and sanitation has dangerous impacts on hunger and health. He said an SDG on “water security” would take away important content from water issues, and suggested the term “water sustainability” instead. He warned that privatization of water and sanitation services generates conflict and is not a solution to water access.

Colombia, also on behalf of Guatemala, advocated a modular approach to structuring the SDG goals and targets. She said this approach would strengthen inter-linkages by incorporating cross-cutting targets under various relevant goals. She explained that in this way targets under one goal may be also slotted under other goals as well. Colombia also stressed the need for a cooperative and holistic approach to shared waters.

Canada stressed the need for holistic strategies and urged consideration of inter-linkages, causal relationships between issues, and the overarching themes arising from the OWG’s discussions. Stating the need to prioritize issues, he suggested focusing on those with the greatest possible development impact. He also noted the need for better data and metrics, the importance of partnerships, and taking account of local and regional dimensions.

Japan said water is the core of sustainable development and noted the lag in achievement of the MDG sanitation target. Stating that the SDGs should not duplicate work being done in

other UN fora, he highlighted the need to address IWRM, water quality and treatment and reuse, and sanitation. He endorsed the use of SMART indicators.

Bangladesh emphasized that “water is life” and noted the wide range of water issues and the misuse and mismanagement of water in the past. He described future water challenges, the need for a holistic approach, the importance of managing water sustainably and the need for universal access. He highlighted the role of joint river basin management for shared waters and the importance of addressing the ecological and economic aspects of water through IWRM and water-use efficiency measures.

Republic of Korea emphasized the need for targets addressing: universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene; improved IWRM and water use; and wastewater management and pollution prevention. He also stressed the need for addressing inequalities with concrete targets and the disaggregation of data, such as by gender.

Nepal said an integrated approach to goals and targets on water should take into account emerging and future challenges and uncertainties, while also allowing flexibility for regional and national contexts. He stressed that water quality and pollution, including the use of agricultural pesticides, should be addressed.

Egypt emphasized that the discussion on the SDGs should be guided by the scope given to water issues by the Rio+20 outcome document. He highlighted dangers of the commodification and pollution of water. Stressing that water-related SDGs should focus on means of implementation, he also mentioned the importance of technology transfer and infrastructure creation to close gaps between countries.

France said water should be anchored in global commitments to human rights, combating climate change, gender issues, sustainable development, and combating natural disasters. On the concept of “water security,” he said securing universal access to water is fully understandable and essential, and that water security and integrated basin management are important to increase productivity.

The Holy See called for recognition of the universal right to safe drinking water and sanitation, which countries have been slow to reaffirm over the past decade. Believing that a rights-based approach is necessary to “meet our personal, political, and social obligations,” he said water is not an unlimited resource and it constitutes a system that belongs to all.

Ethiopia stressed that linkages must be made between water and poverty eradication, agriculture, food security and nutrition, drought, health and access to energy. She advocated for water resource management and establishing long-term transboundary cooperation.

Palestine said a special goal on water is a “vital and important issue,” and everyone should work together so this goal can be simple and achievable. He also emphasized the need to respect the permanent sovereignty of people over their natural resources.

The Business and Industry Major Group underscored that water is extremely important for business, noting that “without water there is no business and without business, communities

will not function.” Noting recent surveys indicating the high priority that business gives to water issues, he emphasized the need for a specific goal on water and sanitation.

The Local Authorities Major Group noted that the local dimension had been addressed often during the session, highlighting the role of local communities. She stressed the importance of integrated water planning in cities, underlining the need to enhance the capacities of cities to do so, and emphasized both the need for data and standardized methodologies for collecting it.

Venezuela stated that water is a social good and warned against its commercialization. He said water is not an instrument for making money, but one for peace, life and cooperation.

### **SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS**

On Friday afternoon, Co-Chair Körösi presented a summary of the discussions during the session. Noting the active and informed engagement of participants, Körösi said the positive atmosphere during the session was encouraging, with participants exploring challenges, jointly identifying inter-linkages, collectively determining and prioritizing issues, and listening to one another. The Co-Chairs circulated a one-page summary of general points made at the meeting as an *aide-memoire*, and Körösi said that a more detailed summary of the meeting and a running list of proposals for goals, targets and indicators would be available soon. He emphasized that the running list would be a living document, issued in the Co-Chairs’ name.

Körösi stressed the need for a common vision going forward aiming for transformational change to address poverty eradication and human development for present and future generations. He remarked on the presence of a general feeling that the SDGs must be human-centered and transformative, and must build on and go beyond the MDGs.

Körösi summarized key points raised during the meeting. On food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture and DLDD, he noted interventions recognizing the inter-linkages between food, land and water and also other development goals. He underlined calls to address nutrition needs, increased agricultural productivity and investment in agriculture. Körösi also noted interventions focusing on the need to support small-scale farmers, women, pastoralists, indigenous peoples, and fishers. He underscored calls for action to address food price volatility and the elimination of agricultural subsidies in developed countries. Körösi also recalled interventions about the causes of land degradation and the need for land restoration and a land-degradation neutral world.

On water and sanitation issues, Körösi underlined calls for universal access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. He noted interventions on the use of a rights-based approach, as water and sanitation issues are generally recognized as fundamental human rights. He summarized findings on the inter-linkages and importance of water and sanitation for the attainment of many development goals, including health, child mortality, economic growth, and poverty eradication. He noted the need to address: water access, quality and quantity; improved water governance; better infrastructure and technology;

and improved water efficiency. Körösi also highlighted calls for improved preparedness for natural disasters, the need for investment, access to appropriate technologies for water treatment, recycling and re-use, and the need for IWRM and consideration of environmental requirements.

In a concluding discussion following the presentation of the Co-Chairs’ summary, delegates commented on the need for future discussion about: means of implementation, including in issue briefs and panel presentations; indicators, baselines, and data generation; goal universality and the responsibilities of developed countries; the issues of industrialization, science, and technology; and structural impediments to development. Nikhil Seth, Director, Division for Sustainable Development, DESA, urged delegates to become involved in the “myriad of activities” generated by the Rio+20 process, in addition to the OWG.

One participant suggested that states send the Co-Chairs a list of their priorities regarding the selected themes before each session in order to shape discussions, and asked that panelists circulate their materials to participants beforehand, if their presentations differ from the TST’s technical notes. One delegate asked that the TST include proposals related to means of implementation in their technical notes, and several delegates voiced the need for more panelists from developing countries.

Co-Chair Kamau offered his own reactions to delegates’ calls for more discussion of means of implementation and financing issues, stressing that it is up to Member States to bring these topics into the debate. He called for specific proposals on how the SDGs can be funded and implemented, for example, through either taxation or market instruments, and said the challenge for Member States is to create a new model of implementation based on equity, universality, and common but differentiated responsibilities.

Körösi gavelled the session to a close at 5:32 pm.

## **A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF OWG-3**

### **OPENING THE BOX**

In June 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development called for the UN General Assembly to develop a set of sustainable development goals that are limited in number, aspirational and easy to communicate, address all three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way, and are coherent with and integrated into the UN’s post-2015 development agenda. Establishing the Open Working Group to elaborate these goals and reaching agreement on its membership and draft programme of work required a serious effort, which left some observers concerned about the group’s ability to fulfill its daunting mandate. Now, as the OWG has shifted its focus to substantive issues, the process resembles a jigsaw puzzle as participants begin the process of turning over the pieces to see what they may hold for a future set of sustainable development goals and where they might best fit.

The third session of the OWG was many participants’ first experience in one of the UN’s newly remodeled conference rooms. The first morning held the air of a “jamboree,” in the words of a bemused Co-Chair Macharia Kamau, with many

colleagues having just arrived from their capitals. But soon enough the initial glee gave way to focused effort as the three-day meeting got underway.

Expert panel presentations instigated in-depth attention to the selected themes. Throughout the meeting, however, some participants called for greater interactive exchanges and fewer long, prepared and official statements. Various delegates also called for a Co-Chairs' summary of the meeting, concerned that an official report would put pressure on governments to develop official positions and ensure that their views were accurately reflected. They emphasized that they did not want the summary to become a negotiated document. At this point in the puzzle, delegates clearly wanted to examine all of the pieces, define the issues and engage in substantive interactive discussions.

### EXAMINING THE PIECES

The first cluster of issues—food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation and drought—highlighted inter-linkages between these issues. One delegate stressed that inter-linkages imply tradeoffs, noting that while food production can eliminate hunger, if done in a “business as usual” manner that gain could come with severe costs in other areas, such as land quality, water and fisheries management, biodiversity, pollution, and the rights and protections of people involved. Therefore, in order to achieve long-term, cross-sectoral and irreversible progress—which several delegations indicated is the essence of sustainable development—the SDGs must balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. Some delegations specifically emphasized the economic and structural causes of hunger, referring to agricultural subsidies, volatile food prices, and land privatization as needing further attention. Within this context, there was general support for the Rio+20 goal of a land degradation neutral world and the need for sustainable agriculture, but uncertainty remained as how to incorporate this into the SDGs.

With regard to the second cluster of issues, participants reiterated that water is at the core of sustainable development and that sanitation, in particular, represents unfinished business under the MDGs. The session's expert panel on water and sanitation introduced the concept of “water security,” revealing a delicate issue for several countries. Despite assurances from panelists that they used the term to mean securing access to water and sanitation, concerns persisted that without an internationally agreed definition “water security” could be seen as support for the UN Security Council to include water issues on its agenda, thus making it a security issue rather than a development issue.

Implicit agreement was easier, however, on the need for focused investment and national policies for better access to water and sanitation. Participants seemed aligned around the idea that water and sanitation deserve specific attention in the SDGs.

### PIECING IT ALL TOGETHER

A common theme during OWG-3 was the need to address cross-sectoral links in a way that promotes inter-ministerial cooperation at the national level as well as cooperation at the international level. This discussion will likely continue at

upcoming OWG meetings. Other issues for continued discussion are the importance of building on the lessons learned from the MDGs, the drawbacks of the “siloed” approach, and continual “re-inventing of the wheel.”

Means of implementation will be a focus in subsequent sessions as well. In his closing remarks on Friday afternoon, Co-Chair Kamau urged delegates not to look at means of implementation in a vacuum or leave it until the December session (OWG-6), where it is a scheduled theme, but to consider it within each set of issues under discussion, and be specific on how to secure it.

As the meeting concluded, several participants were cautiously optimistic that this process had the potential to finally define and operationalize sustainable development. However, others warned that it is still early in the process and success is far from certain. While OWG-3 was a step in the right direction, there are still five more sessions ahead where participants will continue to examine and organize the puzzle pieces before negotiations begin and the SDG puzzle will be pieced together.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

### Arab Regional Implementation Meeting on Rio+20

**Outcomes:** The Arab RIM will discuss the outcomes of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development and their implications for the sustainable development agenda in the Arab region. The meeting is organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. **dates:** 29-30 May 2013 **location:** Dubai, UAE **contacts:** Reem Nejdawi or Rita Wehbé, ESCWA Secretariat **phone:** +961-1-978 578 or +961-1-978-513 **fax:** +961-1-981 510/511/512 **emails:** nejdawi@un.org or wehbe@un.org **www:** <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=2044E>

**International Labour Conference:** The 102nd session of this conference is organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and will include the presentation of a paper and general discussion on “Sustainable development, decent work and green jobs.” **dates:** 5-20 June 2013 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Official Relations Branch, ILO **phone:** +41-22-799-8944 **fax:** +41-22-799-7732 **email:** RELOFF@ilo.org **www:** <http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/102/lang--en/index.htm>

**High-Level Conference of Middle-Income Countries:** The conference aims to create a platform for knowledge exchange and connection by middle-income countries. It will develop a joint action plan and declaration feeding into discussions of the post-2015 development agenda and facilitate network governance structures for knowledge sharing. The conference will be hosted and organized by the Government of Costa Rica and facilitated by the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) initiative Networks for Prosperity. **dates:** 12-14 June 2013 **location:** San José, Costa Rica **phone:** +43-1-26026-0 **fax:** +43-1-2692669 **email:** MIC-Conference@unido.org **www:** <http://micconference.org/conference/>

**Fourth Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals:** The fourth session of the Open Working Group will focus on employment and decent work for all, social protection, youth,

education and culture; and health and population dynamics. **dates:** 17-19 June 2013 **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=1636>

**20th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and first meeting of the High Level Political Forum:** The 20th and final session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 20) will take place back-to-back with the first meeting of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). **dates:** September 2013 (tentative) **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=1211>

**UNGA Special Event to Follow up Efforts made towards achieving the MDGs:** The UN General Assembly will hold this one-day event during the 68th session of the UNGA. This will represent the occasion for leaders to identify actions to complete the MDG process and to provide guidance on priorities. **date:** 25 September 2013 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Saijin Zhang **phone:** +1-212-963-2336 (General Assembly Affairs), +1-212-963-7172 (Protocol and Liaison) **fax:** +1-212-963-1921 **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/67schedule.shtml>

**First Annual Sustainable Development Implementation Forum:** The UN Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) will host the first annual Sustainable Development Implementation Forum (SDIF), which aims to serve as a global platform for sharing best practices in formulating and implementing sustainable development programmes, reviewing evidence of impacts, and charting out new and improved pathways for sustainable development implementation. The programme of the annual SDIF also will include topics related to: scaling up implementation; finding effective solutions to address implementation constraints and challenges; examining emerging issues in the context of planning and implementation; promoting the science-policy-practice interface to ensure the transition towards sustainability; and promoting and facilitating partnerships, as well as building communities of practice. **dates:** 5-7 November 2013 (tentative) **location:** Incheon, Republic of Korea **contact:** SDIF Secretariat, UNOSD **phone:** +82-32-822-9088 **fax:** +82-32-822-9089 **email:** unosd@un.org **www:** <http://www.unosd.org/index.php?page=view&type=13&nr=16&menu=177>

**Fifth Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals:** The fifth session of the OWG will focus on sustained and inclusive economic growth, macroeconomic policy questions (including international trade, international financial system and external debt sustainability), infrastructure development, and energy. **dates:** 25-27 November 2013 **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>

**Sixth Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals:** The sixth session of the OWG will focus on means of implementation; global partnership for achieving sustainable development; needs of countries in special situations, African countries, LDCs, land-locked developing countries, and SIDS as well as specific challenges facing middle-income countries; and human rights, the right to development, and global governance. **dates:** 9-13 December 2013 **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>

**Seventh Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals:** The seventh session of the OWG will focus on sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable transport, sustainable consumption and production (including chemicals and waste); and climate change and disaster risk reduction. **dates:** 6-10 January 2014 **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>

**Eighth Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals:** The eighth session of the OWG will focus on oceans and seas, forests, 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. **dates:** 3-7 February 2014 **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>

## GLOSSARY

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DLDD	Desertification, Land Degradation, and Drought
IPOA	Istanbul Programme of Action
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OWG	Open Working Group
PSIDS	Pacific Small Island Developing States
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TST	UN Technical Support Team
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNGA	UN General Assembly