

United Nations
Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations (Declaration Session)
Ending Minutes of Drafting + Closing
February 20, 2015
5:00 – 6:00 PM

General Notes:

- I walked in during the ending minutes of drafting and was able to get the last couple of speakers.
- Many of the points were repetitive and were mostly regarding semantics of the document put out by the Co-Facilitators (Ambassadors from the Permanent Missions of Kenya and Ireland, respectively).
- The final conclusion is that this document would serve as a blueprint for the discussions in March. The document has no significance, but will be put up on the SDG website for the purposes of posterity.
- The rest of this document will be categorized according to speaker and makes reference to specific paragraphs as pointed out by those speakers.
- The People's Republic of China and South Africa spoke on behalf of the G77, while Mozambique spoke on behalf of the African group. Many speakers mentioned that they were aligned with what was said by these speakers earlier.
- Some speakers specified the need to highlight the achievements made at Rio in this document while others thought that it might be unnecessary.
- Many Latin American countries were called on, and in order. This was just an interesting observation to note, and especially because of the support that they provided each other.

Panama

The speaker from Panama felt that while all delegations had made good progress on the Declaration document, they are now at a stage where they should be able to fine-tune the text to answer questions regarding effective, actionable pieces. She highlighted that this needs to be a document for the people by the people, noting what Fiji said earlier about needing to speak for all 7 billion people on the planet. As such, the final paragraph in the Declaration document should reflect the bottom-up contributions that have come with unprecedented civil society participation. In her eyes, the first paragraph is about each nation's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals—hereafter referred to as the SDGs—and should mention an agenda that not only provides opportunities, but also enables partnerships.

She suggested that Paragraphs 2 and 3 should mention the MDGs and the challenges that the SDGs are starting with. Paragraph 5 in her view should be the vision and should stand separately from subsequent paragraphs. Additionally, she believed that all 17 SDGs should be mentioned in a way that weaves one or two key words from each one into the text. She believed in linking national ownership and leadership to political will in Paragraph 9. Lastly, she stressed the need for women and girls to be able to see themselves in this document. The new title she suggested for the document is “Transforming our world: engaging locally and globally.”

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone's speaker emphasized the need for the declaration to affirm existing commitments such as the purposes and principles of the UN, equal rights and dignity of all people and nations,

improving standards of life, sustainability, right to development, the need to end extreme poverty as a global challenge, and the importance of freedom, peace, and security. He also stressed the need for a robust implementation review to ensure the success of SDGs. In his view, the declaration should have universal appeal, tackle economic and social inequality, and support diversity. Most importantly, the declaration should take care to address all natural disasters, including epidemics. *This is key coming from Sierra Leone, one of the countries worst affected by the recent Ebola outbreak. It is also important to note that Sierra Leone is struggling to recover from this outbreak due to its underdeveloped health infrastructure.*

Ecuador

Ecuador's speaker stressed the need for *inclusive* economic growth that is a) in harmony with nature and b) should be reflected in the first and sixth paragraphs of the Declaration documents. In this vein, he recommended that this body recognize the need to change unsustainable patterns of consumption and production by developed countries, meaning that the declaration should adopt all principles from Rio and recognize CDBR (common but differentiated responsibility). In paragraph 4, according to the speaker, we need to make sure that concepts of governance and rule of law can't be defended in a biased way. He highlighted the role of culture and emphasized the need to address groups that have not been mentioned in this working group. Ecuador credited Mexico, Peru, and the Philippines for bringing up populations such as migrant workers and indigenous peoples. He also suggested making a change to paragraph 9 to reflect that there are different ways to "live well."

El Salvador

El Salvador's speaker highlighted what Ecuador said about including the most vulnerable groups in the declaration and the need to keep it people-centered. Combatting poverty—as listed under Paragraph 7—and combatting inequality should be priorities. He also suggested that an extra paragraph regarding the principles that have inspired this document will be needed, with clear reference to CDBR. The declaration should also include other countries' contributions regarding climate change as well as the theme of resilience. El Salvador supports Ecuador's statement regarding inclusive economic growth.

Peru

Peru's speaker highlighted the six elements from the Secretary General's synthesis report as very valuable and echoed Panama's statement regarding the mentioning of all 17 SDGs and targets. He also stressed the need to mention the convergence of states over the divergence. Unfinished business regarding the MDGs should be included in the SDGs. Peru echoed Ecuador's sentiment that culture should be regarded as a catalyst and El Salvador's sentiment regarding the inclusion of resilience. Special mention of vulnerable population also occurred in the speaker's words. With respect to accountability, Peru felt that the guidelines outlined in Paragraph 13 weren't enough because it's a national process, and that the declaration should mention that accountability corresponds to a national plan with participation from all relevant stakeholders. On an international level, HLPF (high level political forum) should be used as a platform for strengthening partnerships for global development. Additionally, participation of civil society in this process needs to be addressed.

Colombia

Colombia's speaker stressed that the multidimensional nature of poverty should be mentioned. She also mentioned that the concept of CPE consumption and production patterns is key and must appear in the beginning paragraphs of the declaration as it did in the RIO document. She expressed

concern about the phrase “no targets will be considered met,” but the Colombian statistics institute is unsure about different groupings in compiling data. She also expressed concern regarding cost, and mentioned that the declaration should not include unimplementable words. Paragraph 12 should recognize the opportunity of building an international environment centered on development. Most importantly, she expressed the view that this working group needs to be coherent in their work with ECOSOC to ensure consistency within the UN.

Uruguay

Uruguay’s speaker expressed that it is essential that the declaration be action-oriented. It should accordingly reflect international commitment to poverty, inclusion, and involving all in environmental sustainability. On a preliminary basis, there are major important themes: health, education, transferring technology, capacity building, sustainable consumption and production, and discrimination, to name a few. Uruguay echoed the sentiments of Costa Rica and Chile in saying that Rio language should be used in Paragraph 9. She mentioned that human rights, specifically women’s and girls rights, should be stressed, emphasizing that women and girl’s rights should receive a standalone paragraph. While Paragraph 7 discusses vulnerable groups, Uruguay doesn’t believe that this is enough. Uruguay also endorsed Mexico, Costa Rica, and Chile in contemplating middle income countries and considerations of multidimensional poverty.

State of Palestine

Palestine had the shortest speech, mostly speaking of how one of the barriers to sustainable development in Palestine is the current Israeli occupation. The speaker also linked poverty and unemployment to this failing occupation.

Zambia

Zambia stressed the need to have a concise declaration that will inspire to action, that will take into account the needs and special challenges of countries in unique circumstances, hopefully highlighting this in Paragraph 15. The speaker from Zambia also stressed the importance of referring to previous UN conferences and documents such as Rio and Vienna. He was supportive of a transformative title, wanting to add “for development” at the end. He wanted the declaration to focus on eradicating poverty, enhancing economic growth and trade as drivers to success. Zambia highlighted the need to reflect the needs of children in its own national capacity. He also expressed that countries with special circumstances are better addressed in Vienna, therefore this declaration needs elaboration on the topic.

Venezuela

Venezuela emphasized that the declaration should also include social growth, as wellbeing and prosperity is also needed alongside economic growth in order to be effective and meaningful. Issues such as combating inequality and self-determination need to be strengthened. There needs to be more stress on CDBR according to Venezuela’s view. Additionally, south-south cooperation should be viewed as equal to north-south cooperation. Lastly, Venezuela wanted to recognize that there are different tools for each country to achieve sustainable development.

Algeria

According to Algeria, the declaration should be ambitious, action-oriented, and should reaffirm action objectives from RIO, such as poverty eradication and sustainable development. Lessons learned from MDGs should also be included. Furthermore, Paragraph 3 should mention drought and land degradation; the UNFCCC should assist in making sure this land is preserved. Paragraph 4 should be made more clear with respect to self-determination and CDBR. Paragraph 5 should more clearly link growth to sustainable development. In this regard, Algeria was referring to those people who are living under foreign occupation and colonial domination. Paragraph 8, according to Algeria, should address countries with special circumstances. Additionally, Algeria stressed that national rule of law should not constitute the cornerstone for this declaration. Lastly, the declaration should also address the right to development.

Comments from Co-Facilitators:

The co-facilitators mentioned the following, which is listed in bullet point form:

- We tried to pick up on important words and have discussion on key parts to get clarity on where we want to go with certain issues
- This is a new process → we will be basing our works on OWG and its outcomes, but this is a separate and distinct process
- We've heard from you which ideas have traction and those that don't
- We will try to reflect on that moving forward → all of you should do the same
- Merely a document to avail you an opportunity to have a debate
- It might be wise to put document on website for historical reference and memory aid → will not have any kind of significance in future discussions
- We think that this discussed document will be useful for reference
- We should also include the Elements (the document you started with) → historical record as to why group and national statements were prepared in the way they were

Zero Draft

- Comes only at the end of these interactive processes
- We don't envision a zero draft until some time after April
- There have been some demands to have this done earlier, but it would not have given us any time to converse on these issues
- We don't want to assume to base our draft on another, historical process like the OWG
- We are starting with a clean slate
- We have access to the outcome of the OWG, but the modalities of this process is completely different