

Bolivia, speaking on behalf of G77 said at the outset that inequality is a major global trend that should be reversed. They called for a specific goal on reducing inequalities. There is a need for policies of inclusive economic growth. Persistent social inequalities that stopped women benefitting from development have been addressed in paragraphs 236-241 of the Rio+20 Outcome Document *The Future We Want*. MDG 3 has not been sufficiently broad to deal with challenges. G77 urges that there be nationally “determined targets” for promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment for the better inclusion of women and girls.

Andris Peilbalgs for the European Union referred to income and wealth disparities that affect people in both high and low income countries. The failure to address inequalities is holding back progress. He referred to human rights, good governance and rule of law and said that we should reflect on leaving no one behind. There was a need to promote inclusive economic growth and social protection should be seen as an investment in human development. He supported a strong focus on the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality. He supported women’s and girls’ economic and social empowerment as being central, and the importance of addressing the root causes of violence. We should stop FGM and promote women’s participation in decision-making. While his statement was generally strong, he didn’t call for a stand-alone gender goal. Instead he said that gender equality should be considered as a priority.

Ireland, also on behalf of Denmark and Norway said that poor people are less able to access economic opportunity. The new post-2015 framework must integrate inequalities better across the framework. Gender based inequalities are most pervasive across world and in the family. He referred specifically to inequity of women small farmers. Gender equity should include renewed focus on rights of women and girls. We will need targets and indicators that include differentiation on the poorest. MDG 3 has been a powerful tool for advocacy, but is weaker on the needs of women. There has been a poor performance on MDG5 that addresses maternal mortality and access to reproductive health, which denied women’s basic human rights. Sexual and reproductive health and rights were an integral part of the gender equality agenda. He referred specifically to post-abortion care, post-natal attendance and prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. Women should be able to make independent decisions on family planning. He called for an ambitious goal on gender equality, as well as across other goals. The new framework should include gender disaggregated targets and indicators, as well as addressing gender-based violence. There is a need to ensure that global commitments are translated into concrete decisions as to what we finance. Supporting women’s leadership and prevention of violence against women are critical investments.

Trinidad and Tobago, speaking on behalf of the 14 member states of Caricom, aligned its statement with that of the G77. They thanked the TST for the briefing note. Although some progress had been made, Caricom share the view that the SDGs should build on the MDGs. They had adopted people-centred development a long time ago. The SDGs should reflect the cross-cutting factors that lead to inequalities. There is a need for a more enabling environment and an effective monitoring mechanism. The needs of the most vulnerable must be

adequately considered, including women. They continue to support mainstreaming of gender equality and are open to the possibility of a stand-alone goal. The elimination of violence against women; equal access to education; women's empowerment; reducing disproportion of unpaid work; access to primary health care, maternal health and sexual and reproductive health should be addressed. Goals and targets should be properly measurable. They acknowledged the importance of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform for Action and the ICPD Programme of Action but cautioned against any new rights as part of the process going forward.

Benin, and speaking on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), also aligned their statement with that of the G77. Forty-seven percent of populations in LDCs are still living in extreme poverty and there are inequalities in human development in their territories, eg lack of access to health and education facilities in rural areas. High unemployment is a problem among youth with many leaving for opportunities elsewhere and not returning. Inequalities should be addressed systematically. They commend the HLP report to leave no one behind. The projection going forward is that the largest proportion of poor will live in LDCs. He commended recommendations of the TST paper for addressing inequalities in post-2015. The LDCs attach high importance to gender equality and women's empowerment, as recognized in the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. It highlights the importance of education as being central to achievement of poverty eradication. Istanbul sets out concrete actions. When women can participate in household economies they earn more respect from their families. This should be a precursor of greater empowerment of women as a whole and should be prioritized. MDG 3, as a stand-alone goal on gender equality must be carried forward. Rio+20 clearly recognized the importance of gender equality and also as a cross-cutting theme. Targets and indicators should be included on violence against women, economic and social empowerment and leadership of women in decision-making. A gender equality goal should be transformative and also ensure inclusion of gender sensitive targets in other areas.

Guinea and speaking on behalf of the African Group said that addressing inequalities should not be limited to the national context. The richest one percent of the population control 40 percent of global assets. The African group supports a framework that will incorporate targets and indicators on global income inequalities in trade investment, technology transfer, debt relief and global governance. The majority of African women live in rural areas and there is an urgent need to focus on empowerment of rural women and their involvement in decision-making. Violence is a most de-humanizing manifestation of discrimination and there is a need to address violence against women and girls. CEDAW guides states in addressing legal violence against women. Whether there is a stand-alone goal or not, gender equality and women's empowerment should be mainstreamed throughout the SDGs.

Kuwait, and on behalf of Gulf countries supported statement of G77 are striving to implement and achieve the post-2015 goals to empower women and

lift obstacles to their enjoyment of rights at all levels. There is a commitment to gender equality, including mainstreaming, although they have not always attained the goals that they have set ourselves. They hope to learn lessons to consider cultural ethnic specificities etc. He referred to the gender-based violence convention and the UN General Assembly resolution on gender equality. There is a need to guarantee rights of all groups and to implement the Beijing Platform for Action in reference to the post-2015 development agenda. The Gulf countries seek to expand female participation in partnership with men in access to education, equal opportunities and medical services and against discrimination in the work place. Legislation has been changed to achieve social justice in line with Islamic principles.

Indonesia, and on behalf of China and Kazakhstan, align with G77 stating that there are inequalities between countries, which are a key concern that the international community needs to address. They support a stand-alone goal on gender equality. Countries should integrate gender equality into their programmes etc. Priorities include protection for women in politics, economy, health, education, social protection and family life.

United Kingdom, and on behalf of the Netherlands and Australia, stressed the need to focus on tackling inequalities, including related to gender, income, ethnic minority and disability. There is a need to ensure that marginalized and vulnerable groups benefit, including through access to employment and services. The use of modern methods of contraception is lowest among poor women in developing countries. The private sector and NGOs have an important role to play. It will not be possible to eradicate poverty without gender equality and women's empowerment and the SDGs need to strengthen commitment from MDGs on gender equality. The SDGs should reflect the work of CEDAW and the Commission on the Status of Women. Eliminating violence against women and child marriage should be addressed as well as women's empowerment and inclusion of women's voice, leadership and participation. They support a stand-alone gender goal that ensures sexual and reproductive health and rights and mainstreamed targets. The stand-alone gender goal and mainstreaming gender should ensure that no-one is left behind.

Slovenia, and on behalf of Montenegro aligned with the EU statement, while highlighting the importance of addressing those areas that are not well addressed in the MDGs. They emphasize a human rights-based approach to development, proving accountability and equity as well as justice, equality, good governance, democracy and the rule of law. In focusing on gender inequality, equal participation in all areas of life is important and while gender equality is an objective in itself, it also has catalytic possibilities in improving the lives of all girls and women. They support a stand-alone goal on gender equality, in parallel with specific targets across other goals. They also referred specifically to equality with respect to reproductive health and rights.

Croatia, and on behalf of Bulgaria said that the post-2015 development agenda must address structural the barriers of MDGs, including women's empowerment. No person, regardless of his or her ethnicity, should be denied basic human

rights. Women and girls face wage gaps. Gender equality has an effect on good governance, but is an important end in itself. They strongly support a stand-alone goal, with a focus on violence against women, the right to education and women's economic empowerment. They support comprehensive mainstreaming across all the SDGs and are committed to engaging constructively.

Peru, and on behalf of Mexico stressed that this session provided an important possibility for addressing gender equality and that transforming approaches must be created to focus on mainstreaming a gender approach to public policies domestically and the enjoyment of human rights. Gender equality is a central matter in this perspective. For the effective inclusion and participation of women. The role of women in families and societies has brought about significant changes. Must advocate for a new development agenda. They called for the definition of gender equality as a crucial element of sustainable development that will influence and contribute to gender results. Specifically they referred to violence against women and basic health education services, as well as relevant human rights instruments. Efforts should be made to improve information, including through the availability of disaggregated data.

Spain, and on behalf of Italy and Turkey said that inequalities are in the opposite position to economic opportunity and trying to make technology part of the solution is a challenge. The agenda should include zero tolerance to all forms of violence against women and girls, which is one of the widest forms of discrimination. They support a stand-alone goal, which must envisage specific actions to move forward on the fulfillment of the economic, social and cultural rights for women, such as reproductive and sexual rights as well as the right to water, land and food. Women's and girls' control over their own bodies has been internationally recognized as a human right, the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the context of universal health coverage should also be strongly considered in the promotion, protection and fulfillment of all human rights and in the context of the full implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action and the ICPD Programme of Action.

Zambia, and speaking on behalf of the Southern African Group of Countries aligned its statement with that of the G77. Goals 4 and 5 remain a challenge in the region. This is an opportune time to define appropriate SDG goals. Gender-based violence is widespread and a major obstacle to achieving equality. It is about education, prevention and victim assistance. Sex trafficking and labour trafficking are also problems and measures are required that protect women. Progress on SDGs is an important platform. There is a need for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for all women in line with ICPD, the MDGs and relevant CSW agreed conclusions. Maternal health is critical to poverty reduction and SDGs.

Pakistan, and speaking on behalf of India and Sri Lanka aligned with the G77 statement. Inequality is startling and the following elements need to be addressed to tackle it: rules for trade and business accounting, the brain drain, and access to medicines and vaccines. Gender equality and women's empowerment should be at the centre of the discourse as women's inequality is a

cross cutting theme that impinges on economic development. Women continue to bear the brunt of poverty, disease etc. Gender equality should be a transformative stand-alone goal as well as mainstreamed. The SDG on gender equality will be a reincarnation on MDGs 3 and 5 as we now know what works and what doesn't. Gender parity in education and access to reproductive health care have fallen behind. Women should be the first beneficiaries for economic development. The future agenda should be about empowerment -- political participation, education, elimination of violence against women and equal pay for equal work. ICT access can be a game changer, including for rural women to bring about structural change across the world. He also referred to gender parity in sport, particularly in cricket, (which is a national sport in the countries in the troika).

Ecuador, and on behalf of Argentina and Bolivia referred to inequalities for women and girls, indigenous peoples, refugees, migrant workers, domestic workers and the disabled as being invisible in development agendas. They should have access to means of production, credit, food, and property to be able to participate in the economy. Spiritual poverty, which is transformed into machismo, should be eradicated and the prevalence of informal work and violence against women ended. They called for a stand-alone goal and mainstreaming of gender equality.

Switzerland, and on behalf of France and Germany said that inequalities constitute the major obstacle to sustainable development. The future framework should provide incentives for full and meaningful participation of disparate groups. Gender-based inequality is the most pervasive. Gender equality should be a universal priority and based on CEDAW. The new framework should build on MDGs, focusing on equal participation and leadership. He referred to four principles including promoting equal opportunities – women should gain full access to income generation; elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls; realization of women's and girls human rights – equal rights under the law, issues around minimum age of marriage; and sexual and reproductive health and rights, including access to comprehensive sexuality education, information and services and supplies, free of coercion. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are human rights and must also be addressed in the context of human rights.

Singapore, and on behalf of Cyprus and the United Arab Emirates said that inequalities should be tackled as they pose economic and environmental consequences. They would consider a stand-alone equality goal as well as mainstreaming gender equality into various goals and targets.

Nicaragua and on behalf of Brazil align with G77 statement, recognizing uneven progress between areas and countries. Concept of inequality has two dimensions macro-economic and also relating to access. Wealth can have a harmful impact on policy-making and the gap is widening between very rich and the poor. Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have shown that they have reduced inequality. Account should be taken of inequalities between countries. An integrated approach is required.

The gender issues brief shows gender inequality is one of the most persistent, exacerbated by other inequalities. They referred to LGBT issues and the need to address structural causes of gender inequality, as women can be the drivers for sustainable development. While there is resilience among women, a third suffer from gender-based violence. Women and girls do not have access to full formal education and their potential to participate hasn't been fully realized. They support addressing gender both as cross-cutting and as an autonomous issue. Experience of gender shows that there is a need for a multi-dimensional response. Gender equality contributes to addressing poverty and increasing women's participation can help to grow per capita income. Women play a key role in all moves for the eradication of poverty. They referred to the relationship between gender equality and deforestation. Priority areas include respect for gender equality, especially including LGBT and eradication of poverty as a necessary step. The post MDG agenda should have a focus on gender.

Vietnam, and on behalf of Bhutan and Thailand associated themselves with G77 position. They underlined the need to address inequalities. It is important to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Educated and productive mothers are likely to bring up healthy and productive children. Special attention should be paid to violence. The rule of law is an enabler for gender equality and peace and stability are important.

Colombia, and on behalf of Guatemala, said that gender equality is fundamental to an inclusiveness agenda. There should be a dedicated goal but it has to be mainstreamed and targeted in education, health etc. These would also contribute to a goal on gender.

Nepal said that inequalities should be approached in a holistic manner. They are committed to gender equality and the enjoyment of human rights. Gender equality and women's rights must remain a major goal. The elimination of violence should be an important target in 'any such goal', which should include the role of men. It was important to enhance women's empowerment and mobilize men and boys on violence against women.

Bangladesh said that inequalities should be addressed in post-2015 transformative shift, including in health, education, food security and employment. Gender inequality is the most pervasive form of inequality around the world and progress on gender equality is fundamental. Transformative changes are needed in social norms. Progress has been uneven among countries and within countries. Many reports have proposed a stand-alone goal – they will look at it positively. Targets can make progress if equal of opportunity, particularly in political process, access to credit, extending health care. Those who blame MDGs for shortcomings should realize that there is no magic bullet to secure gender. They suggest that gender equality be included in a stand-alone goal and mainstreamed.

Egypt is against focusing on one dimension of inequality at a time. Gender should consider progress in health, education and political participation. Inequalities

still exist and this goal should include violence. Gender perspective should be mainstreamed across all goals. The principle of shared parental responsibility should be included and the focus should be on what can bring about consensus. Measures to ensure equal opportunities in Egypt are enshrined in the recently amended constitution.

Peru and on behalf of Mexico said we must focus on the cycle of life and on household and family. SDGs should address inequalities in an integral way, while enhancing visibility and assessing inequalities. The data revolution should lead to disaggregated data. New development objectives should include targets and indicators that reflect inequalities, for example, in wages. There is a need to strengthen infrastructure of countries and ensure national capacities are taken into account. There should be inclusive development and economic growth and a focus on being inclusive in order to grow.

Korea proposed three targets on gender equality – violence against women; enhancing part in economic development; and closing income gap and political participation.

Japan said that essential elements for sustain development included freedom from violence and participation in decision-making. They support a stand-alone goal and to mainstream gender.

Poland, and on behalf of Romania, promote the vision of the High Level Panel to leave no one behind. They support a self-standing goal on equality. There is a need also to take into account targets and data. A stand-alone goal should monitor progress and gaps and ending violence against women and girls regardless of age and ability; access to justice. Women's voice should be heard and women should participate in decision-making with access to decent work and assets such as credit and access to education. Gender specific targets should be integrated across other goals. Sex disaggregated data is necessary. Achieving gender equality should also be a challenge for men and boys.

Uruguay said that women constitute one of demographic groups that experience greatest inequality. The new agenda should include the empowerment of women. It can only be addressed as a priority area. Women must have equal conditions and unpaid work should be recognized. Sexual and reproductive health and rights should be recognized with access to sexual and reproductive health services using a comprehensive approach. Sexuality education and family planning services should be available together with safe services for abortion within a legal framework. The equality and autonomy of women must be recognized and violence against women addressed in the workplace and in schools. They will support SDGs that promote the human rights of women and gender equality must be included in a cross cutting way as well as specifically. Gender equality and women's empowerment are priority areas.

Solomon Islands, and on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States and Timor Leste said that gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment should be addressed in an integrated and balanced manner. They

referred as a target to economic and technological development and empowerment of women, rural women and addressing the causes of social inequality eg employment generation, building resilience. A second target should address violence against women and girls. Addressing adverse impact of climate change should be included as a cross-cutting issue.

Sweden said that gender equality is a goal in itself and a pre-condition for sustainable development. There was solid and increasing support for a stand-alone goal, as well as mainstreaming. Sweden supports this dual approach. There is a need to address men and boys. They called for five target areas: women's economic empowerment including access to land and equal opportunities in the labour market with affordable child and parental care and better indicators especially for unpaid work; women in decision-making processes; security and all forms of gender-based violence including functioning judicial systems and prevention; literacy at all levels particularly transfer to secondary level; access to sexual and reproductive health services with sexual and reproductive health and rights included to increase life expectancy and the control of women over their own bodies. They also called for sex-disaggregated data.

Maldives said that there was a need to set clear targets with gender equality as a cross-cutting issue. They also called for a stand-alone goal as part of broader context of sustainable development. The MDGs had been weak on the path for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Cuba spoke about maternal mortality and adolescent saying that maternal mortality is the main cause of death of girls in this age group. They also referred to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including adolescent access to comprehensive sexuality education. Pending matters from the ICPD Programme of Action should be included in the goals to follow with specific indicators. Comprehensive sexuality education helps adolescents to develop and be part of all societies and in the 21st century violation of rights of women is unacceptable. There is a need to change the status of women, which also means changing the status of men. We cannot advance using isolated initiatives and cannot speak about family responsibilities in the abstract. They would like to see a reference to Montevideo Consensus.

Israel and on behalf of the United States asked how to apply the lessons learned from MDGs and to ensure no one is left behind. They stressed the importance of empowerment including through education and affordable health services. They could not imagine a post-2015 agenda without a stand-alone goal on gender equality. It should include early, child and forced marriage and violence against women. Gender should also be integrated into the other development goals, linked protecting HR of all women and control over matters of sexuality, including access to sexual and reproductive health. Women should have control over their own reproduction including the number and spacing of children. Adolescents should have access to comprehensive sexuality education. Education is important in promoting gender equality. It is necessary to look at the needs of women in rural areas and they stressed the importance of disaggregated data. They welcomed the joint statement to be made by Argentina.

Estonia aligned with European Union statement. Gender equality and women's empowerment are affirmed in the framework of Rio+20. They called for the UN Women stand-alone goal on gender equality. Violence against women and girls must be stopped. Women should have equal access to resources and opportunities, control over land, access to ICT. One of the shortcomings of the MDGs was that not enough attention was paid to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The SDGs should correct this. This must be reflected in the final outcome of the OWG. Special attention should also be paid to governance. .

Palau called for a target on disaggregated data for all vulnerable groups. They agreed with a gender equality stand-alone goal, but when the areas of action are analyzed they should be based on human rights. Special reference was made to men and boys.

Liechtenstein supported a goal plus targets. There should be investment in adolescents and girls and men should be involved in furthering women's empowerment and gender equality. There is a need for a strong monitoring framework. The High Level Political Forum will play a central role in reviewing the SDGs

Rwanda said that the Post-2015 should have a specific target geared towards gender equality. It should ensure that girls not denied education, as it is vital to eliminate discrimination in public life and to tackle violence against women. Development should be a two-fold tool to advance women and eliminate discrimination.

Malta supported ending inequalities. They do not see gender equality as a problem only for developing economies. On sexual and reproductive health and rights, they said that the SDGs should reflect the needs of member states. Abortion is illegal in Malta and the goals should not undermine national legislation. They supported sexual and reproductive health and rights in accordance with ICPD, as the 'gold standard' Different viewpoints should be a framework and they referred to last year's agreed conclusions of CSW.

Iceland supported a stand-alone goal as well as mainstreaming gender. They also referred to the role of men and boys, women's equal political and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Holy See said that no human person should be marginalized or excluded. As far as women and girls are concerned he noted inequalities, including the following: sex selected abortion; girls infanticide; child marriage; forced sterilizations; marginalization of women; unequal work opportunities and pay. An approach was needed that would overcome barriers to equality. Societies and institutions should join together on an approach that allows women to make decisions, respecting their rights. There should be equal job and equal salaries and equal access to education.

