



## SUMMARY OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: 6-10 JANUARY 2014

The seventh session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) took place from 6-10 January 2014, at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting brought together OWG members and other Member States, observers and representatives from UN agencies, and Major Groups to address the thematic issues of: sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable transport; sustainable consumption and production (including chemicals and wastes); and climate change and disaster risk reduction. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, and Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, continued in their role as OWG Co-Chairs.

On Friday afternoon, Co-Chair Kőrösi presented the Co-Chairs' summary of the session, noting that, as the OWG approaches its next phase of work, specific proposals have become sharper and more concrete. Most important, he said, is the prevailing wisdom that the issues are closely interlinked and will require a systemic approach to address them. As noted in the Co-Chair's summary, delegates recognized balanced territorial development is important since people, knowledge, income, and services flow between urban and rural areas in both directions. The summary also highlights the importance of including sustainable transportation in the SDGs. On sustainable consumption and production (SCP), delegates noted the need for decoupling resource use from economic growth using a mix of policies and life-cycle analysis. Many governments also advocated for differentiated SCP targets between developed and developing countries, and contributing to the trust fund of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP. Chemicals, it was noted, are most harmful to the poor and vulnerable, and developing countries often lack the capacity to properly manage them. Governments also agreed that climate change and disasters will put development gains at risk and should be cross-cutting issues. Delegations also called to respect the negotiating role of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Finally, as the intensity of and vulnerability to disasters will only increase, delegates stressed the need to consider three dimensions of risk mitigation: prevention; reduction; and fostering resilience.

As delegates continued to grapple with the nature and structure of the SDGs, delegates also began to think about the "way forward" in the next phase of the OWG's work, for which Co-Chair Kamau reviewed options for how the OWG might work to devise a set of SDGs and their targets. With one more stocktaking session scheduled in early February, the next phase, set to begin in early March and conclude in late July, is just around the corner.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE OWG

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

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

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

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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 towards the achievement of the goals, accompanied by targets and indicators, while taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and levels of development; and
- the importance of global, integrated and scientifically-based information on sustainable development and of supporting regional economic commissions in collecting and compiling national inputs to inform this global effort.

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

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

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

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

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

**THIRD SESSION OF THE OWG:** OWG-3 took place from 22-24 May 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. The meeting addressed the thematic issues of: (a) food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, desertification, land degradation and drought, and (b) water and sanitation.

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

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

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

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

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

## OWG-7 REPORT

Co-Chair Macharia Kamau opened OWG-7 on Monday morning, 6 January 2014. He noted that there are two more stock-taking meetings—this one and the eighth session in early February. He reminded delegates that, at OWG-6 in December 2013, they had agreed on a way forward, including: the OWG will meet in five week-long sessions from March to July to

discuss SDG proposals and focus on goals and targets; the OWG will not rewrite the narrative but rather use the text in the Rio+20 outcome document; there will be formal and informal meetings; and the process will remain open and transparent. He noted that the issues for this session of the OWG are of the utmost importance and this aspect of the debate is necessary to move forward.

### **SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT**

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION:** Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, noted that urbanization is at its fastest rate in human history, and in the next 40 years, 70% of the population could be living in cities. He stressed that urbanization is a driver of development, generates political institutions and promotes socialization. It is impossible to achieve sustainable development without harnessing the power and potential of urbanization, he added. He outlined three pillars of good urbanization: rules and regulations, design, and a financial plan. He concluded that the battle for sustainable development will be won or lost in cities.

Adriana de Almeida Lobo, Executive Director of CTS Emarq Mexico, said that transportation is the “circulatory system” of a city. She highlighted rapid urbanization, increasing automobile use and air pollution as important problems for cities to deal with. She proposed a goal of universal access to clean and safe transport, with indicators covering commute time, percentage of income dedicated to transport, and access to walking and cycling facilities. Also stressed was the need to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, as transport will soon be responsible for one-third of global emissions. On public policies, she highlighted the need for local and national governments to develop sustainable transport financing facilities, and to modernize transport systems.

In response to the keynote presentations, Co-Chair Kamau recalled comments from the morning’s meeting with Major Groups, suggesting that governments consider the kind of signal they will send to national and municipal authorities, planners, designers and investors through goals and targets on sustainable cities. He asked whether we understand what cities cost to run, in terms of their impacts on climate, biodiversity and chemicals and waste, and noted cities’ varying impacts on their different demographic groups. Finally, Kamau said markets should not be allowed to drive entire solutions around cities and transport, calling for the right balance between public investment and financing and those from market sources.

Responding to a question on incorporating urban issues into a larger goal on infrastructure development, Clos said urbanization is not performing well and must be approached differently. The technical problems of building infrastructure elements are clear and do not require special intellectual attention. Infrastructure must follow urban design, not the other way around; putting infrastructure before urban design leads to crowding and is “usually a mess.”

Asked about key targets for city issues, Clos outlined a proposal for four clusters of targets: improved spatial configuration; improved living conditions; enabling urban policies; and improved access to energy and urban job creation. Lobo added that key targets should include economic activity and distribution of wealth, and access to goods and services, especially health services.

Responding to a question on engaging the automobile industry in strengthening mass transportation, Lobo said car companies know their role has to change, but it will not happen without a change in society. She cited regulations and public policies as important to changing the culture around using cars and other forms of transportation.

In response to several questions on the relationship between rural and urban areas, Lobo said the relationship between urban and rural areas is important, particularly with regard to the food supply. She said transport is the basis for urban growth. Clos argued that there is no dichotomy between rural and urban areas, but the dichotomy is instead development or no development. He added that rural people move to cities when they don’t have a livelihood that meets their expectations.

In response to several questions on the role of the private sector, Clos said that the public sector must design the city and invest in a good set of rules and regulations first, and then the private sector can invest in real estate and infrastructure. In response to a question on strategic urban planning, Clos said that it cannot succeed without common space regulations, a street grid, a financial plan and good urban planning. Finally, regarding the role of democratic governance, Clos said urban planning has not been democratic historically, but democratic urban planning is possible, as illustrated in the US and, in particular, New York City.

Colombia commented on handling the cross-cutting aspects of cities, including with regard to targets on reducing GHG emissions, and about the nexus between urban and rural. Brazil observed that the current system of taxing the auto industry does not necessarily lead to more financing for other transportation solutions.

### **MONDAY’S PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND**

**DISCUSSION:** On Monday afternoon, Harriet Bulkeley, Durham University, presented on the intersection between building sustainable cities and the challenges of climate change. She said the straightforward sustainability model of 20 years ago no longer applies, as there are now “multiple ideas about how to make a city sustainable.” On considering climate change in the urban context, Bulkeley emphasized both the unique vulnerabilities of cities, as well as the fact that 50-75% of GHG emissions are produced in urban areas worldwide. One positive, she said, was that climate change has recently had a synergistic effect on city governments, bringing diverse agendas and projects together under common sustainability goals. Bulkeley recommended developing an urban SDG, which she said should also address climate change, guided by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR).

Ousmane Thiam, Director-General, Conseil Exécutif des Transports Urbains de Dakar, said without a good transport system, neither MDG 1 (eradicating extreme poverty and hunger) nor 7 (environmental sustainability) can be achieved. Thiam highlighted the call by the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) to double the market share of public transport by 2025 compared with 2005 levels, which would result in lower oil consumption, fewer traffic fatalities, a doubling of jobs and health benefits from physical exercise. Finally, he called for developing multiple modes of public transport, lamenting the decline of railways in Africa in favor of road transport.



In response to a question about Bulkeley's comment on CBD, she stressed that the divisions we place around national boundaries do not reveal the uneven distribution of GHG emissions within countries. Some people have emissions 300 times more than others living in the same city and it is important to be sensitive to these inequalities. In response to several questions on the rural-urban divide, Bulkeley said that, just because there may be an urban SDG, does not mean it couldn't also have rural benefits.

Thiam added that transportation is a central issue in rural development, especially for poverty reduction and for bringing farm products to market. In response to a comment about urban silos, Bulkeley said we will create silos wherever we draw the issue boundaries. In response to a question about the role of the car, Thiam acknowledged that the auto industry doesn't need to stop production, but there needs to be substitution or fewer individually-owned cars. For example, the auto industry could produce mass transit vehicles for which there is high demand. Thiam responded to a question on the need for sustainable transport, saying that it should be promoted because it is reliable, safe and best for the economy. Bulkeley said the overall message and big picture of the SDGs are important in shaping actions, and she urged the OWG to consider the larger message being sent to cities about what they should achieve.

#### **TUESDAY'S PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND**

**DISCUSSION:** Aromar Revi, Director, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), outlined the SDSN proposal for a stand-alone urban SDG and three targets. The proposed goal calls for making all cities socially inclusive, economically productive, environmentally sustainable, secure and resilient to climate change and other risks, and achieving this through an emphasis on city governance. Revi said cities are not sustainable unless the regions in which they are embedded are also sustainable, since cities cannot survive without food, water and everything else that rural areas provide. An urban SDG, therefore, should not be seen in isolation from rural issues, or from equity and justice, education and health care, and ecosystem services and biodiversity.

Lewis Fulton, Institute of Transportation Studies, University of California, Davis, made the case that transport deserves its own SDG and set of targets. Fulton explained that transportation is usually underestimated but represents 10-15% of gross domestic product (GDP) and indirectly enables all economic and social activities around the world, as it is not just about moving people but also moving goods. He described the work of the Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) and its proposal for five major transport targets: secure universal access to sustainable transport for urban populations by 2030; secure universal access for rural populations by 2030; halve the burden of global road traffic crashes by 2030 compared to 2010; halve years lost due to premature death and years lived with disability from transport-related air pollution by 2030 compared to 2010; and realize a reduction of at least 1.6-2.5 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide.

Responding to a question, Fulton said the increased use of information and communications technology (ICT) has not yet coincided with reduced travel. On the differences between larger and smaller cities, he said medium and smaller cities offer opportunities to do things right in the first place, rather than

dealing with retrofitting and reversing older policies. On the role of pricing, Fulton called for policy packages that promote sustainable travel, rather than subsidizing vehicles and fuels. On the need for a stand-alone goal on transport, Fulton said spreading the targets across different goals might result in losing their synergy, and added that the targets might not survive. He said it is time to send a clear message that transport is a priority.

Aromar said ending extreme poverty requires building linkages between communities for remittances, job opportunities and basic services. He explained that decentralized systems for energy and other sectors is the way of the future, in contrast to the centralized, fossil-fuel-driven systems of the past. He added that contemporary technologies provide the opportunity to decentralize such systems, but financing and administrative/governance systems must allow it. On the difference between new and old urbanization, Aromar highlighted the opportunities provided for new construction, noting that updating older infrastructure takes significant investment. He said financing for urban development will vary between market-driven contexts and those that are more managed. On a question about consistency with points made by Joan Clos, Aromar agreed with Clos on the need for effective urban planning and design, but said it must be locally situated.

During the second round of questions, Kamau asked Clos to respond to the question of whether to set an urbanization goal. He said an urbanization goal has the advantage of having a universal approach. He called for developing understandable and implementable goals, and reiterated that urban and rural development is sustainable development.

Revi, in response to a question on legal and regulatory systems, said there is no universal land management system; there are differences between countries and within countries. He said authority has to be transferred to the local level, and processes that start at the city level may affect how we look at indicators at the national and global levels.

In response to questions on how Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries could achieve transport targets, Fulton said the target of cutting car use in OECD countries will be challenging, but slowing car growth in other parts of the world is also challenging. He said Davis, California, is one of the most bicycle-friendly cities in the US, California has a target to cut car travel by 10% by 2020 and to cut urban sprawl, and OECD countries are paving the way on vehicle safety. In response to a question on how developing countries can reduce car travel by 50%, he noted that cities do not function well with high car ridership. He said the multilateral development banks now understand that more resources should go into mass transit rather than road development and cities now have to recognize this. In response to a question about the role of biofuels, Fulton said the sustainability of biofuels is being questioned. While Brazil's biofuels help reduce GHG emissions, he added, there are other biofuels that cut oil use but are not helping to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. He concluded that, in looking at the big modes of transport—trucks, ships and aircraft—it is hard to see how they can decarbonize without biofuels.

On the difficulties of phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, Fulton said his sympathy for fossil fuel producers is trumped by the need to stop "paying people to behave in an unsustainable way." He added that there is also "natural pressure" to end subsidies, as they are hard on national treasuries.

Responding to a question on narrowing down goals and targets, Aromar said the framework has to accommodate what happens both at national and local levels. He said the private sector—not just large transnational corporations, but also small enterprises—is an important player in cities. He said cities are “where the money is, where the externalities come from, and where the power resides.” He emphasized that “exciting the imaginations of youth and other ordinary people” is the key to making things work in practice.

**INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS:** Delegates had the opportunity to present statements on this cluster of issues on Monday and Tuesday. Fiji, on behalf of the Group of 77 (G-77) and China, looked forward to 2014 as a challenging year that should be a “milestone” in formulating the SDGs. He emphasized that sustainable cities and human settlements will present major challenges over the coming decades, and they are generally under-resourced and underequipped to deal with many of emerging issues. With one billion people living in slums and rising inequality in cities, he stressed the importance of proper urban planning, inclusive policies and participatory decision-making.

The European Union (EU) said cities are hubs for employment opportunities and inclusive and sustainable economic growth, but attention also must be paid to inter-dependencies with rural surroundings. He highlighted the following action areas: slums and soaring levels of poverty; gender equality; urban sprawl and public space; air quality; resilience to disasters; and transparent decision-making processes. On sustainable transport, he said access is central to ensuring a basic set of living standards, and transport systems must be secure for women and environmentally friendly.

Viet Nam, also for Bhutan and Thailand, said the OWG should take a practical approach to formulating concrete goals for urban sustainability with clear achievement dates. He said integrated planning and design should consolidate and reinforce existing urban advantages. On sustainable transport, he said systems should reduce time and expenditure on travel, and adapt to climate change in order to minimize potential losses.

Montenegro, also for Slovenia, called for cities to have social protection systems and to address inequality, crime, and the protection of children, youth and stigmatized groups. He said unplanned urbanization is rightly viewed as a negative trend, due to overconsumption and inefficient use of resources, among other issues. Cities must go beyond resource efficiency and low-carbon emissions to also enhance the ecosystems that support them. Sustainable transportation, he added, requires improving accessibility, not simply focusing on movement.

Cyprus, also for Singapore and the United Arab Emirates, said green open spaces, green infrastructure policies, and safe and clean drinking water are vital requirements for human well-being, and protection of biodiversity and natural resources. He suggested reducing the movement of rural populations to cities by improving rural services. He highlighted the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction currently under consideration and called for coherence with the post-2015 development agenda.

Nicaragua, also for Brazil, said urban transportation is essential to poverty eradication by providing access to energy, health, education, and water and sanitation. Human settlements and transportation should be included as a priority in the post-2015 agenda, whether as a stand-alone goal or group of goals

and indicators. He added that the auto industry should not create obstacles to more sustainable transportation, and called for international marketplace access for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).

Norway, also for Ireland and Denmark, called for an integrated approach to challenges such as homelessness and slums, clean air and water, empowerment of women and youth, and climate change. She said that, although MDG 7's target on slum-dwellers was met ten years ago, challenges remain. Urbanization provides great opportunities, including for waste recovery and recycling, she said, as well as for addressing gender violence and unequal property rights, but fulfilling this potential requires stronger partnerships and involving people in decision-making.

Poland, also for Romania, said urbanization will lead to the further marginalization of groups that are already excluded from society, resulting in an increase in slum dwellers, for example. She stressed that an SDG on sustainable cities must incorporate linkages with other areas, and that it should be reflected as a cross-cutting issue. She proposed targets for: job creation; access to affordable mass transit; road infrastructure for rural populations; and improving the safety of transport.

Bulgaria, also for Croatia, said the post-2015 development agenda should help to shape cities so that everyone can have a decent quality of life while protecting the environment. She said cities are an important cross-cutting area to reflect on in multiple goals, and transport was left out of the MDGs and has not received the needed attention, despite its links with the three pillars of sustainable development. As a contributor to food security, education and health, she said transport can be considered a driver of social inclusion and could be reflected in targets across multiple goals.

China, also for Indonesia and Kazakhstan, said the future development agenda must, *inter alia*: optimize urban planning and management models; make industrial development consistent with the size of each city and town; accelerate the development of low-carbon cities; and promote green building. On sustainable transport, she called for coordinating rural, urban and inter-regional transportation, and promoting conservation and emissions reduction in the transport sector.

Turkey, also for Italy and Spain, said the SDGs should embrace cities not only as drivers of economic growth, job creation, innovation, and exchange of cultures and experiences, but also as a base of consumption, waste generation and GHG emissions. The urban dimension of the SDGs should, *inter alia*: reduce the number of slum dwellers; limit the transformation of public spaces into private spaces; improve energy efficiency; and support public, non-motorized forms of transportation.

Guatemala, also for Colombia, said cities will play a central role in the SDG framework, and through cities we can visualize how shared targets may occur within the integrative approach that Colombia has put forward. She highlighted the interdependence between urban and rural areas, and added that, if all statistics point to 70% of the world's population living in urban areas by 2030, it would be irresponsible not to have an urban SDG.

Benin, on behalf of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), suggested: the need to prevent further growth of slums through better urban planning and increased access to affordable housing, land and basic services; improved food safety nets and social services; the need to mitigate natural hazards exacerbated by

climate change at the city and village levels; improved energy efficiency, including quality affordable transport systems; and multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approaches. He added that the OWG could consider a dedicated goal on sustainable cities and transport.

Japan said he was open to the proposal for a stand-alone goal on sustainable cities, while targets must involve local governments and stakeholders for knowledge-sharing and networking. He was not convinced that it is necessary to have a stand-alone goal on transit, but recognized its important role for sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Bangladesh said it is critical to address the demographic phenomenon of urbanization, particularly through refreshed targets on slums and urban sprawl. In order to make cities more sustainable, he said, we must strengthen urban-rural linkages. Emphasizing the importance of rural development, he said impoverishment and under-development push people to move to the city in search of jobs.

The Major Groups Commons Cluster said an SDG should not just promote sustainable cities, but all types of settlements. She said possible targets for an SDG could include efficiency of energy and material use, sustainable entrepreneurship, waste, low-carbon transit, and a systems perspective.

Workers and Trade Unions said creating decent urban jobs is a high priority. She proposed concrete targets on reducing slums, prioritizing vulnerable populations, eradicating poverty, lowering unemployment rates, and reducing social exclusion. Emphasizing the important role of municipalities and local authorities, she said they must respond to growing needs by providing quality public services and democratic management.

Local Authorities said they strongly advocate a stand-alone urban SDG, and highlighted opportunities for sustainable and efficient urban building. He called on Member States to join local authorities and stakeholders who can transform communities in moving along the path to sustainability, by creating an urban sustainability goal.

Children and Youth said the SDG architecture must facilitate the role of cities as implementers, as the new global partnership will not be achievable without engaging young people. He said cities and local governments will be critical in achieving targets within universal SDGs, called for a target of public space within a five-minute walk of every household, and recalled urban youth's readiness and even desperation to engage in the new agenda.

Women called for targets on: expanding active engagement with slum dwellers, women, mayors and others; avoiding environmental degradation; and promoting and protecting urban green infrastructures. She added that the market alone cannot take sustainable development forward, and stressed public responsibility at all levels.

The Scientific and Technological Community questioned whether an urban SDG would reinforce the urban-rural dichotomy. He said the SDGs should include a clear statement that the goal is sustainable urbanization, with an emphasis on process, which would also help rural areas. Such a goal has the potential to integrate health, water, food, poverty, infrastructure, biodiversity and land use, among other issues. He concluded by noting that, when given a clear signal, municipal and local governments take "immense action."

Bahamas, for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said sustainable urbanization and transportation should be "key components" of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs. He said it is essential to ensure strong partnerships between all relevant stakeholders in order to address issues of urban income inequality, job creation, resilience, integrated planning and design, and access to urban services.

Israel, also for Canada and the US, said the work of the OWG must be relevant to the majority of the world's population who live and work in cities. He emphasized that meaningful stakeholder engagement must be at the center of urban development, and that city-dwellers themselves must play a decisive role in problem-solving and innovation. Cautioning against "reinforcing the static rural-urban divide," he emphasized that cross-cutting issues affect all people and areas.

Zimbabwe, on behalf of Southern African Countries, said the promotion of livelihood opportunities in cities is crucial to their development, but building sustainable cities is a daunting task in the face of rapid urbanization. Addressing problems requires technology, access to capital and advanced management skills, he said, calling on the private sector and development partners to work together to advance urban sustainable development.

Serbia, also for Belarus, said success in combating climate change depends on the sustainability of cities. The goal must be to achieve smart, low-carbon and "post-carbon" cities. He said many countries in transition are undertaking efforts to: upgrade transportation networks; reduce air pollution, noise and use of fossil fuels; and improve multi-modal transportation, including rail and river transport. He also noted that international cooperation and support to developing countries and transition countries are crucial for the development of transportation networks.

Nepal noted that one-fifth of his country's population resides in cities, which has resulted in massive strains on social services and increased crime. He outlined the following priorities for LDCs and LLDCs: sustainable transport; implementing the technology bank for LDCs mandated by the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA); harnessing synergies in the SDGs; addressing the special needs of world heritage cultural cities; and implementing all commitments of bilateral official development assistance (ODA) to LDCs without delay.

The Republic of Korea noted that 91% of his country's population resides in urban areas, and sustainable cities and human settlements must be a part of the post-2015 sustainable development framework. He said urbanization should be anchored in a poverty alleviation goal, while sustainable transport should be included in a sustainable energy goal. With regard to climate change, he said the UNFCCC negotiations will be a decisive factor in figuring out the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Since food and energy are closely related to climate, he warned, it will be difficult to shape a stand-alone climate goal.

Venezuela said modern cities are built on the idea that nature is to be exploited for economic growth, questioning the concept of "sustainable cities." We may think we are independent of nature, he said, but in fact we may be more dependent on nature than ever before. He emphasized that rural areas are the basis for urban life.



France, also for Germany and Switzerland, said urban and rural development can no longer be seen in opposition; “they are twins” and must be integrated. He outlined three major principles: the crucial role of strong local authorities and citizens; an “integrated urban development approach” including good transitions between rural and urban areas; and environmental sustainability of cities and resilience to climate change and natural disasters. Three priorities for the post-2015 agenda include: universal access to modern energy sources; social inclusion; and supporting balanced economic development to make towns and land areas more attractive. He also highlighted the role of culture in sustainable cities.

Körösi responded to France’s intervention to echo the cultural dimension of sustainable cities. He said that making cities sustainable does not mean creating the same cities everywhere; cities will differ because of their cultural backgrounds. That’s what makes our cities our home and what makes them attractive, he added.

Ecuador, also for Argentina and Bolivia, highlighted the central role of the state as a coordinator of social and environmental policies in all human settlements. He called for an SDG to eliminate barriers that the most vulnerable people in society face, namely people with disabilities, especially in urban areas. He said a sustainable and continuous flow of resources is necessary to ensure that the SDGs lead to concrete results.

India, also for Sri Lanka and Pakistan, said the post-2015 development agenda must: be broad enough to address both developed and developing country urban issues; encourage investments along multiple streams; and prioritize investment in public transportation. In particular, he stressed that it will be a challenge to address the needs of old urban settlements, while also ensuring that new cities function from the start.

Australia, also for the UK and the Netherlands, said cities should take an integrated and participatory approach to development through good governance and planning. He emphasized the continuing increase in slum dweller populations, whom he called “the most vulnerable of the world’s poor.” On transportation, he emphasized the need for rural transport services, resilience to climate change, and reducing transport emissions.

Mexico, also for Peru, said urban issues and transport must be dealt with together. She lamented: the separation of housing from work areas and the resulting increase in travel; the growth in suburban areas, which use land more intensively; and the growth of mega-cities. She said goals should, *inter alia*: account for the November 2013 Warsaw Statement on Low-Carbon Transport and Sustainable Development; reduce vehicle use; enhance developing countries’ efforts to reduce emissions; and involve various stakeholders in ensuring sustainable mobility.

Iran said the OWG should focus on the sustainable development of human settlements, a term that goes beyond “urban” or “rural.” He said most targets on sustainable cities are cross-sectoral and the overlaps could be addressed by highlighting only those issues unique to cities (planning and design, resilience, common space). Transport targets, such as road safety and accessibility to transport systems, could be included under other goals, such as on infrastructure or accessibility.

Ghana called for post-2015 goals that are both country- and locality-specific. She said the future of Africa is urban, and we risk creating expensive and unlivable cities if they are not managed so as to reap the opportunities of urbanization.

The Russian Federation emphasized the need to consider road safety in the global agenda. He proposed stand-alone indicators on sustainable transport and safe and affordable transit. He supported a high-level panel on sustainable transport to ensure UN coherence in this area.

Senegal said cities should contribute to economic growth, reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. He stressed the need for solid recommendations that are aimed at establishing a true partnership between all stakeholders.

Business and Industry said there should be an SDG on transport because: it is a crucial tool of production; it is important to implement existing UN conventions on trade and transport; and sustainable supply chains boost competitiveness and productivity. As an example of the importance of transport in a globalized world, he said one cup of coffee from the UN cafeteria was transported here by 29 companies from over 18 countries.

NGOs emphasized the importance of cooperatives and the special needs that are met by transportation cooperatives. She stressed the need for all individuals to be responsible for their own impacts on the planet.

Local Authorities cautioned against putting urban and rural areas in opposition, as they “have a common destiny.” He advocated instead for the territorial approach that includes rural areas, food security and methods to stop “urban creep.” He said an SDG on urbanization should include targets on transport and infrastructure. Finally, he called for mobilizing local managers and locally elected officials in order to make progress against poverty and climate change.

Children and Youth proposed three targets on transportation: safe and active transport (walking and biking), which could be measured by the percentage of people who do it for more than 30 minutes per day; reduction of dangerous chemicals such as lead and black carbon; and an increase in the percentage of people using public transportation regularly.

Indigenous Peoples suggested rejuvenating railways in Africa and other regions in order to reduce dependence on aviation fuel. She supported a call for small, collective transport systems such as the minibus, which reduce the need for individual vehicles.

### **SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (INCLUDING CHEMICALS AND WASTE)**

**KEYNOTE PRESENTATION:** On Wednesday morning, Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Co-Chair of the International Resource Panel, called for major changes to production systems, not simply their optimization. He quoted the report of the UN High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (HLP), which stated that the MDGs fell short because they did not promote sustainable consumption and production patterns. Advocating for sustainable consumption and production (SCP) to be central to the new agenda, von Weizsäcker proposed that a stand-alone goal, targets and indicators on sustainable resource management could be integrated with other goals. He cautioned against making trade-offs and urged decoupling environmental sustainability and industrialization and resource consumption.

He suggested that it is possible for developing countries to pioneer efficiency and decoupling, and that they could “beat old industrialized countries” if they do so.

Responding to a question on CBDR, von Weizsäcker said global inequity is still an issue, and economic growth is the main target for developing countries. On decoupling, von Weizsäcker said it may be “psychologically easier” for developed countries to accept the need for resource efficiency if developing countries also make efforts. He stressed that resource efficiency is good for economic and social development in Southern countries.

Regarding decoupling in the context of poverty reduction, von Weizsäcker highlighted the North-South divide between rich and poor, and the potential solution of trading CO<sub>2</sub> emissions among countries.

With regard to a question on how to create a target or indicator on resource efficiency that is valuable at both ends of the supply chain, he replied that we need to separate SCP and efficiency. First, we need to create a limit on per capita resource consumption, and second, we need an efficiency goal for both the North and South. In response to a question on the role of markets and fiscal instruments, he said existing markets will do nothing to promote efficiency without state intervention to make efficiency and renewables profitable. He described an air pollution tax in Sweden from which the revenues were recycled back into the steel, non-ferrous metals and power industries, resulting in competition to reduce air pollutants.

#### **PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION:**

William McDonough, Founder, McDonough and Partners, said exponential growth in a world of limited resources is a fundamentally challenging issue; sustainability should mean more than just limiting “bad things.” He said that, while reducing emissions through efficiency is good, the question should be reframed to why we are polluting at all. He said that, if we optimize design from the start, we can remove the things we don’t want through efficiency and replace them with the things we want. Today we ask “How much can I get for how little I give?” We need to change this to “How much can we give for all that we get?”

Karti Sandilya, Blacksmith Institute, presented on his work with the Global Alliance on Health and Pollution, which aids low- and middle-income countries in cleaning up toxic sites. “We are fighting a global epidemic,” he explained, with more than 200 million people exposed to dangerous levels of toxins, mostly children and the poor. Wealthy countries have shifted manufacturing and mining overseas to poor countries with inadequate pollution controls, he explained. He emphasized prevention before remediation, as safer, less expensive and more effective. He spoke of the impacts of chemical pollution on poverty and the economy, highlighting that it disproportionately affects poor women, children and fetuses, and can affect the brain development of entire communities. The SDGs must incorporate chemical, waste and toxic pollution into the SDGs, he said, to lessen their impact on the health of local populations.

Helio Mattar, President, Akatu Institute for Conscious Consumption, said the one billion people who are the majority of the world’s consumers will become four billion in the next 20 years, meaning that today’s models of production and consumption will require a 75% reduction in use of natural resources. Noting that consumers will only permit different, not less, consumption, Mattar called for products and services that

are, *inter alia*: durable, shared, locally produced, virtual and healthy, and he emphasized quality of experiences and emotion over tangible goods. He suggested a shift from possessing products and services to just using them, and from seeing consumption as an end in itself to using it as an instrument of well-being. Finally, Mattar advised that the SDGs should incorporate two kinds of indicators: those showing effort, such as the number of schools with sustainable education campaigns; and those showing results, such as the percentage of a population above a minimum level of well-being.

McDonough responded to a question about definitions with a suggestion that the UN should distinguish between consumable items (toothpaste, food) and “products of service” (TV or car). He suggested designing products for consumption that “go back to biology” without toxic or polluting impacts, and designing products for technology that can be recycled.

Mattar, in response to a question about GDP as a measurement, said we should worry less about GDP growth and more about job generation. In response to a question about the role of corporations, he said very few companies work in sustainability; their work is instead in corporate social responsibility and is insufficient when looking at the four billion middle-class consumers coming into the market in the next 20 years. In response to a question about the number of hours worked, he said we have to guarantee that labor will receive a greater proportion of GDP through a reduction in the workload and redistribution of people. In response to a question about education, he called for public policy to support SCP education for children and youth. He also noted a need to regulate financial markets, in part through pressure from community-based organizations. Sandilya responded that corporate behavior can make a difference. He noted that many of the world’s 20 million people with lead poisoning are exposed in “backyard” operations that recycle lead acid batteries. If the companies producing these batteries take a life-cycle approach and recycle all of the batteries they produce, it would put the informal recyclers out of business and end their lead exposure. To replace the jobs lost, he recommended converting these recyclers into collection agents of used batteries.

In his closing statement, Sandilya called for a specific component on environmental public health within a health SDG. Mattar concluded that a long-term road map for the education of children and youth, campaigns for adults, and a large societal discussion will be necessary to transform society. McDonough closed by emphasizing that the re-use of an item must be planned for in its original design, in order to eliminate its disposal.

**INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS:** Fiji, on behalf of the G-77/China, said SCP is an overarching concept. He said chemicals and waste, on the other hand, present specific and concrete challenges that require focused and effective action. Developing countries, especially SIDS and LDCs, lack capacity for the sound management of waste and chemicals, and require assistance through technology transfer and capacity building. As the global population continues to increase, he stated, there is great urgency for the present generation to adopt sustainable patterns that safeguard the rights of future generations. Finally, he called for the strong leadership of developed countries to implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on SCP, which should serve as a “global cooperative framework.”



Barbados, also for the Bahamas and CARICOM, emphasized SIDS' lack of capacity for the sound management of chemicals and waste, calling for capacity building, technology transfer and assistance to address their special situation. She said the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda should emphasize: equitable and balanced global consumption of resources; the time-bound implementation of the 10YFP on SCP with developed countries taking the lead; the establishment of a SIDS-specific platform within the 10YFP on SCP; and the institutional strengthening for its implementation at the national and local levels.

The EU noted the benefits of SCP, including stimulating jobs and innovation in resource efficiency and relevant services. He said SCP has universal relevance: for industrialized countries it implies resource efficiency in production and adoption of more sustainable lifestyles, while for many developing countries, it enables better well-being and economic prosperity. He called for reducing food waste to lessen pressure on production. Finally, on wastes, he said this is increasingly an issue of universal concern, and on chemicals, he noted that exposure to certain chemicals results in more deaths than those caused by HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

The UK, also for Australia and Netherlands, said SCP is a cross-cutting issue. He said all parties will need to contribute based on their respective stage of development, but this can evolve with time. Specifically, the world must: produce more food with fewer resources; reduce water waste; improve reuse and recycling; and use non-renewable energy more efficiently while phasing out fossil fuel subsidies.

Montenegro, also for Slovenia, said inefficient and inequitable use of resources undermines development efforts in many countries. He cautioned that a one-size-fits-all approach to SCP will not be sufficient to achieve global progress. He called for decoupling economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation by advancing ICT and more responsible lifestyle choices. He said mainstreaming SCP into policies at all levels is needed for SCP implementation, and highlighted consumer action and awareness-raising in this regard.

Viet Nam, also for Bhutan and Thailand, said we are reaching and breaching the earth's limits, citing overconsumption of goods and services. Sustainable green energy for all could be the first step in ensuring SCP. He suggested governments could guide businesses toward SCP through environmental taxes and fiscal incentives. He also called for reducing the use of hazardous materials and toxic chemicals and generation of waste, enhancing consumer awareness of SCP, and using the 10YFP on SCP. Developed countries should take the lead in promoting SCP, he stressed, highlighting financial and technical assistance and capacity building for developing countries.

Croatia, also for Bulgaria, said we need new business models, innovation, public policies and consumer awareness of ecological footprints to move to a more sustainable economy. She added that SCP is the means to decouple economic growth from resource consumption and environmental degradation and secure social justice. She concluded by supporting the HLP in its assessment that the MDGs fell short on promoting SCP, and that this needs to be a priority in the post-2015 development agenda.

Serbia, also for Belarus, stressed the critical role of the 10YFP on SCP in delivering results at national and regional levels through a focus on development, replication and scaling up of SCP. He emphasized that this is a shared responsibility involving stakeholders, governments, research, business, academia, Major

Groups and international organizations. He urged prioritizing sectors that are resource intensive and have high economic importance.

Denmark, also for Ireland and Norway, called for acknowledging the cross-cutting nature of SCP, which has impacts on: decoupling resource use from economic growth; strengthening green public procurement; reducing waste; capturing the cost of environmental externalities; and better managing food production and waste. The 10YFP on SCP, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), and the chemicals and wastes treaties are significant steps in the right direction, but need better implementation.

Italy, also for Turkey and Spain, admitted that it will be challenging to design goals that reflect both global overconsumption and under-consumption, but they should be tailored so that the benefits of strong early action are felt. He said that "time is the only thing that we cannot recycle," and implored delegates to "act now and reach higher beyond the low-hanging fruits."

Colombia, also for Guatemala, said SCP is absolutely fundamental to the post-2015 goals, as it encapsulates the need for a universal agenda. Chemicals and waste are more than a technical issue, she emphasized, and are central to efforts to reduce poverty. She used SCP to illustrate Colombia's "integrated approach" to sharing targets across multiple goals, which she said will help deliver impact and action on the ground.

Romania, also for Poland, said implementation of the 10YFP on SCP requires rethinking current patterns and tools. She emphasized that governments, the private sector, labor and civil society must share responsibility, as "we are all producers and consumers." SCP, she said, can be a strong driver of a transformative agenda.

Saudi Arabia said developed countries should take the lead on changing patterns of consumption and production, in accordance with the 10YFP on SCP. She encouraged developed countries to support means of implementation of developing countries in achieving SCP.

Bangladesh said that, in developed countries, SCP means resource efficiency and lifestyle changes to reduce waste. In developing countries, meanwhile, it means building capacity to "leapfrog" to more resource-efficient, environmentally-sound and competitive practices. He called for preventing high rates of food loss and waste. On chemicals and waste management, he said developing countries need special attention, including for capacity building.

Mexico, also for Peru, said SCP must be included in national development programmes, and she outlined Mexico's approaches to SCP as a cross-cutting issue, where each ministry has the responsibility of addressing SCP. Mexico, Peru and Southern Cone countries are working jointly to move toward the 10YFP on SCP, she noted.

Chile spoke of the importance of tackling SCP in more concrete terms to create awareness and mobilize the different actors that need be engaged. She supported the "target-to-goal" approach proposed by Colombia, and a proposal to include sustainability reporting in the SDG framework.

The Russian Federation said a transition to SCP helps to eradicate problems of poverty, hunger and disease, while minimizing negative anthropogenic effects on the planet. "The priority should be transforming ways of life, ethics, and cultural and social relations," he said. Looking to strengthen the

international legal regime to mitigate the impacts of industrial and other pollution, he emphasized the need to ensure synergies between existing legal structures.

Sweden said SCP is a universal concept, with clear linkages to all parts of sustainable development, including food security, economic growth and reduced pressure on ecosystems. She said sound management of chemicals is crucial for the protection of human health and the environment.

The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) explained that: tourism has been recognized as a key area in the 10YFP on SCP; achievements in tourism can and should trigger improvements outside the sector, including water and biodiversity; tourism represents 5% of global GDP and employs one out of 11 people worldwide; and, by 2030, 58% of the over one billion tourist arrivals will be in emerging economies.

The Scientific and Technological Community said the discussion of targets and indicators is as important as the goals, and the OWG should set indicators that will “do no harm” and avoid negative consequences. She said the way data are collected, stored and analyzed will make a difference in implementation.

Business and Industry said SCP is at the nexus of change, but there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach; diverse approaches are needed for different countries and different sectors. He said industries can accelerate progress through the 10YFP on SCP and many industries are using sustainable production, energy efficiency and waste reduction. He warned that trying to dictate programmes and limit choices risks inhibiting innovation and progress.

Canada, also for the US and Israel, expressed support for SCP initiatives that culminated in the 10YFP on SCP in 2012, which “thankfully is already operational.” In a broader sense, he said SCP describes the OWG’s overall purpose, but the present discussion should focus on specific opportunities that could be the focus of SDGs and targets, such as energy, water and sanitation, and food security. He highlighted science, technology and innovation as a necessary cross-cutting issue. He expressed doubt about the need for a stand-alone goal on SCP.

Argentina, also for Bolivia and Ecuador, called for support for micro, small and medium enterprises; said agricultural and fossil fuel subsidies drive unsustainable means of production; encouraged environmental education for cultural change; called for use of the life-cycle approach to identify sustainable products; and noted that government purchases, given their large volume, can drive sustainable markets.

China, also for Kazakhstan and Indonesia, said developed countries should take the lead on shifting to SCP and sound chemicals and waste management. The short-term objective of the SDGs should be to assist countries with implementing SCP to achieve national sustainable development goals, and the long-term objective should be to facilitate implementation of other SDGs. She also noted that the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions face implementation challenges due to lack of funds and technical assistance.

France, also for Germany and Switzerland, said new consumption and production patterns need to create jobs and reduce inequality. He called for fully integrating SCP in the different areas of development—energy, health, food security, water and sanitation, climate change, education and training.

He noted that 90 million people each year are affected by exposure to dangerous chemicals and wastes, and called for safe alternatives.

Brazil, also for Nicaragua, said discussions thus far have been superficial and detached from the social and economic realities of the 21st century. He called for more focus, data and technical support, and added that CBDR must be applied. He said we cannot reduce production if we do not reduce demand. He called for special consideration of chemicals and wastes because of human health, worker conditions and the environment. A new economic architecture could globalize a sustainable lifestyle, with developed countries taking the lead.

Uruguay stressed the need to ensure financial resources and technology for developing countries to advance SCP. He said the SDGs must include the management of waste and chemicals, and ensure that the goals can truly be attained.

Benin, on behalf of LDCs, spoke of the need to understand how consumer behavior is changed, and which policy mixes are the most effective. He called for raising awareness by engaging civil society and school systems in the implementation of SCP programmes. Small- and medium-sized enterprises in LDCs must be assisted to promote SCP, he concluded.

Women said the North should lead by example in promoting SCP. She emphasized that gender equity is an essential dimension to decoupling and called for gender-related indicators for every target.

Trade Unions supported including SCP in a proposed goal on decent work, and said that important principles of the SCP agenda include: efficiency of resources; life-cycle analysis of products; and zero waste, toxicity and CO2 emissions. She noted that many developing countries had expressed a willingness to sustainably manage chemicals, but face financial gaps.

Business and Industry said the chemicals industry delivers products and solutions essential for addressing sustainable development challenges, including: medical technologies and breakthroughs, increased agricultural production and reduced food waste, clean drinking water, and building materials for energy efficiency and sustainable construction.

Indigenous Peoples highlighted extractive industries as aggravating unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, especially in indigenous territories. She encouraged adopting SCP as an overarching SDG, to be implemented alongside sustainable management of natural resources.

NGOs said sustainable public procurement is a powerful tool for promoting SCP and suggested a target on this, noting that some governments use public procurement as a reward for sustainable practices.

Children and Youth called for a target on integrating SCP into education, both in school curricula and broader behaviors. He also stressed the importance of traditional knowledge.

India, also for Pakistan and Sri Lanka, said SCP should be a stand-alone goal and a central deliverable in the SDGs. Even though SCP is of universal relevance, developed countries have to take the lead. He called for a targeted approach to reducing per capita consumption of energy in developed countries, and for a global response to the unacceptably high level of food wasted in developed countries.

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

Co-Chair Kőrösi opened the session on Thursday afternoon. Saying that climate change is one of the big game changers that will have a direct influence on development, he asked participants to think about how to capture climate issues in terms of goals and targets.

**KEYNOTE SPEECHES AND INTERACTIVE**

**DISCUSSION:** Andrew Steer, President and CEO of the World Resources Institute (WRI), said that, if you care about poverty reduction and development, you also must care about climate change. He noted that the progress made with the MDGs could be erased by climate change, which affects development through increases in temperature, sea-level rise, extreme weather events and shifts in the hydrological cycle. He said he did not want to make a case for a stand-alone goal on climate or even specific targets, and suggested that every goal needs to reflect climate change. He called for a storyline connecting development and climate change in the goals' chapeau, and identified climate-smart development targets in goals under sustainable energy, food and nutritional security, productive and resilient cities, and a global partnership for development.

Pan Jiahua, Director, Institute for Urban and Environmental Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said a climate change goal is fundamental in the SDG framework, and it must be harmonious with both development and sustainability. He said its indicators must be measurable, reportable and verifiable, and suggested examples of both aggregate indicators—which would reflect CBDR—and per capita indicators. Pan said the drivers of climate change are linked to all other SDG issues. He also advocated a paradigm shift away from industrial civilization—based on fossil fuels, neglectful of geo-physical limits and materialist—to harmony between humans and nature, which relies on efficiency and justice.

OWG members' comments and questions included one by France's Deputy Minister for Development Pascal Canfin, who stressed the importance of limiting global temperature increases, and said the development agenda can no longer be considered without taking climate change into account. Poverty cannot be eradicated, he said, without also incorporating climate solutions into the agenda. He stressed that a specific SDG linked to climate change would not bring any added value, but that the issue should be reflected across goals from many different points of view.

Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction Margareta Wahlström said sustainable development is not feasible without recognizing disaster and climate risks. With the rapid increase of disasters, she said we have focused more on losses than on preparation and mitigation. She urged thinking about risk in three ways: prevention; risk reduction; and strengthening resilience.

Steer, responding to a question on the principle of CBDR, said this principle should not become a burden but investment in development. He said a stand-alone goal on climate could push the UNFCCC process "in the wrong direction." Influencing the chances of a deal at the twenty-first session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 21), he asserted, is not the role of the OWG, but it would be a "massive mistake" for the SDG process to ignore climate change because of other ongoing processes. The OWG's job is not to meddle in negotiations, he affirmed, but to set SDGs, which cannot be done without addressing climate change. He added that climate change

responses are about development: resilience of cities and agriculture, for example, on the adaptation side, and resource efficiency, as an example of mitigation.

Pan, in his responses, suggested that the SDG process can have positive impacts on UNFCCC negotiations. An SDG on climate, he said, can push the negotiation process further. Because of the centrality of climate change to sustainability, he called a stand-alone goal on the issue "absolutely necessary." He suggested that, at a minimum, the SDGs should reflect low-carbon elements, because even this could have an impact on the UNFCCC negotiations.

**PANEL PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION:** On Friday, Debra A.K. Johnson, DuPont Sustainable Solutions, said the threat posed by climate change should motivate change, especially with regard to disaster risk reduction (DRR). Emphasizing the need for clear goals and easy communication among actors, she said the private sector will respond better to ideas that bridge DRR with their existing concerns. She said private corporations recognize the benefits of working together, and called for measurable targets.

Peter deMenocal, Columbia University, spoke of the role of climate science in shaping the discussion about how we respond to a changing world. Noting that climate change will impact the "fundamentals of human civilization," including food, water, shelter and conflict, he said this is where science can deliver meaningful and useful information. On food, he explained that for every degree of warming, crop yields decrease by 5-10%. On water, he spoke to the changes in access to water for drinking, agriculture and power. DeMenocal also highlighted that climate change increases the tendency for conflicts, saying "climate change threatens the world we want."

Ronald Jackson, Executive Director, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, said that, while another speaker considered risk reduction as essential for resilience, he sees it as the opposite: by focusing on resilience indicators, risk issues can be reduced. He described the Hyogo Framework for Action and Comprehensive Disaster Management as seeking the same "desired end state" as the sustainable development agenda. However, he said that they have not sufficiently addressed the underlying drivers of risk and enhancing resilience, and these are areas the SDGs could tackle. He added that goals could focus on reducing: human exposure to hazards and increasing safety; losses; and systemic impacts on society, economies, and livelihoods.

In response to a question on measuring livelihoods, Jackson said damage and loss assessments can capture livelihoods at the local level through more data collection, which is not always well defined in economic terms. On a question about specific targets, he said anything framed around environment or ecosystem services will capture and bring together all three issues—DRR, climate change and sustainable development. A common target also could be defined on climate change adaptation.

DeMenocal, responding to a question on a possible science-based food security target, said this is a very new discipline and relies on new mathematics and statistics to quantify specific crops' responses to climate change. On a question about collaboration between the private sector and the scientific community, he said one of the first collaborations at this nexus is with the insurance industry, which seeks to understand how extreme weather events impact their holdings. Responding to a



question about the need to “fast-track” knowledge and research, he stressed that scientific knowledge is advancing so quickly that we need to get stakeholders information faster so it is actionable. Responding about the need for including climate change in the SDGs, deMenocal said climate is the foundation of every one of the SDGs; it would not be consistent with scientific beliefs to design the goals with the idea that the climate is unchanging. Regarding climate deniers, he said the scientific community can provide needed information in a timely, actionable way, and he urged delegates to decide what is relevant to their constituents.

Johnson responded to a question on the role of science to say that DuPont’s science engineers are interested in DRR but need guidance to focus their efforts. On a question about developing targets, she said the discussion should be broad and include multi-stakeholder input.

**INTERACTIVE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS:** Delegates had the opportunity to speak on this cluster of issues on Thursday and Friday. Bolivia, on behalf of the G-77/China, called on all countries to fulfill their climate and development related commitments. He said climate change puts developing countries at risk and is disrupting livelihoods. “The current model of development needs to be realigned to the changing world,” he said, emphasizing the importance of action on climate change and DRR in an international sustainable development agenda.

The EU said efforts to address climate change should be embedded in the post-2015 development agenda, particularly in the issues of: SCP, sustainable energy and transport, education, health, DRR, food security, water, biodiversity and security. He said the poorest and marginalized are most exposed to disaster risks, and the SDGs must address all aspects of vulnerability by engaging stakeholders and building governance structures for disaster management. He stressed that this is a unique opportunity for sustainable development, poverty reduction, DRR and climate change to be addressed in a coherent and mutually supportive way.

Benin, on behalf of LDCs, noted that 51% of deaths caused by climate-related disasters from 1980-2013 occurred in LDCs, nearly five times the global average. He said climate change and DRR need to be integrated into development programmes, and building resilience in LDCs is a necessity. He added that finance is the key to unlocking many such necessary actions, but climate finance remains a promise under-delivered.

Palau, also for Nauru, Papua New Guinea, as well as the other Pacific SIDS at the UN, said climate change is the greatest threat to the livelihoods, well-being, viability and sovereignty of Pacific SIDS, and a global development agenda that ignores climate change would be unacceptable. He called on the OWG to realize that climate change and DRR are cross-cutting issues. He provided suggestions for climate change targets under possible goals on extreme poverty eradication, renewable energy, and oceans and seas.

Nauru, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said the adverse impacts of climate change losses and damages in SIDS can no longer be prevented by mitigation or adaptation. While the UNFCCC is the forum for negotiation, climate change is an existential threat that must be addressed in the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda as a cross-cutting issue; otherwise the goals on eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development will be ineffective.

Poland, also for Romania, said the numerous inter-linkages between climate and poverty lie at the heart of the sustainable development agenda. Climate-related goals and targets should be coherent with the UNFCCC. The SDG process also should build on the UN Climate Summit in September 2014. On DRR, Poland emphasized that the OWG’s approach should be coherent with the post-Hyogo agreement to be adopted in March 2015, and DRR should be a priority for national and local authorities and communities.

Norway, also for Denmark and Ireland, said climate change alters the context in which we need to develop, noting that the poorest, women and indigenous peoples are hardest hit by climate change. She said disasters must be incorporated into development planning, while sustainable development should be prioritized before, during and after disasters. She called for “climate-smart” goals, including on agriculture, disasters and energy, in which clean cookstoves, for example, can improve health, mitigate emissions, and reduce the burden on women to collect firewood.

Slovenia said climate change adaptation and resilience efforts can provide new market opportunities through jobs, new construction, water management and insurance. He said resilience is strongly connected with DRR, and resilience efforts can contribute to the three dimensions of sustainable development and poverty eradication. He urged that the outcomes of the UNFCCC, OWG and Post-Hyogo negotiations should be mutually supportive and coordinated.

Croatia, also for Bulgaria, said climate change and comprehensive risk reduction must be addressed in the context of development. He stressed that a legally-binding climate agreement in 2015 would be an important step towards poverty eradication and development, but any climate change or DRR goals should be in line with existing agreements.

Peru, also for Mexico, said the three ongoing processes addressing climate change and DRR (UNFCCC, post-Hyogo and SDGs) provide an opportunity to develop a single framework and coherent approach to the issues. He said climate change should be addressed in a cross-cutting nature, as issues can be structured into mutually-reinforcing goals.

China, also for Indonesia and Kazakhstan, said the principles of equity and CBDR should be central to a sustainable development framework. She said “Climate change has merged with the issue of development,” as the issue is mutually reinforcing with current sustainable development efforts. She called for developed countries to help build the abilities of developing countries to respond to natural disasters.

Saudi Arabia said: the UNFCCC is the leading and primary platform for negotiations on climate change; CBDR should underpin the sustainable development discussion; and without developed countries taking the lead and following through on their commitments, developing countries cannot implement their own climate change actions.

The US, also for Canada and Israel, said there could not be a more critical global priority than climate change, and failing to act with “commitment and vigor” will disrupt efforts to overcome poverty. She stressed that it would not make sense for the OWG to have a debate on climate change in parallel to the UNFCCC, including on issues such as CBDR and respective capabilities. Instead, she said, it is important to integrate climate change and DRR into key goals and targets.

Trinidad and Tobago, on behalf of CARICOM, said climate change and disaster events are increasingly frequent and intense in his region and pose serious threats to development possibilities. He said climate change and DRR must be addressed as cross-cutting issues, suggesting that resilience could form the “spine of the post-2015 agenda.” The availability and reliability of data, he stressed, will be a key aspect of the successful integration of targets.

Thailand, also for Bhutan and Viet Nam, said his region has learned that development gains can be wiped out by disaster. He urged that DRR and preparedness be incorporated into the future development framework. He said that, while the Hyogo Framework for Action has been effective, the post-2015 Framework for DRR must consider and strengthen the role of local communities.

The Netherlands, also for the UK and Australia, said climate change and DRR must be integrated throughout the post-2015 development agenda. She called for: developing sustainable energy and enhancing energy efficiency; decoupling emissions growth from economic growth; and aligning freshwater withdrawals with supply. She added that addressing DRR in the post-2015 framework must be consistent with the new Hyogo Framework, and there should be a target on building resilience to disasters.

India, also for Pakistan and Sri Lanka, said any response to climate change must be consistent with principles of equity and CBDR, and must not prejudge or prejudice the ongoing negotiations under the UNFCCC. He suggested how climate change could be treated as a cross-cutting issue in the SDGs, including targets on: universal access to modern energy sources; improved public transport; food security; reduction of ecological footprints in developed countries; and transfer of environmentally-friendly technologies.

Nicaragua, also for Brazil, stressed that the UNFCCC is the negotiating forum for climate change. He opposed adopting an indicator on reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the post-2015 agenda, in order to preserve commitments reached within the UNFCCC. He said climate change is universal in its scope but differentiated in its responsibility, stressing that “universality does not imply uniformity.” On DRR, he said poverty eradication, health care and decent jobs would build more resilient communities.

Nepal expressed strong support for including mitigation and adaptation in the SDGs, saying they should support the Kyoto Protocol and deeper commitments on reducing GHG emissions. He said global sustainability cannot be contemplated without binding emissions commitments and enhanced and predictable financing for the most vulnerable countries. He also supported incorporating into the agenda: the full functioning of the Green Climate Fund; Sustainable Energy for All; the targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Strategic Plan 2011-2020; and desertification, land degradation and drought.

Ecuador, also for Bolivia and Argentina, said governments must address the causes of climate change in the SDGs. He said the challenge is to define criteria so that all countries can contribute to reducing GHG emissions in the framework of CBDR, bearing in mind that developing countries’ priority is to eliminate poverty. He also suggested that the topic of resilience provides an opportunity for a cross-cutting goal on climate change and its impacts on development.

The Maldives said his country and other low-lying islands may not survive to see another century given the realities of climate change. Insisting that sustainability, climate change and development cannot be seen in isolation from each other, he called on delegates not to miss the “historic chance” of the post-2015 development agenda to send a signal to the entire UN system on the importance of addressing climate change.

Spain, also for Turkey and Italy, said climate change has much greater impacts on the poorest and most vulnerable. He said the post-2015 development agenda is a unique opportunity to change focus, and that there must be a decided effort to change emissions while responding to causes of poverty.

Kiribati said the single most pressing challenge facing her country is climate change. She quoted her President, asking “How can we meaningfully speak of SDGs, if the very survival of our people is at stake?” She implored delegates to understand the uncertain future, insecurity and grave anxiety that her people are facing today, given that climate change is already happening.

Guatemala, also for Colombia, asked how to ensure that the conversations in the OWG and the UNFCCC are complementary. She said climate change should be a cross-cutting issue through many of the SDGs.

Japan said the UNFCCC negotiation process is fragile and the SDGs should not interfere. He said that, in the SDGs, climate change should be mainstreamed via associated thematic goals. DRR should be clearly positioned in the SDGs since it is related to poverty, gender, water, cities, peace and security, and governance, he added, but expressed concern about how to collect data in developing countries and how to elaborate a target.

Bangladesh said DRR and climate change should be part of a transformative shift to more resilient development, and the current development model is not climate sensitive. He said that, although the UNFCCC has adopted the Cancun Adaptation Framework, technology mechanisms and the Green Climate Fund, their effectiveness is yet to be seen on the ground. He added that ambitious goals and targets on climate change and DRR can inspire the UNFCCC negotiations and a strong climate agreement and the post-2015 DRR Framework can support the SDGs.

Iran said the OWG should work on how to implement the goals and targets that have been agreed in the existing specialized frameworks, and integrate climate change with other issues. He stressed the importance of devising a mechanism to assess targets on climate change and DRR.

The Russian Federation cautioned against ruling out stand-alone goals or reflecting climate in specific targets and indicators under other goals, such as on energy, environmental protection and infrastructure development. He said proposals to link climate change and DRR with international peace and security and human rights are counterproductive.

New Zealand said the week’s discussions have reinforced the inter-relationships among the issues and most of the week’s topics could be considered cross-cutting, such as urbanization, transport and SCP. One criterion to determine whether an issue warrants a stand-alone goal, she said, could be “whether its achievement would significantly contribute to global sustainable development by 2030.” She said New Zealand is attracted to Colombia’s “integrating approach,” and it deserves further

consideration. On DRR, she suggested treating it as cross-cutting, and called for reducing not just current levels of risk but also minimizing the build-up of new risks.

Ethiopia said her country faces a number of risks from inaction on climate change, including increased droughts and floods, which damage growth and make communities more vulnerable. She suggested that climate change be addressed in the SDG framework by ensuring that each goal is “climate-proof.” Climate change is multi-dimensional and DRR is cross-cutting, she said, stressing that a multi-stakeholder approach is needed.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said what is missing from international efforts on DRR and climate change is not rhetoric, but action. He suggested that the targets and goals should: address the full range of a disaster’s impacts, including displacement and job loss; ensure universal access to and disaster resilience of infrastructure and services; include a focus on small- and medium-scale disasters; and entail bold and ambitious commitments to limit emissions.

NGOs said DRR is needed, but is not a full solution itself, as a change in consumption patterns is a more pressing issue.

Local Authorities called for mobilizing local players to address climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience activities, especially since 70% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions come from cities. He agreed that climate change should be a cross-cutting issue across goals, especially those related to energy and food security.

Business and Industry said business is committed to building on already significant actions through sharing expertise and good practices, and to being a partner in climate solutions as an investor, innovator and jobs provider.

The Scientific and Technological Community welcomed the HLP’s proposed target to improve resilience and reduce deaths from disasters. He called for risk and resilience indicators that capture the disproportionate impact of disasters on poor people and can be applied from local to global scales, across sectors. He suggested a “capstone” goal on avoiding risks from natural hazards, and suggested that parallel indicator systems could help hold this goal to account.

Trade Unions said there can be no social or economic development without fulfilling the polluter-pays principle, and expressed concern about some governments’ unwillingness to act. She said the SDG agenda must be “climate-proofed” by assessing each target and indicator for climate implications, for example, a green jobs target under a goal on decent work.

Women proposed including concrete, measurable goals, targets and indicators that are catalysts of high ambition on climate change, and the implementation of decisions that are safe, sustainable and address gender safeguards.

Children and Youth suggested a target on resilience education, such as on emergency response, preventive local response protocol, and planning and zoning guidelines that minimize destruction. She said a state’s failure to adhere to UNFCCC commitments should be considered a crime against humanity.

Indigenous Peoples said human rights-based and ecosystem approaches should be integral in the SDG framework. She noted that her Major Group soon will propose targets and indicators, including on land tenure rights of indigenous and local communities.

### CO-CHAIRS’ SUMMARY

On Friday afternoon, Co-Chair Kőrösi offered summarizing remarks, saying that as the OWG approaches its next phase of work, specific proposals have become sharper and more concrete. Most important, he said, is the prevailing wisdom that the issues are closely interlinked and require a systemic approach. On cities and human settlements, he recognized the calls for an urban SDG, although he said this proposal does not yet have consensus. He recalled that cities are large consumers of energy and materials, and concentrate pollution and waste. Balanced territorial development is important, he stressed, saying that people, knowledge, income and services flow between urban and rural areas in both directions. He highlighted that the importance of including sustainable transportation in the SDGs was recognized, specifically through: avoiding unnecessary transport; promoting more effective and mass modes of transport; and improving the environmental performance of existing transport modes.

On SCP, Kőrösi highlighted the need for decoupling resource use from economic growth using a mix of policies and life-cycle analysis to address consumption and production. Governments advocated for differentiated SCP targets between developed and developing countries, and contributing to the trust fund of the 10YFP on SCP. Chemicals, it was noted, are most harmful to the poor and vulnerable, and developing countries often lack the capacity to properly manage them. He said climate change and disasters will put development gains at risk and called them cross-cutting issues for the entire agenda. He repeated delegations’ calls to respect the negotiating role of the UNFCCC. Kőrösi highlighted multiple calls for reflecting CBDR in the agenda, while recognizing that some governments think the concept has evolved over time. As the intensity of and vulnerability to disasters will only increase, he recalled the need to consider three dimensions of risk mitigation: prevention; reduction; and fostering resilience.

Guatemala said the Co-Chairs’ summary needs to avoid issues that have already been addressed in the UNFCCC, particularly vulnerability. She added that, while some countries were not convinced of the need for a stand-alone goal on SCP, others did advocate for one.

Pakistan reminded the Co-Chairs that his troika had called for a sustainable infrastructure development goal, where linkages between urban and rural development and transport could be incorporated.

On climate change, both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia noted the sensitivity of this issue and flagged the many clear statements to avoid a climate change goal. Pakistan also said the summary on climate change does not capture CBDR.

Sweden noted that, on chemicals and wastes, there are strong inter-linkages between chemicals management and SCP, and health and access to clean water, which need to be recognized.

Mexico expressed its commitment to the chemicals issue. He also said three delegations had raised gender and gender equality during the discussion.

The UK, also for the Netherlands and Australia, recalled suggestions for cities to be handled at the target level. On climate change, he underlined suggestions for a target on two-degree warming.



India said, *inter alia*: the SCP section should capture the applicability of CBDR; the document should reflect specific proposals made on energy consumption in developed countries and food waste at the consumption level; on climate change, there was a “chorus of support” not to have a stand-alone goal; the two-degrees goal should not be taken out of context and “artificially applied”; and the SDGs can have an impact on climate change by handling the technology transfer issue.

The Russian Federation recalled that his and other delegations had raised the importance of global road safety for the sustainable transport agenda.

Trinidad and Tobago: said the cities and transport section should reflect the need for knowledge-sharing and technology transfer; recalled the importance of implementation for climate change and DRR; and reminded the Group that the UNFCCC does not call for “two degree warming,” but less than that.

Venezuela said the discussion on the division between the countryside and cities should be included.

Brazil said much of its country’s position was not included, but he recognized that the summary was the responsibility of the Co-Chairs, as the group was not yet at a text-drafting stage.

Körösi asked delegates to submit suggestions in writing to the Secretariat by 17 January.

**DISCUSSION ON THE WAY FORWARD**

Co-Chair Kamau presented a series of options for the next phase of the OWG’s work, which is to devise a set of SDGs and targets. He said that, after OWG-8 in February, the Co-Chairs will “pool together” an overall summary document of the 11-month-long stock-taking process. Then the Group will have to change gears from stocktaking to a consultative process.

In preparation for the negotiating stage, he offered delegates two options of Co-Chair inputs. Option A would be a provisional list of SDGs and their targets, synthesizing proposals that have been made. Option B is a “looser,” text-based document that would cover the main trends of discussion, conceptual ideas and potential outcomes. Kamau also said a third option would be that the Co-Chairs would prepare nothing and leave it up to the membership to collectively prepare something for the Group to look at on 3 March. Kamau also said the Co-Chairs can compile criteria, based on the Rio+20 outcome and principles, for determining what SDGs are and differentiating goals from targets.

Governments agreed to let the Co-Chairs take the lead, but had differing opinions on the two options. The UK, also for the Netherlands and Australia, said he wants to see this open, transparent and inclusive process continue. He supported the proposal for an initial, inclusive list of SDGs and associated targets. France, also for Switzerland and Germany, also favored the development of a complete list of targets and possible goals to be presented before the March negotiating session. The US also supported Option A, but cautioned against an abstract conversation on criteria or parameters, preferring to discuss them in the context of specific issues. She also suggested that the Co-Chairs should take an inclusive approach to the initial stock-taking paper and not take for granted anything that may already seem to have been agreed in the Group. Italy (also for Spain and Turkey), Colombia, Japan, Peru (also for Mexico), Slovenia (also for Montenegro), and Croatia (also for Bulgaria) supported Option A.

Brazil, also for Nicaragua, supported Option B, saying that jumping from “listening mode” to a concrete list of SDGs devised by only a few hands is a big leap. He said the Group should not discuss targets until it knows how the goals will be framed. A number of delegations, including Saudi Arabia, Cyprus (also for Singapore and the United Arab Emirates), Venezuela, Egypt and Morocco, supported Brazil.

Sweden suggested something in between, “the Swedish way,” which would be “not too directive and not too loose.” Denmark, also for Norway and Ireland, requested a report with a long list of possible goals.

Argentina, supported by Zimbabwe, proposed holding an informal, intersessional meeting to further discuss the options. India, also for Pakistan and Sri Lanka, supported the Co-Chairs’ leadership but said they needed time to reflect on the options and consult with their capitals. He suggested waiting until OWG-8 to take a decision.

Kamau responded that they would hold informal consultations before OWG-8. Colombia and Guatemala took issue with this proposal, saying that it will be difficult for representatives from capitals to attend. Kamau said the meeting will be informal, and that an official decision will be taken at OWG-8. He gavelled the meeting to a close at 6:40 pm.

**A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF OWG-7**

During a week in New York where the weather included a bit of everything—snow, sleet, ice, rain, fog and dazzling sunshine—and temperatures ranged from -15 to +13°C, delegates to the seventh session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals braved the elements—both outside and inside United Nations Headquarters—to continue their stocktaking process. In a reflection of the changing weather in New York, discussions on the three distinct, but inter-related, issues on OWG-7’s agenda also ranged in temperature as government delegates and Major Groups advocated for those items viewed as priorities. Not only are these three clusters of issues—sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable transport; sustainable consumption and production (including chemicals and wastes); and climate change and disaster risk reduction—of prime importance to the sustainable development agenda, they also illustrate one of the major challenges inherent in the OWG process: how do you design goals that will be universally applicable to all countries (“universality”), while keeping the goals and targets easy to communicate and limited in number? This brief analysis will examine this challenge through the lens of OWG-7.

**THE FOG OF UNIVERSALITY**

The notion of “universality” is one element that will make the SDGs different from the MDGs. Simply put, the MDGs were about actions by the South financed by the North. However, the framework for the SDGs in various proposals is also about actions in the North benefiting the South. This implies that developed countries need to make changes in their own countries, not just pay for changes in developing countries. So, how can the SDGs be universal in nature and, at the same time, take into account different national realities? Governments have expressed different ways to reconcile these two needs. Some delegates support a goal framework that applies to developing and developed nations alike, with each goal having universal

responsibility and universal application. Others, meanwhile, have favored an agenda that distinguishes between groups of countries, setting universal participation in the context of national circumstances.

A discussion note by Paula Caballero, Peter Hazlewood and Kitty van der Heijden, informally distributed to participants during the OWG process, outlines three mutually supportive interpretations of universality:

- Local/national challenges have applicability not just in developing but also in developed countries (development goals today have universal relevance);
- Local/national challenges in LDCs, low and middle-income countries may require support from high income countries;
- Global challenges, like climate change, require global solutions.

Incorporating such approaches into the SDG framework, they argue, would mean that it should be: globally agreed; reflective of common aspirations of all countries; and relevant for all countries, based on universal responsibility. But, as the discussions at OWG-7 illustrated, universality in the context of an intergovernmental process cannot be discussed without the complementary notion of “differentiation,” recognizing that all UN Member States are sovereign and are at different stages of development—and even that some may have a greater “historical responsibility” than others for the current state of affairs and for resourcing the needed solutions.

### **CITIES IN THE EYE OF THE STORM**

OWG-7’s discussions on sustainable cities and human settlements and sustainable transport illustrated the first point above that local challenges have applicability in both developed and developing countries, and thus imply universality. At the same time, the challenges of both sustainable cities and sustainable transport, especially in LDCs, low- and middle-income countries will require continued support from high income countries.

Along these lines, all countries recognized the central role that urban areas have in sustainable development. However, it was also clear that different countries have different priorities when it comes to urban areas, which leads to a challenge in formulating a universal urban goal. Some, including Colombia, have advocated for a universal goal with differentiated targets and indicators. Thereby, each country can determine which targets and indicators are relevant according to national and local circumstances. For example, some, including the G-77/China and the EU, stressed the need to focus on the one billion people living in slums, urban poverty and rising inequality in cities. Others stressed the importance of limiting the transformation of public spaces into private spaces; improving energy efficiency; reducing waste; and supporting public, non-motorized forms of transportation.

As an alternative to a stand-alone goal, some governments from different regions suggested including urban and rural targets across other goals, which is another way of grappling with the universality challenge. This was clearly illustrated as delegates noted that urban sustainability is closely inter-linked with climate change, natural disasters, biodiversity, chemicals and waste, transport, agriculture, food security, land use and deforestation. In addition, as the Co-Chairs’ summary noted, urbanization also needs to be seen as a process involving urban-rural flows of people, goods and services. However, while the inter-linkages between urbanization and transport are apparent, there are still

concerns about “splicing” urban and transit issues under other goals. Some argued that if these issues are incorporated as targets under other goals, they may lose synergies, visibility, fail to attract finance and investment, and fail to send a message of the importance of urban and transit issues.

### **A HEATED EXCHANGE ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION**

It was no surprise that the discussion on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) seemed to heat up quickly. As some have said, this may be the topic that points most bluntly to the need to change our daily habits, in order to fulfill other goals. As Colombia and Guatemala pointed out on Wednesday, SCP invites the question, what do we understand as prosperity?

With SCP historically viewed as a “differentiated” task, primarily for developed countries, some governments now see changes to unsustainable patterns of consumption and production as a universal necessity for all countries. Along these lines, keynote speakers highlighted ways for developing countries to participate in the SCP agenda, and the benefits of doing so, but some delegates thought that this seemed imbalanced. Pakistan criticized Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker’s presentation on developing countries’ possibilities for decoupling economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation, and implied that this view did not account for “common but differentiated responsibilities” (CBDR). Similarly, Mexico recalled that at the 1992 Earth Summit, developed countries were asked to take the lead to change unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and noted that “I don’t think we have seen that kind of change; now we find ourselves hearing that developing countries can do this.”

Brazil wondered how a developing country could justify decoupling because the resource intensity of GDP growth must also be considered in terms of poverty reduction. As some speakers have noted, finding ways to grow economically without overtaxing the environment is both a very specific set of tasks, and broadly synonymous with sustainable development. While it is possible to see SCP as a diffuse concept that can be reflected as a target in a range of other goals—an approach highlighted by Canada/ US/Israel—other OWG members cautioned that that diffusion could take away its shape and power as a potential goal. Many developing country governments as well as the Women’s Major Group called on developed countries to “take the lead” on SCP. Others, including China, indicated that developed countries will also need to assist developing countries with implementing SCP to achieve national sustainable development goals.

What would this mean in practice? If the South believes the North has all the responsibility in this area and needs to take the lead, how can there be universal goals and targets? Indeed, the size of the North-South divide on this issue presents a challenge to incorporating SCP in the goals, and to the universality of the SDG agenda overall.

### **THE CLIMATE IS CHANGING**

Climate change, which Kiribati referred to as “the most universal issue facing us today,” has proven to be a challenging subject in the OWG. Although speakers have mentioned it at every OWG meeting thus far, in relation to nearly every other issue area, ongoing UNFCCC negotiations on a post-Kyoto agreement, which also must conclude in 2015, make many

delegations wary of “re-negotiating” climate in the SDG context. To prevent this, some delegations proposed that the universal and cross-cutting nature of climate change means that climate change should be reflected across the SDGs through specific targets and indicators, rather than in its own stand-alone goal. For example, climate targets could exist under specific goals on energy, health, SCP, transport, cities, education, water, etc., allowing for a reflection of the inter-linkages between climate and all other global issues.

Other delegations wanted to ensure that UNFCCC-agreed principles of CBDR and loss and damage, as well as the need for developed countries to fulfill past commitments for mitigation and adaptation financing, remain central to the discussion. Developing countries, and SIDS in particular, are resolute that these principles be included in the SDGs, with many even hoping that the SDGs might influence the negotiation of the 2015 climate agreement. Others are wary to have a full-fledged climate debate in the OWG, worried that gains on these principles in the UNFCCC negotiations could be eroded.

What bearing these demands will have on the universality of the agenda is yet to be resolved, but it is clear that some countries will not allow “universal” to mean “identical” with regard to climate change in the SDGs. As Nicaragua stressed, “climate change is universal in scope, but differentiated in responsibility.”

### **WILL THE SUN COME OUT TOMORROW?**

As the number of issues under consideration for stand-alone and/or cross-cutting SDGs has proliferated over the past year, at the same time, issue inter-linkages have become more concrete. The more issues that can be satisfactorily incorporated as cross-cutting rather than stand-alone goals, the more possible it will be to narrow down the approximately 327 proposed goals so they are indeed “limited in number.” In fact, many OWG-7 delegates emphasized that they do not want stand-alone goals on urbanization, transport, climate change, SCP or disaster risk reduction. These discussions also highlighted the challenges of true universality, particularly by the constant references to CBDR in the context of SCP and climate change.

However, the real challenge with universality may be something even less well understood: getting beyond a focus on the world’s poor and poverty eradication to also account for the emerging global middle class. As the number of the very poor falls and the consumer base grows, the earth’s resources will be more taxed than ever, according to experts and delegates alike. Perhaps, therefore, a truly universal agenda will be one that requires action from all countries on all goals, taking local, national and regional realities into account through differentiated targets and indicators.

The final stocktaking meeting of the OWG will take place in February. Then the difficult work will begin to elaborate universal SDGs that are also concise, and easy to communicate—two other requirements of the Rio+20 outcome document that called for the development of SDGs in the first place. As Co-Chair Kamau noted on Friday, the stock-taking process has been “a long journey, but a worthy one.” The OWG-7 discussion about the way forward, however, illustrated that there may still be changing weather ahead, with delegations uneasy about writing out a potential list of goals and targets at this point. After nearly 10 months, the journey may have only just begun.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**Global Meeting on Data and Accountability:** This meeting is focused on data and accountability in the new development framework, building on the outcomes of the first phase of the UN Development Group’s consultations on post-2015 development priorities. The UN Development Programme will convene the event, which will feed into the intergovernmental and broader discussions on sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda. **dates:** 29-31 January 2014 **location:** New York, New York, US **www:** <https://one.unteamworks.org/node/417081>

**Eighth Session of the OWG on SDGs:** OWG 8 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](mailto:dsd@un.org) **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1680>

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

**Second Set of OWG Meetings:** At the conclusion of OWG-7, the Co-Chairs announced that the Group would meet formally on the following dates in 2014: 3-5 March, 31 March - 4 April, 5-9 May, 16-20 June and 14-18 July. **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** [dsd@un.org](mailto:dsd@un.org) **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

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

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

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



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

**UNGA Thematic Debate: Role of partnerships and their contributions to the post-2015 development agenda:**

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

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

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

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

**UNGA High-level Event: Contributions of South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation and information and communication technologies for development to the post-2015 development agenda:** This event is part of a series convened by the President of the UN General Assembly under the theme, “The post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” The objective is to generate concrete contributions to the formulation of the SDGs. **dates:** 20-21 May 2014 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office of President of the General Assembly **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/68schedule.shtml>

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

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

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

**GLOSSARY**

10YFP	10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBDR	Common but differentiated responsibilities
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
GDP	Gross domestic product
GHG	Greenhouse gas
HLP	UN High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
ICT	Information and communications technology
LDCs	Least developed countries
LLDCs	Land-locked developing countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OWG	Open Working Group
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small island developing states
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly