



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY  
THEMBELA NGCULU (MR), COUNSELLOR FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN PERMANENT MISSION TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEBATE ON THE REVISION  
OF SDGS TARGETS (New York, 21 May 2015)**

Co-facilitators,

This intervention represents the collective voice of the 134-member Group of 77 and China.

The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the release earlier in the month of the Revised Target Document on the SDGs and some of their targets. We thank the Co-facilitators for allowing Member States and political groups sufficient time to coordinate on the said document and arrive at a conclusion that will help chart the way forward on the efforts of the Co-facilitators on SDGs targets.

The Group recalls that during the Third Session of the post-2015 development agenda in March the Co-facilitators appealed to Member States to consider entrusting them with the responsibility to revisit targets without clear figures and percentages (Xs), as one option to address perceived challenges in some targets. It was also mentioned that this would be the last-ditch effort to put an end to the revision of questionable targets as contained in the Report of the OWG-SDGs.

We note that the Revised Target Document contains twenty-one (21) targets that were revised either to strengthen the perceptibly weak targets, close the gaps represented by X percentages or harmonize them with the existing international agreements. Regrettably, the Group of 77 and China is in no position to accept the revision of the intergovernmentally agreed SDGs and targets as the increasing number risks tampering with the political balance struck during the negotiations on SDGs. We reiterate our view that the OWG-SDGs Report is a product of many compromises and any attempt to revisit the substance thereof would require involvement of Member States. It is for this reason that the Group has always opposed the revision of targets especially in a context where our development partners have made it clear that they have a long list of targets that need revision, at least in their view. Various figures have been bandied about in an attempt to either strengthen or weaken the said Report. It is fast becoming clear that the revision attempts could open doors for some Member States to introduce new language and concepts that have not been agreed internationally, which gesture risks unraveling the said Report and the hard-won gains.

We reiterate the point made on previous occasions that the Report of the OWG-SDGs represents a delicate political balance that resulted from an intergovernmental process that lasted for almost 18 months and any attempt to amend or revise its contents risks not only dislodge the political balance but could easily interfere with the agreed timeframe for negotiation and adoption of the post-2015 development. The Group of 77 and China maintains that the OWG-SDGs Report should serve as a basis for the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

Co-facilitators,

The Group takes this opportunity to reassure you of our continued support in your leadership during this critical time of the intergovernmental process. Your efforts to lead and bring this process to its logical conclusion will never go unnoticed by the international community that we collectively

represent at the United Nations as Member States.

I thank you

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